Sensor Tower

State of Digital Advertising 2026

Discover the latest trends across digital advertising and retail media

Sensor Tower | Our Customers

Top publishers trust Sensor Tower insights to grow their business

Note: Top publishers by app store revenue | Source: Sensor Tower

Executive Summary | State of Digital Advertising 2026

Worldwide

Digital Ad Spend

$348 Billion

12 months between August 2025 and July 2026

+19% Year-over-Year

Digital Ad Impressions

70.7 Trillion

12 months between August 2025 and July 2026

+13% Year-over-Year

#1 Ad Channel

Facebook

by ad spend among included ad channels in this market

$96.4B 12 months between August 2025 and July 2026

#1 Category

Shopping

12 months between August 2025 and July 2026

#2 Consumer Packaged Goods

#3 Media & Entertainment

#1 Advertiser

Procter & Gamble

12 months between August 2025 and July 2026

#2 Amazon.com

#3 The Walt Disney Company

Included Ad Channels

Only select ad channels are available in each market

Ad Channel	Included?
Social Networks	
Facebook	✓
Instagram	✓
LINE	○
LinkedIn	✓
NAVER	✓
Pinterest	✓
Reddit	✓
Snapchat	✓
TikTok	✓
X	✓
Search	
ChatGPT	○
Display & Video	
Desktop Display	✓
Desktop Video	✓
Mobile Apps	✓
Mobile Display	✓
Mobile Video	✓
TV & Streaming	
Linear TV	✓
OTT	✓
YouTube	✓

Note: Included ad channels vary by market. Ad spend estimates are as of August 28, 2026. Year-over-year growth calculated using ad channels that were available since August 2023 and exclude more recently released ad channels.

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About this Data:
Digital Advertising Methodology

The digital ad spending and impressions estimates presented in this report were compiled by Sensor Tower's Insights team using Pathmatics by Sensor Tower Digital Advertising Insights.

The figures mentioned in this report reflect estimated ad investments made by advertisers through July 31, 2026.

Data includes select channels in each market. Figures in this report represent the totals for these channels only, not across all digital formats.

Data Collection: Pathmatics collects a sample of digital ads from the web. In order to report the most complete picture of the digital advertising landscape, we utilize two leading data sourcing technologies: panels and data aggregators.

Pathmatics uses statistical sampling methods to estimate impressions, cost per thousand impressions (CPMs), and spend for each creative. Each impression served to our data aggregators and panelists is assigned a CPM, which when combined with impressions results in our spend estimates.

Pathmatics OTT data is powered by a panel of real OTT & CTV viewers and includes data representative of all Smart TV brands, such as Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, HBO Max, Hulu, Netflix, Pluto TV, Tubi, Peacock, and Paramount+. Linear TV estimates are also available in the US.

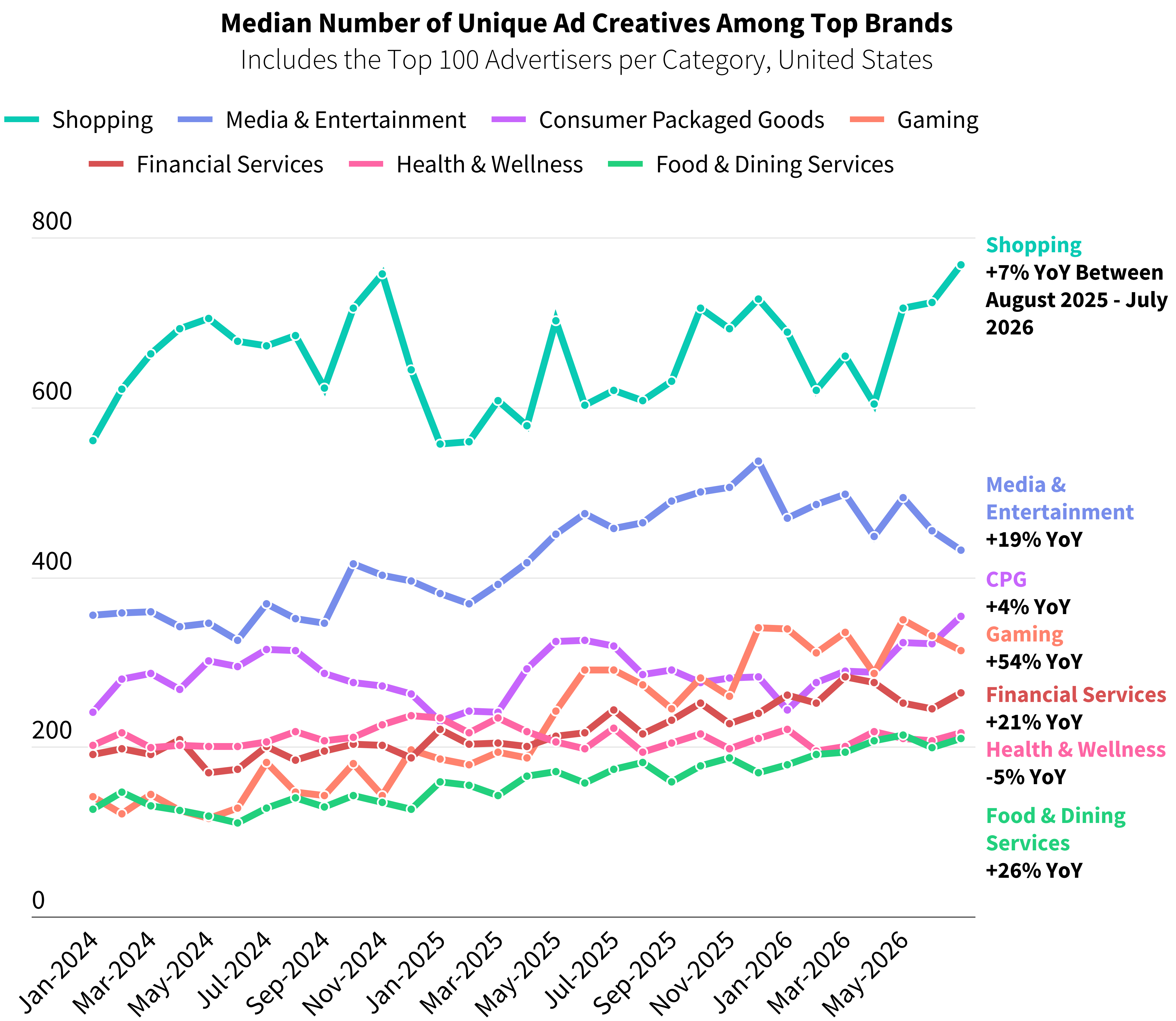
Advertising Stories of the Year:

AI Reshapes Advertising in 2026

Is AI Accelerating Ad Creative Testing?

As AI image and video generation improves, it is becoming a useful tool in the ad creative process. Shorter production times for images, videos, and text allow brands to test more variations and iterate faster. As a result, the number of unique ad creatives used by advertisers should increase over time.

There is some evidence to support this theory: advertisers have increased the number of creatives they use. While AI is not necessarily responsible for all of this growth, the rapid increase in ad creatives beginning in 2025, particularly in categories such as Gaming, suggests that AI may be helping brands reduce production times and test more efficiently.

