



Voice Engine Optimization:

The Key to Driving Local Sales
and Offline Traffic



CHATMETER
LOCAL BRAND MANAGEMENT

The Need for ‘Voice Engine Optimization’

THE FACTS

Voice technology is an undeniable and fast encroaching component of consumer search—expected to account for **50% of all searches by 2020**, according to [ComScore](#). Equally important, [Search Engine Watch](#) reports that mobile voice searches are **3X more likely to be local-based** than text searches. This means marketers *must* adapt their SEO approaches now, to account for consumers who are searching and shopping on the go, with a local mindset and with natural language speech over traditional written queries.

THE PROBLEM

Marketers acknowledge the growth and importance of voice technology, but many do not understand the depth of the behavioral shift and the action it requires them to take. Far too many marketers have no plans to incorporate strategies that optimize their marketing, reputation and local strategies for voice technology and voice search—and the minority that do have plans are often unsure of where to start.

By not understanding why and how to upgrade SEO strategies to fit voice, CMOs and other C-suite decision makers are jeopardizing revenue and traffic from nearby voice searchers—which may be costing them local business to more optimized competitors. As new research finds **41-51% of consumers use voice assistants daily**, brands and marketers have no time to waste.



THE SOLUTION

Setting the foundation to maximize voice search is easier than brands realize. CMOs and their counterparts must go back to the basics of online listings and local reputation and integrate with the natural language search terms and queries voice tech consumers use.

This approach, called **Voice Engine Optimization (VEO)**, is an adaptation of what is already known and understood—local reputation and local search drives visits and sales.

The Research

The following third-party research was conducted to help businesses better understand consumer voice search habits and their impact.

The research was commissioned by Chatmeter, the leader in local search marketing and reputation management, among US consumers who own a smart speaker and/or use mobile voice assistants.

KEY INSIGHTS



CONVENIENCE IS A MAIN DRAW OF VOICE

52% of consumers say ease of use is what they like most about voice technology, followed by it being **fun and different (23%)**.



SMART DEVICES AREN'T YET SMART ENOUGH

The main issue people have with voice technology is experiencing **voice recognition errors (39%)** or the technology **not being able to understand the question they ask (31%)**.



FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN IS PREVENTING SALES

Those who have never made a purchase via a smart speaker or mobile voice assistant are **15-21% more likely to say security and ordering incorrect or duplicate items are moderate or great concerns** about making a purchase via voice.



THE MAJORITY OF CONSUMERS ENGAGE WITH OR VISIT NEARBY BUSINESSES AFTER CONDUCTING A VOICE SEARCH

Over 2 in 5 consumers use voice search to ask for directions, an address or business hours for a nearby location; **88% of consumers are likely to use driving directions** after making a voice search.



SUCCESSFUL VOICE EXPERIENCES AND PURCHASES LEAD TO MORE FREQUENT MOBILE VOICE SEARCHES

90% of consumers use a voice assistant on their mobile device; those who make purchases via voice device are **30% more likely to use their voice assistant daily**.

How are Consumers Interacting with Voice Technology?

THE MAJORITY OF CONSUMERS ARE FREQUENT VOICE USERS



61%

of consumers own a smart speaker – 51% of them use it daily and 29% use it at least once a week



9 in 10

consumers use a voice assistant on their phone – 41% of them use it daily and 33% use it at least once a week

CHATMETER TIP:

PRIORITIZE HOUSEHOLD DECISION MAKERS

Voice devices are most used by 35-44 year olds, of whom 63% use their smart speaker every day.

CHATMETER TIP:

TARGET FREQUENT VOICE SEARCHERS

Individuals who make purchases via voice device are 30% more likely to be daily voice assistant users.

CONVENIENCE OUTWEIGHS HURDLES



of consumers rate their experience with voice devices a 7 out of 10 or higher – convenience is the #1 reason consumers turn to it

Consumers' least favorite part about voice assistants:

39%

Voice recognition errors

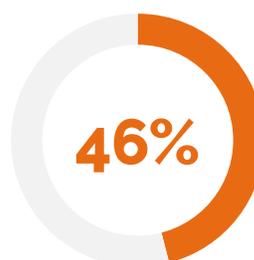
31%

Unable to understand their question

21%

Inaccurate or lack of answers

FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY ARE GETTING IN THE WAY OF SALES



of consumers have never made a purchase via voice device – the majority say this is due to concerns about security and ordering wrong brands or items



of female consumers and individuals who have no plans to make a voice purchase say **security is their main concern**

How Does This Behavior Impact Businesses on a Local Level?