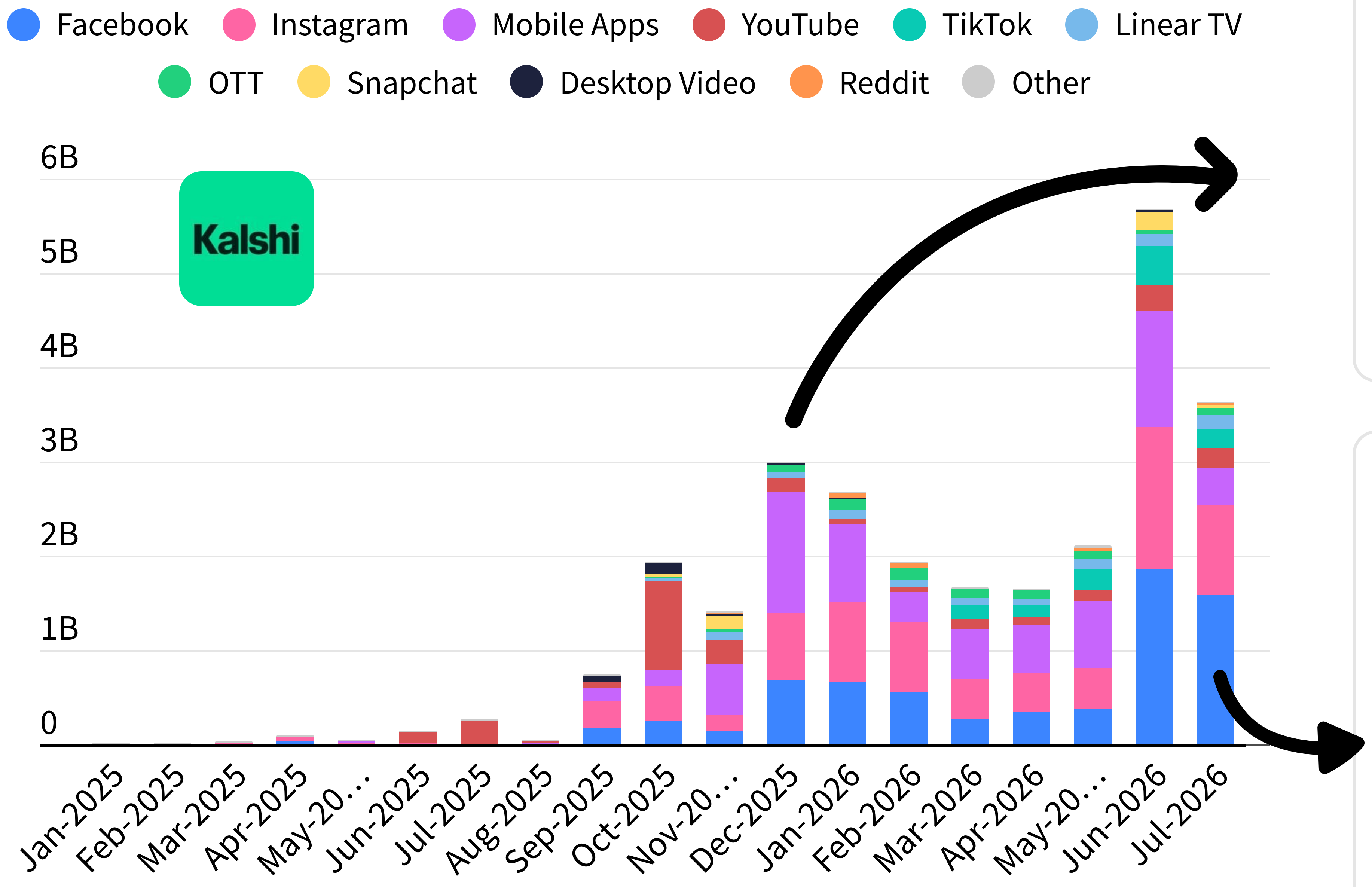


Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels available in the United States. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market.

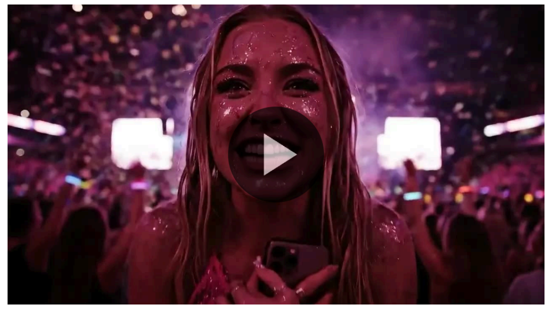
Mimicking AI Can Grab Attention but Risks Undercutting Brand Credibility

Kalshi leaned into AI-style ad creatives in late 2025 as a way to reach a younger audience familiar with the look and feel of AI-generated videos on social media. However, the brand moved away from this approach in 2026 as it reached a more mainstream audience, instead using celebrity endorsements to build credibility and establish the brand.

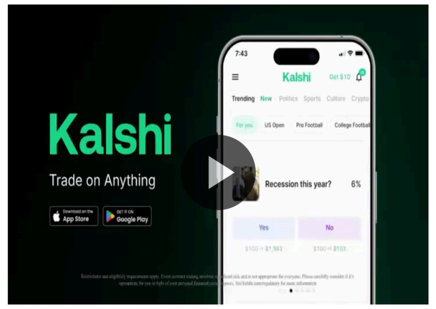
Kalshi US Ad Impressions by Channel



Example Creative on YouTube



Example Creative on Linear TV



Kalshi's ad creative strategy in Q4 2025, particularly on YouTube, featured videos designed to resemble AI-generated content and illustrate scenarios where users could make predictions. These videos displayed dramatic hypotheticals that could capture viewers' attention.

Example Creative on YouTube

Example Creative on Linear TV

More recent Kalshi ads have leveraged celebrity endorsements to reach a more mainstream audience. Giannis Antetokounmpo helped position Kalshi as an alternative to traditional sports betting, while an ad featuring Timothée Chalamet ran during the FIFA World Cup, where Kalshi also participated as a sponsor.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Example top digital ad creatives in the United States.

Investment in AI Messaging Reached New Highs

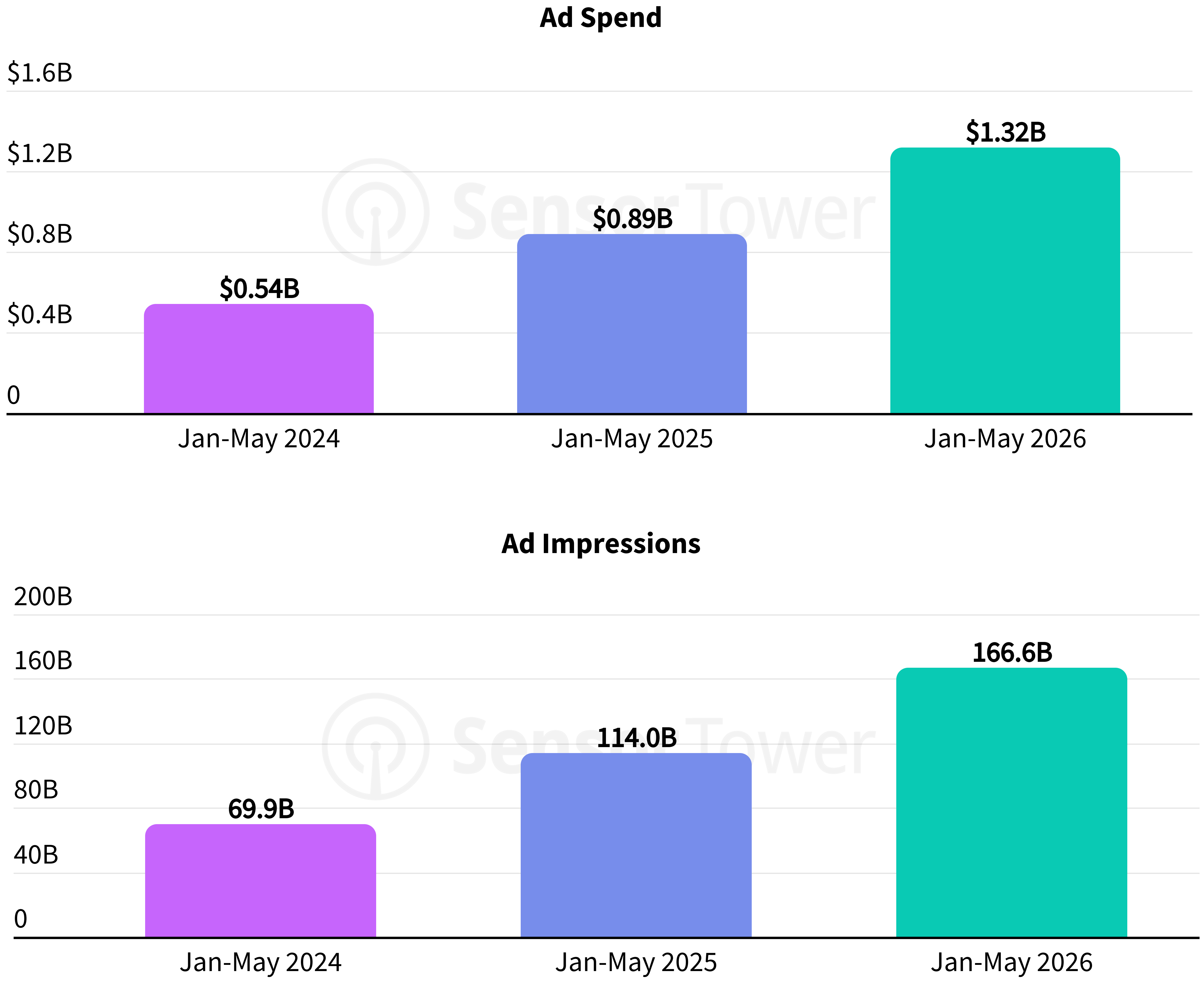
AI-related messaging gained further traction among advertisers in 2026. Digital ad spend on creatives featuring AI-related terms reached $1.3 billion, up 48% YoY, while impressions climbed to 167 billion, a 46% increase from 2025.

Growth extended well beyond Software. Health & Wellness led major categories with a 165% increase in ad spend on AI-related creatives, while Financial Services, Business & Industrials, and Media & Entertainment each recorded growth of more than 60% YoY. The trend highlights how brands across industries are increasingly leveraging AI messaging to differentiate products and capture consumer attention.

The analysis is from our State of AI Apps Report 2026: **Click here to download the full report** covering the latest insights covering AI on mobile, digital advertising, and retail media.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes ad creatives that mention "AI", "GPT", "OpenAI", "artificial intelligence", "machine learning", "LLM", or "large language model".

Digital Advertising Spend and Impressions for Creatives with AI-Related Terms
United States



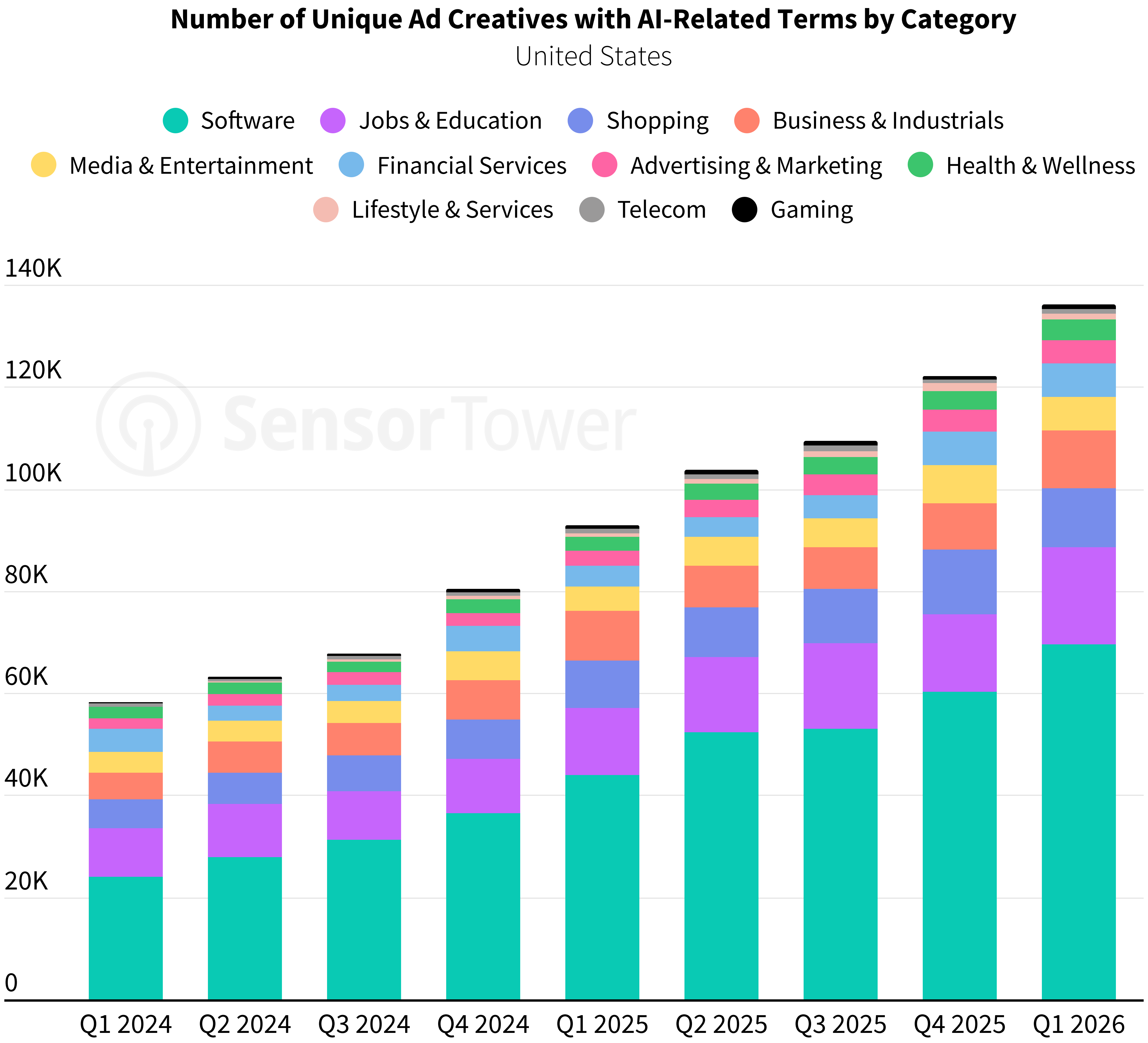
AI Became a Mainstream Marketing Theme Across Industries

The use of AI-related language in advertising continued to expand beyond traditional tech-forward brands. From Jobs & Education and Shopping to Financial Services and Health & Wellness, brands increasingly highlighted AI capabilities in their marketing as consumers became more familiar with AI-powered experiences.

AI marketing also reached new levels of scale in Q1 2026. Software generated nearly 70K unique ad creatives featuring AI related terms, while Jobs & Education grew 42% YoY. Health & Wellness and Advertising & Marketing recorded even faster growth of 52% and 61%.

The analysis is from our State of AI Apps Report 2026: **Click here to download the full report** covering the latest insights covering AI on mobile, digital advertising, and retail media.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes ad creatives that mention "AI", "GPT", "OpenAI", "artificial intelligence", "machine learning", "LLM", or "large language model".