A LOCAL LISTING IS THE MOST IMPORTANT RESULT IN A VOICE SEARCH



Factors most likely to influence the decision between local voice search results include:

63%
Distance

58%
Deals or Discounts

38%
Search Engine Ranking

THE MAJORITY OF VOICE SEARCHERS ARE TAKING LOCAL ACTION

When conducting a voice search for a nearby business:



31%

Ask for business hours



13%

Ask for specific product availability nearby



CHATMETER TIP:

ACCURACY OF LOCAL LISTINGS IS CRITICAL

Otherwise, businesses jeopardize sales by sending consumers to incorrect addresses or closed locations.

AUDIENCES VARY IN THE LOCAL ACTION THEY TAKE



Consumers in the Western part of the US are **14-18% more likely to ask for driving directions** than consumers in other regions



32% vs. 23%

Women are more likely to use voice devices to find local restaurants, shops or businesses

Employing ‘Voice Engine Optimization’

In simplest form, Voice Engine Optimization starts with the basics of any local SEO strategy—accurate online listings, optimized keywords, strong reputation and review management—while accounting for both traditional text queries and natural, everyday terms used in consumer voice searches.

To successfully adopt VEO to drive offline visits and revenue from mobile and voice searches, brands and marketers must do three critical things:



ANTICIPATE UNBRANDED SEARCHES

Nine times out of ten, consumers make unbranded searches – such as “pizza near me” versus “Pizza Hut nearby.” Best practices in SEO and VEO take into account the keywords a consumer uses when they know what they want, but not necessarily where they want it from.



FOCUS ON DRIVING A LOCAL ACTION

Employing VEO means not only ensuring consumers can find you, but also that they can take an action when they do—whether that’s calling your location, checking hours, getting directions or something else. Accuracy and availability of this information is critical to ensuring consumers stick with your business over your competitors.



CREATE SEAMLESS SEARCH EXPERIENCES TO BUILD A PATH TO PURCHASE

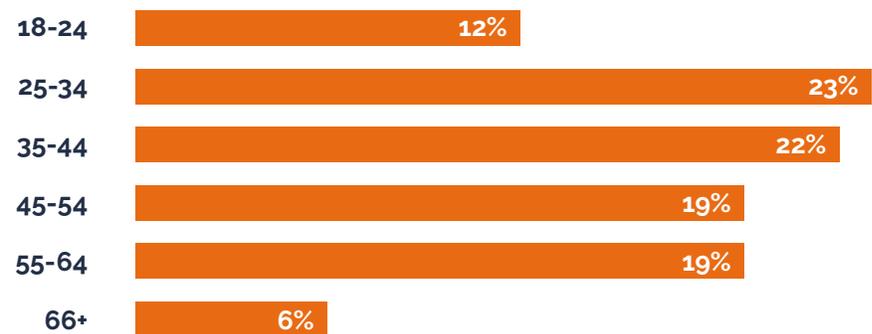
Convenience is the number one factor drawing consumers to voice technology, which means it’s the first qualifier they have when deciding if and when to move from a mobile or voice search to a nearby location.

About the Research & Methodology

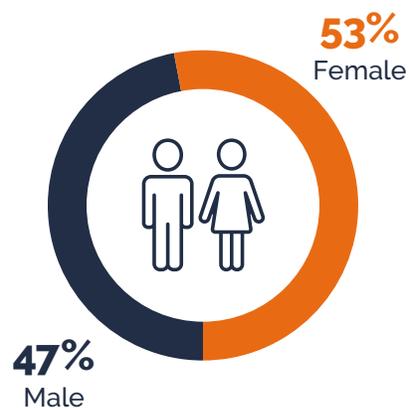
This research was intended to identify the usage habits, purchase decisions and brand consideration process of US consumers who utilize voice technology devices such as smart speakers or mobile voice assistants. Commissioned by Chatmeter and overseen by Hotwire Global, the survey research was conducted by Sapio Research, which interviewed 1,000 US voice tech users in August 2018.

INTERVIEWEE DEMOGRAPHICS

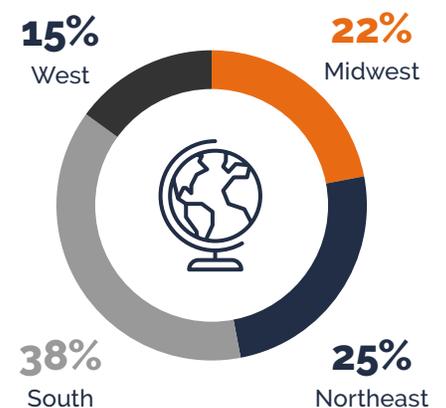
AGE



GENDER



REGION



For more information on Voice Engine Optimization and Reputation Management, visit [chatmeter.com](https://www.chatmeter.com) or reach out to info@chatmeter.com