Financial Services Maintained AI Advertising Momentum

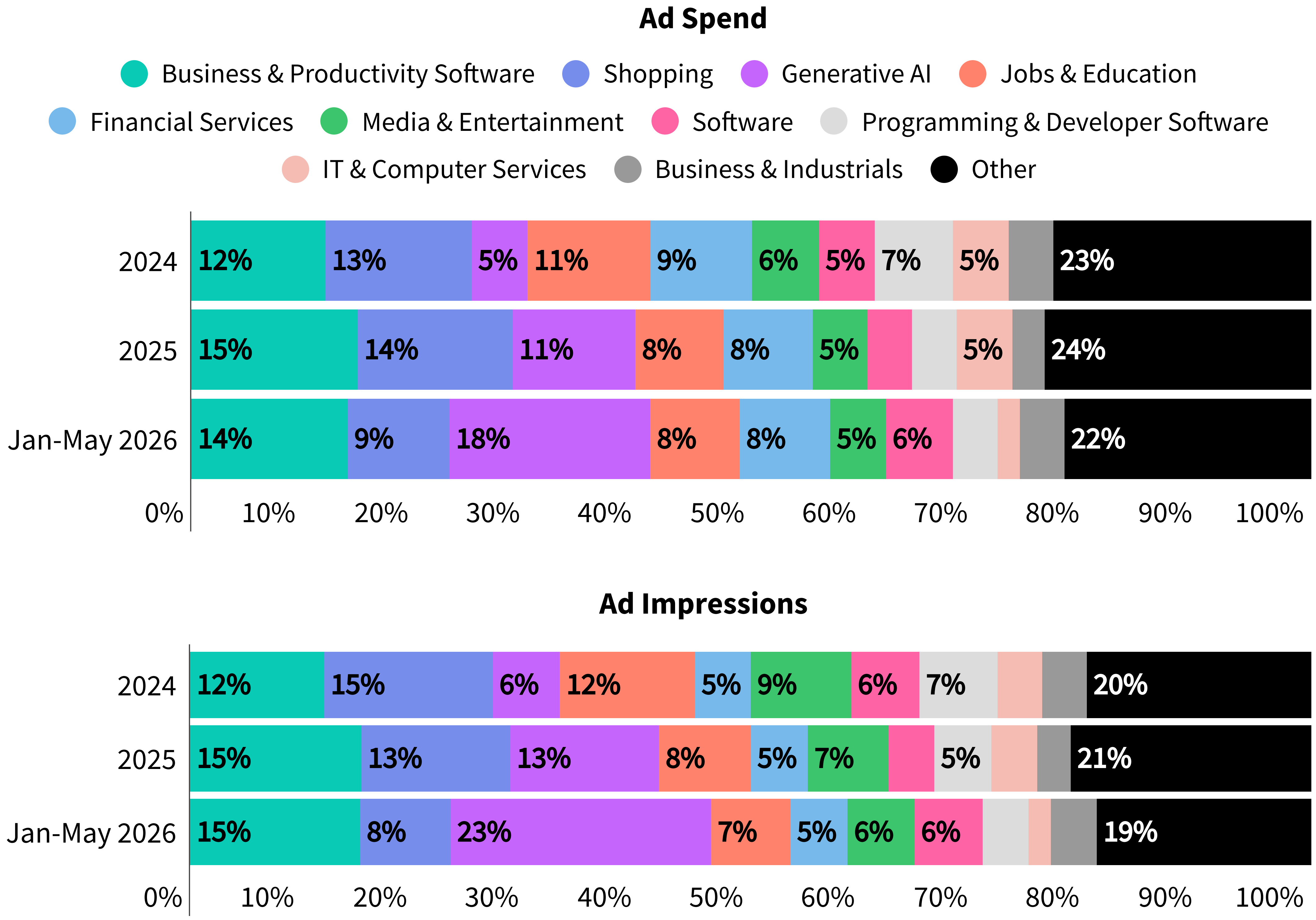
Generative AI brands accounted for an increasingly large share of advertising featuring AI-related messaging. Their share of AI-related ad spend rose from 5% in 2024 to 18% in the first five months of 2026, while their share of impressions nearly quadrupled to 23% as AI-native companies invested aggressively in user acquisition and brand awareness.

Financial Services maintained its share of AI-related advertising while growth in GenAI advertising outpaced categories such as Shopping and Jobs & Education. Advertisers such as Capital One, TZ Insurance, and ADP continued to promote AI-powered financial services and workplace solutions, highlighting interest in practical AI applications beyond the technology sector.

The analysis is from our State of AI Apps Report 2026: **Click here to download the full report** covering the latest insights covering AI on mobile, digital advertising, and retail media.

Category Breakdown for Digital Advertising with AI-Related Terms

United States



Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes ad creatives that mention "AI", "GPT", "OpenAI", "artificial intelligence", "machine learning", "LLM", or "large language model".

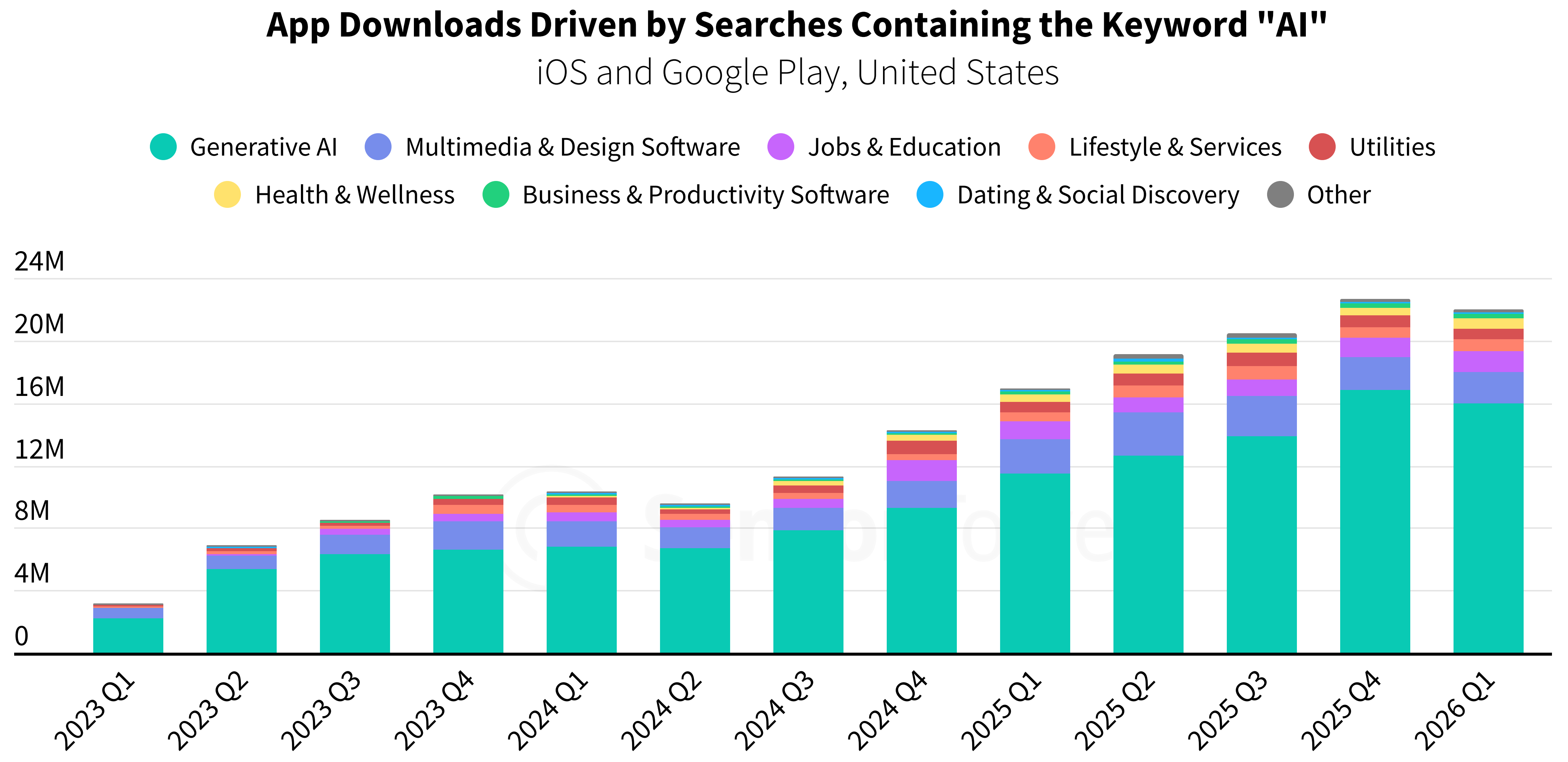
Consumers Increasingly Used AI-Related Searches to Discover Apps

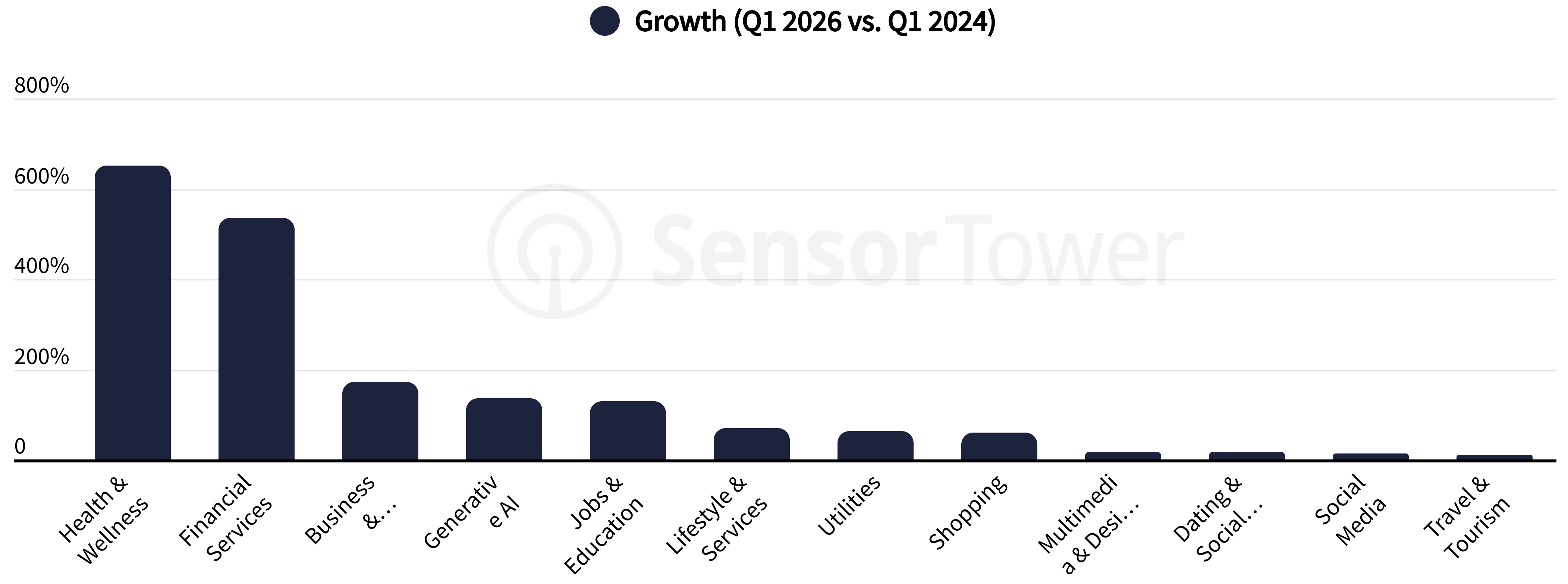
Consumer searches containing "AI" increasingly led to downloads outside traditional Generative AI apps. Downloads driven by AI-related searches grew 651% in Health & Wellness and 536% in Financial Services between Q1 2024 and Q1 2026, while Business & Productivity Software and Jobs & Education more than doubled.

The trend suggests that AI is becoming an increasingly effective discovery and user acquisition driver across app categories. As consumers actively seek AI-powered experiences, developers are gaining new opportunities to attract users by highlighting AI capabilities in app listings and marketing.

The analysis is from our State of AI Apps Report 2026: **Click here to download the full report** covering the latest insights covering AI on mobile, digital advertising, and retail media.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: iOS and Google Play combined in the United States



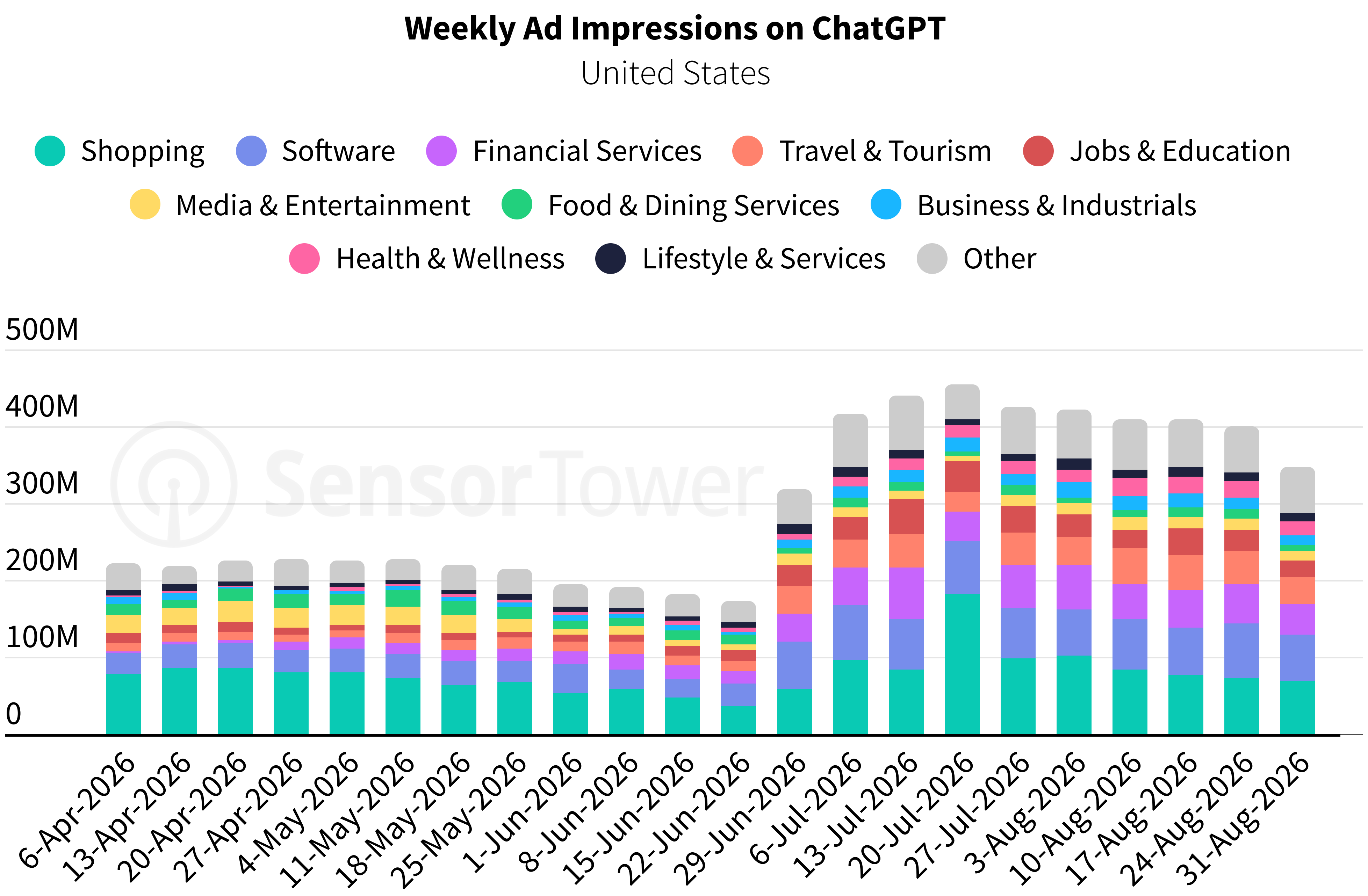


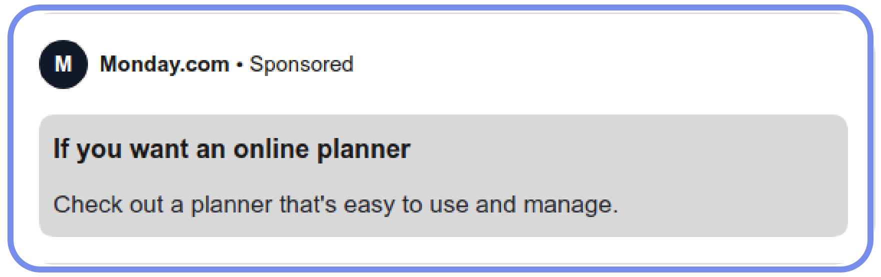
AI Search is a New Channel That Advertisers Need to Monitor

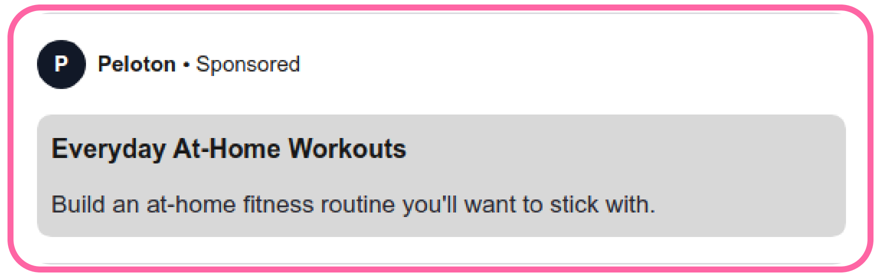
As user attention shifts to AI Assistants like ChatGPT, brands have an opportunity to reach consumers in a new environment. But this also presents a new challenge: How can advertisers reach consumers (and what messaging works best) when users are in a research, work, search, or planning mindset?

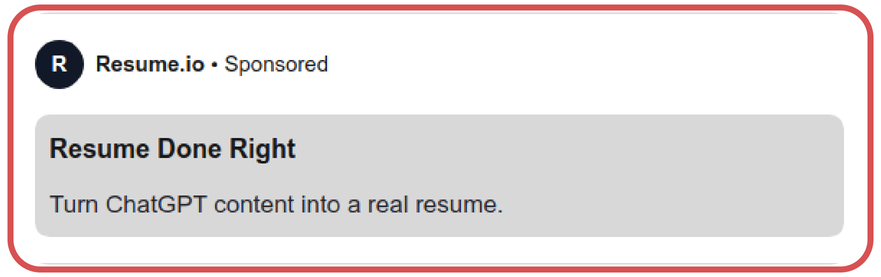
ChatGPT notably increased its advertising activity in June 2026, displaying ads after a higher percentage of prompts. While Shopping brands continue to leverage ChatGPT advertising the most, categories such as Software, Financial Services, Travel & Tourism, and Jobs & Education are also a natural fit for the platform's users and the types of tasks they use ChatGPT to accomplish.

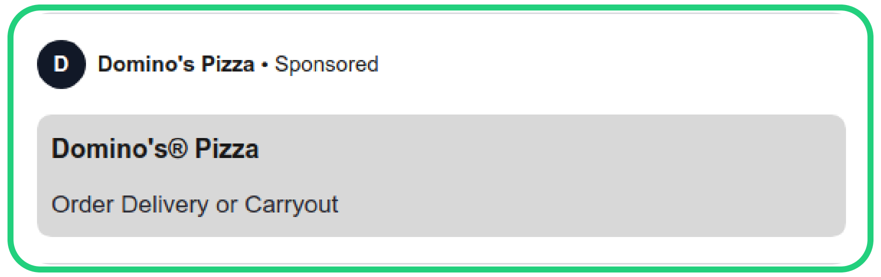
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes ad impressions on ChatGPT in the United States.











Advertising Stories of the Year:
Advertising Ramps Up for the Holiday Season

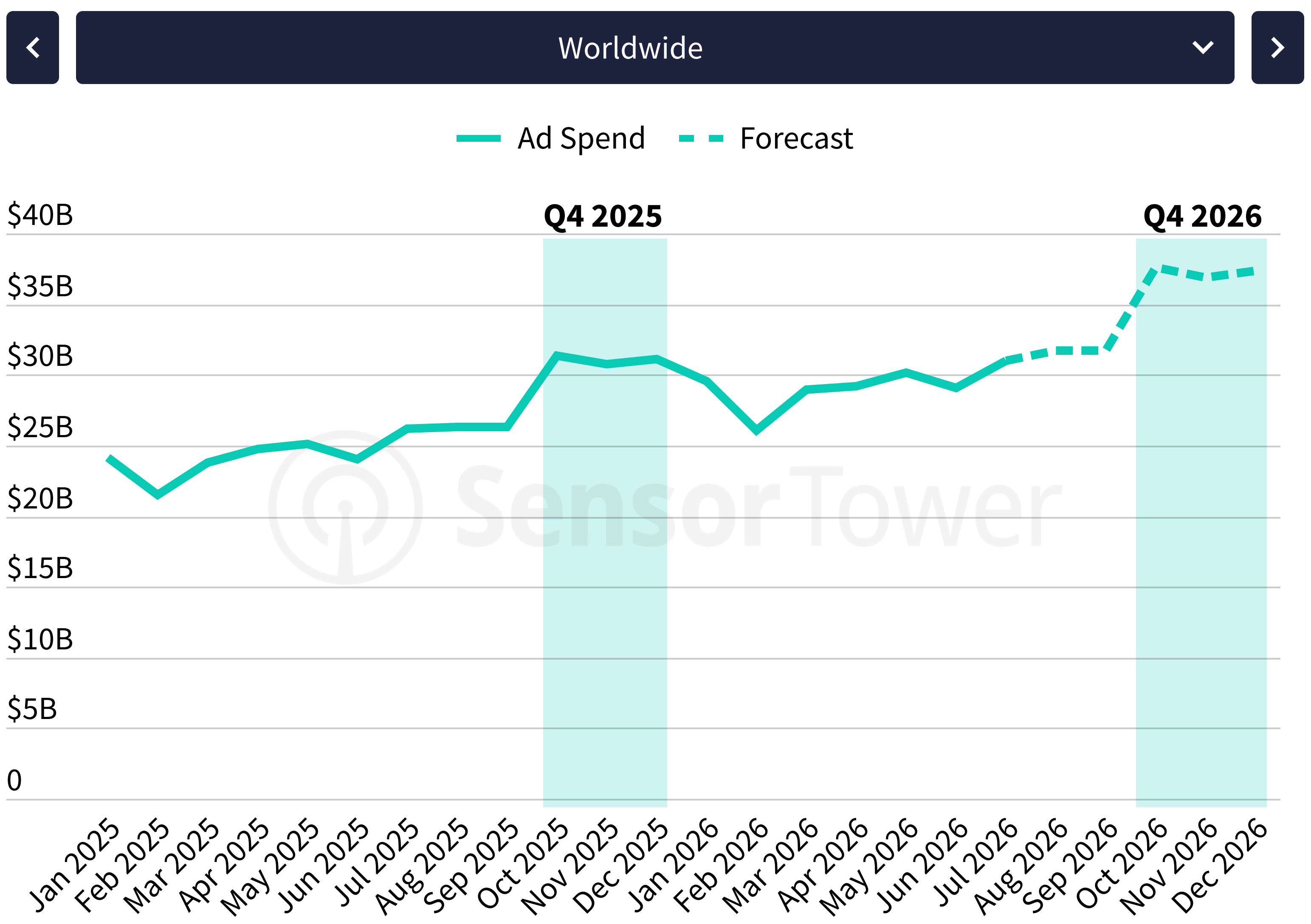
Digital Ad Spend is Projected to Surpass $110 Billion in Q4 2026

With digital advertising ramping up well before Black Friday and Cyber Monday, advertisers need to prepare early for the holiday season. Digital ad spend is projected to surpass $110 billion in Q4 2026, a 19% increase quarter-over-quarter (QoQ). The United States accounts for a significant share of this holiday-focused advertising, with ad spend projected to reach $63.3 billion in Q4 2026 (+20% QoQ).

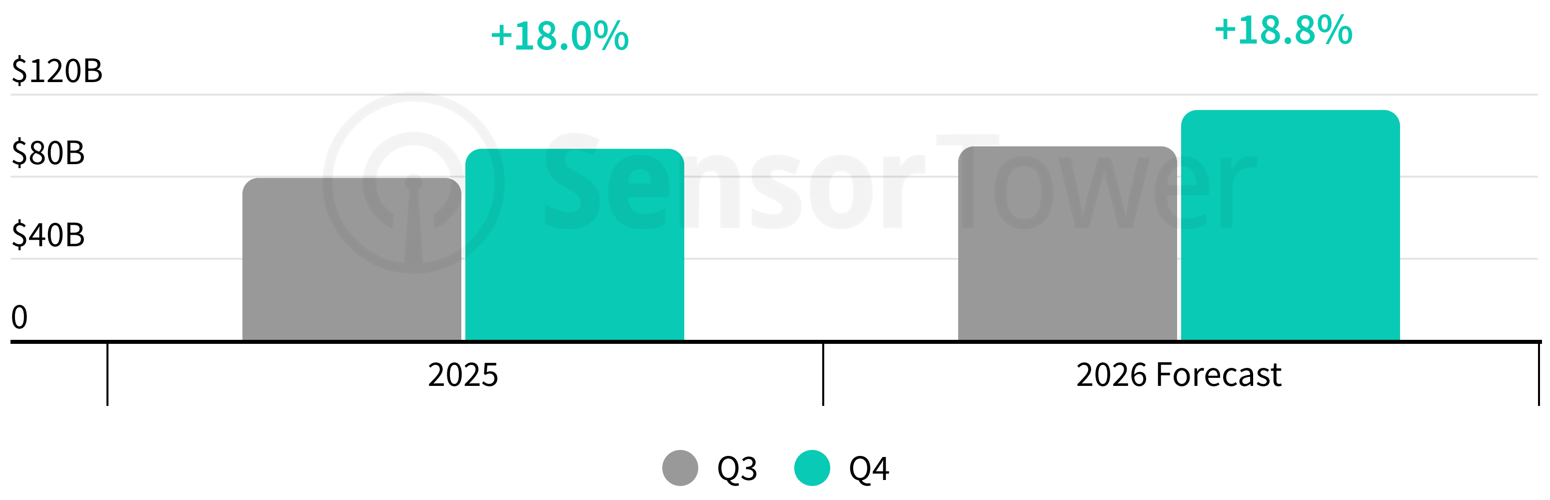
Markets across Europe, Latin America, and APAC are also forecast to see a strong boost in advertising during the fourth quarter, even as the holidays driving this increase vary by market. For example, festivals such as Diwali in India drive increased shopping and advertising activity in November.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.

Monthly Digital Ad Spend by Country



Quarter-over-Quarter Growth in Q4 vs. Q3 Each Year



Included Ad Channels

Only select ad channels are available in each market

Ad Channel	Included?
Social Networks	
Facebook	✓
Instagram	✓
LINE	✓
LinkedIn	✓
NAVER	✓
Pinterest	✓
Reddit	✓
Snapchat	✓
TikTok	✓
X	✓
Search	
ChatGPT	○
Display & Video	
Desktop Display	✓
Desktop Video	✓
Mobile Apps	✓
Mobile Display	✓
Mobile Video	✓
TV & Streaming	
Linear TV	✓
OTT	✓
YouTube	✓

General Shopping and Apparel Lead Ad Push During the Holiday Season

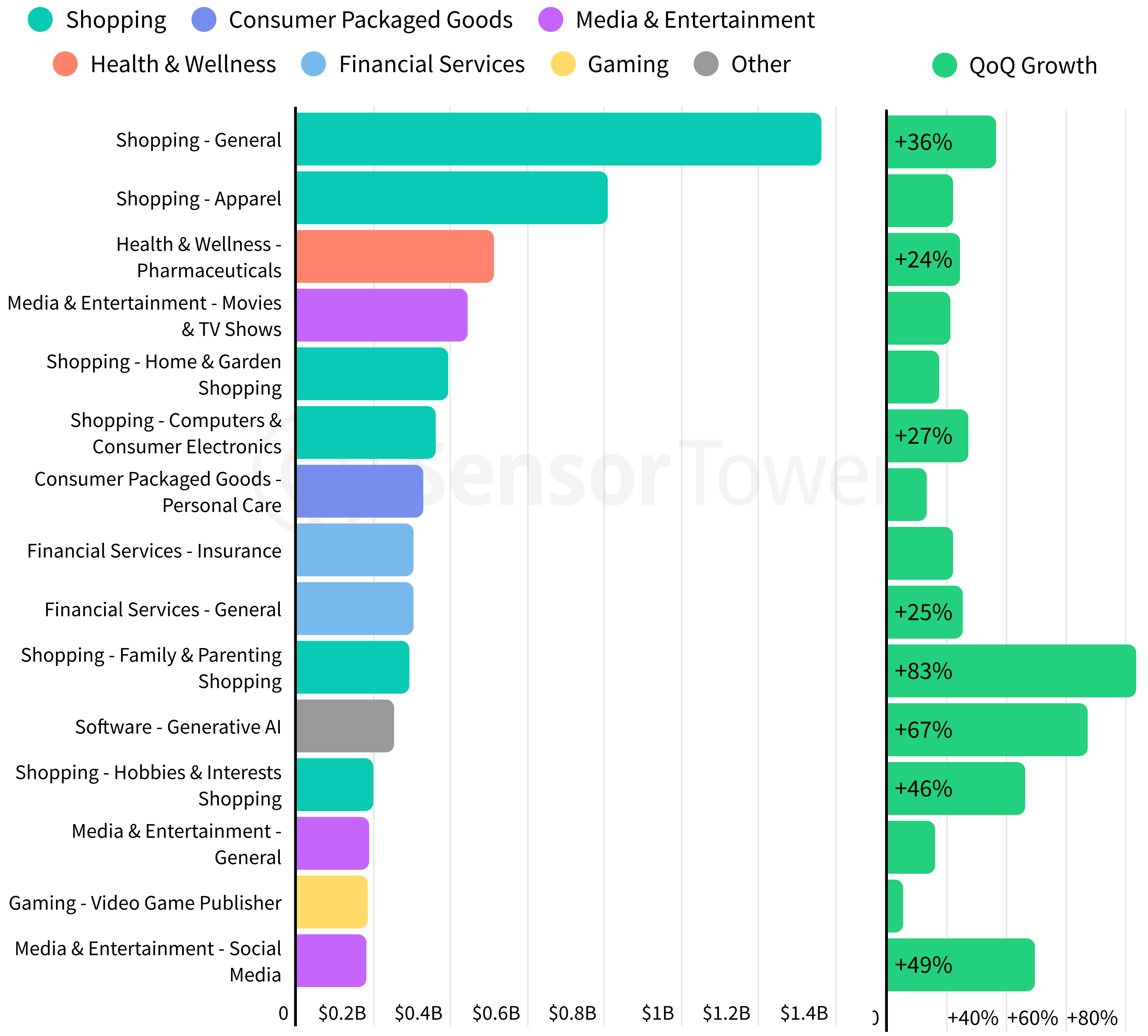
Shopping brands spend a disproportionate share of their ad budgets in Q4. Six of the 15 subcategories with the largest QoQ increases in Q4 2025 were in the Shopping category, including General Shopping, Apparel, and Computers & Consumer Electronics. Family & Parenting Shopping also saw the largest percentage increase among the top subcategories.

Many non-Shopping categories also ramped up ad spend at the end of the year, competing for consumer attention during the holiday season. Pharmaceuticals increased ad spend 24% QoQ, largely driven by the United States, while Movies & TV Shows, Personal Care, and several Financial Services subcategories also saw notable increases.

Top Categories by Digital Ad Spend Growth

Change in Ad Spend in Q4 2025 vs. Q3 2025

Worldwide



Included Ad Channels

Only select ad channels are available in each market

Ad Channel	Included?
Social Networks	
Facebook	✓
Instagram	✓
LINE	✓
LinkedIn	✓
NAVER	✓
Pinterest	✓
Reddit	✓
Snapchat	✓
TikTok	✓
X	✓
Search	
ChatGPT	○
Display & Video	
Desktop Display	✓
Desktop Video	✓
Mobile Apps	✓
Mobile Display	✓
Mobile Video	✓
TV & Streaming	
Linear TV	✓
OTT	✓
YouTube	✓

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. General spend includes creatives that aren't associated with a particular subcategory, creatives that feature products from several subcategories, or corporate ads.

When Should Brands Allocate Their Ad Dollars?

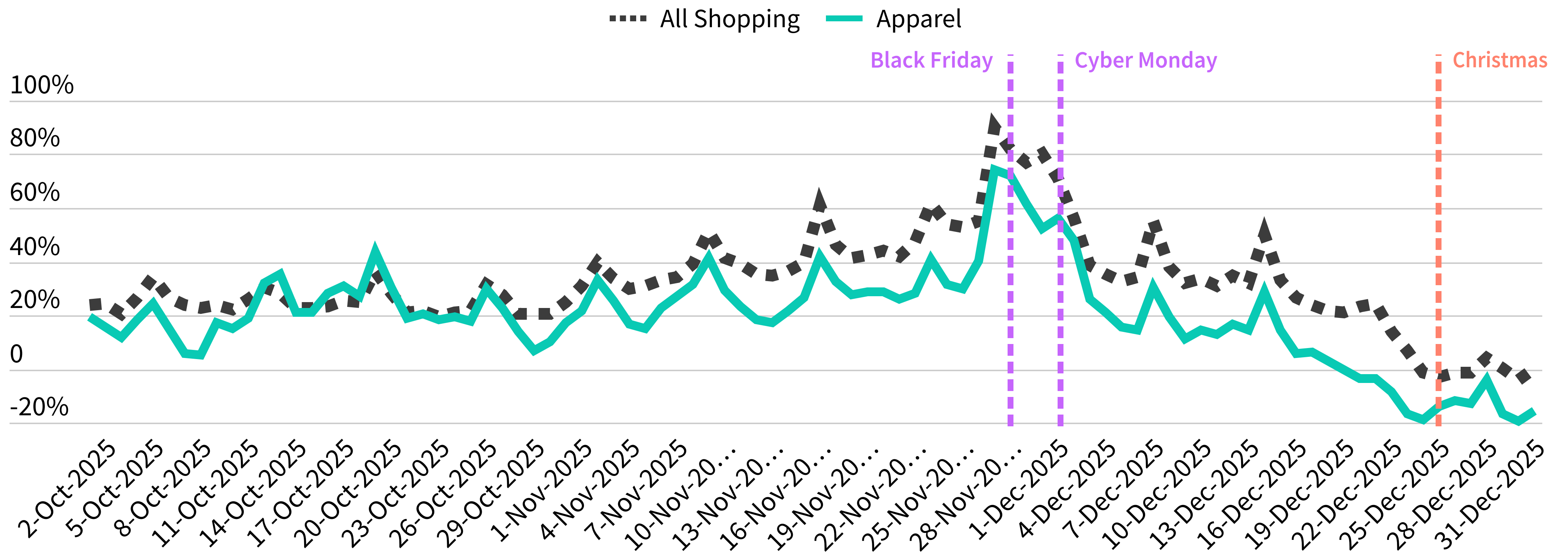
While many advertisers ramp up spend in Q4, the timing varies significantly by category. Most Shopping subcategories prioritize Black Friday and Cyber Monday, beginning to increase ad spend in early November before peaking around these key shopping days.

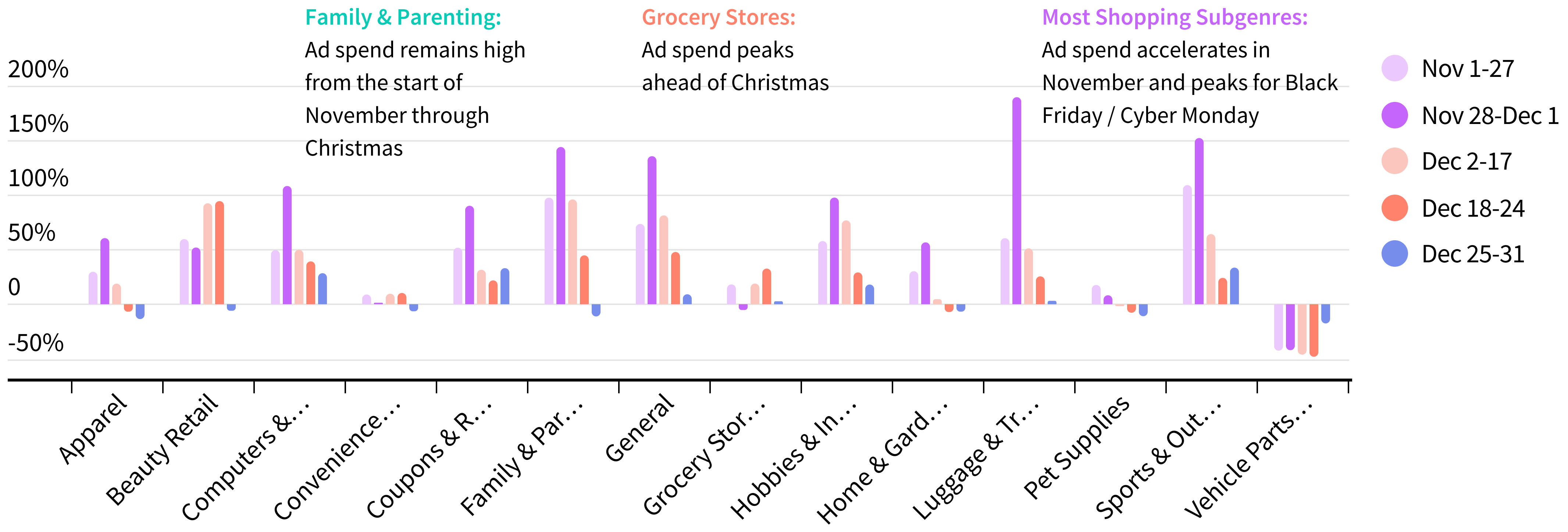
Popular gift categories such as Family & Parenting, Computers & Consumer Electronics, Hobbies / Interests maintain elevated ad spend throughout December. Computers & Consumer Electronics sees a second peak ahead of Christmas, likely targeting last-minute shoppers. Grocery Stores, meanwhile, largely skip the November and early December boost, instead ramping up ad spend in earnest ahead of Christmas.

Daily US Digital Ad Spend by Shopping Subgenre in the 2025 Holiday Season

Indexed to Average Daily Spend in September for Each Subgenre

Apparel





Source: Sensor Tower

Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. General spend includes creatives that aren't associated with a particular subcategory, creatives that feature products from several subcategories, or corporate ads.

Walmart and Target Pivot Strategies from Black Friday to Christmas

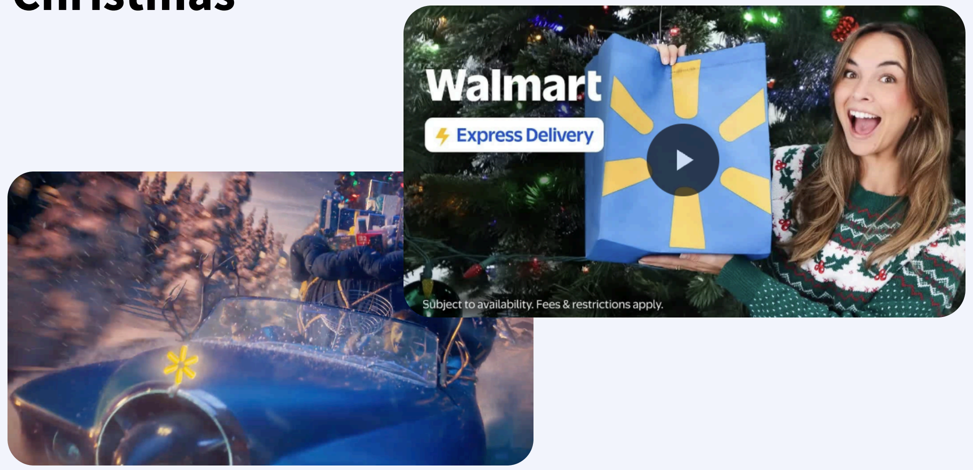
Target and Walmart pivoted their advertising from early deal urgency during Black Friday toward fulfillment convenience as Christmas approached. Target transitioned from deep discount scarcity hooks to promoting Target Circle 360 same-day delivery, while Walmart shifted from half-price membership drives to highlighting 1-hour Express Delivery for last-minute shoppers.

Walmart

Black Friday

Walmart centered its holiday narrative on membership acquisition, using a half-price promotion ($49/year) paired with exclusive early access to Black Friday deal drops to convert shoppers into paid Walmart+ subscribers.

Christmas



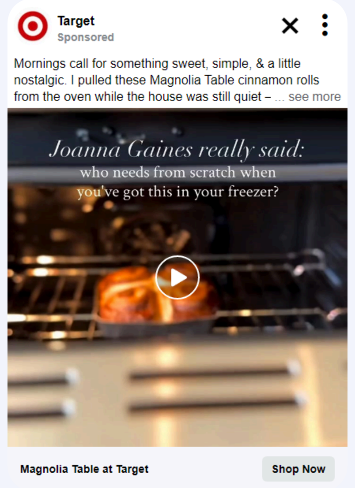
Walmart shifted messaging from membership acquisition to high-speed fulfillment, promoting Express Delivery ("in as fast as 1 hour") to relieve friction for last-minute shoppers and holiday hosts needing rapid gifting and entertaining essentials.

Target

Black Friday

Target engaged early Christmas shoppers with "40% off gifts and decor" alongside $5 price anchors, leveraging scarcity messaging like "three days only" and "moving fast" to trigger rapid retail conversions across trending merchandise categories.

Christmas



Target emphasized emotional holiday warmth and seamless convenience, promoting Target Circle 360 same-day delivery alongside trending character merchandise and seasonal decor.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Example top digital ad creatives in the United States in Q4 2025.

Advertising Stories of the Year: **Major Sports Events Create Unique Opportunities**

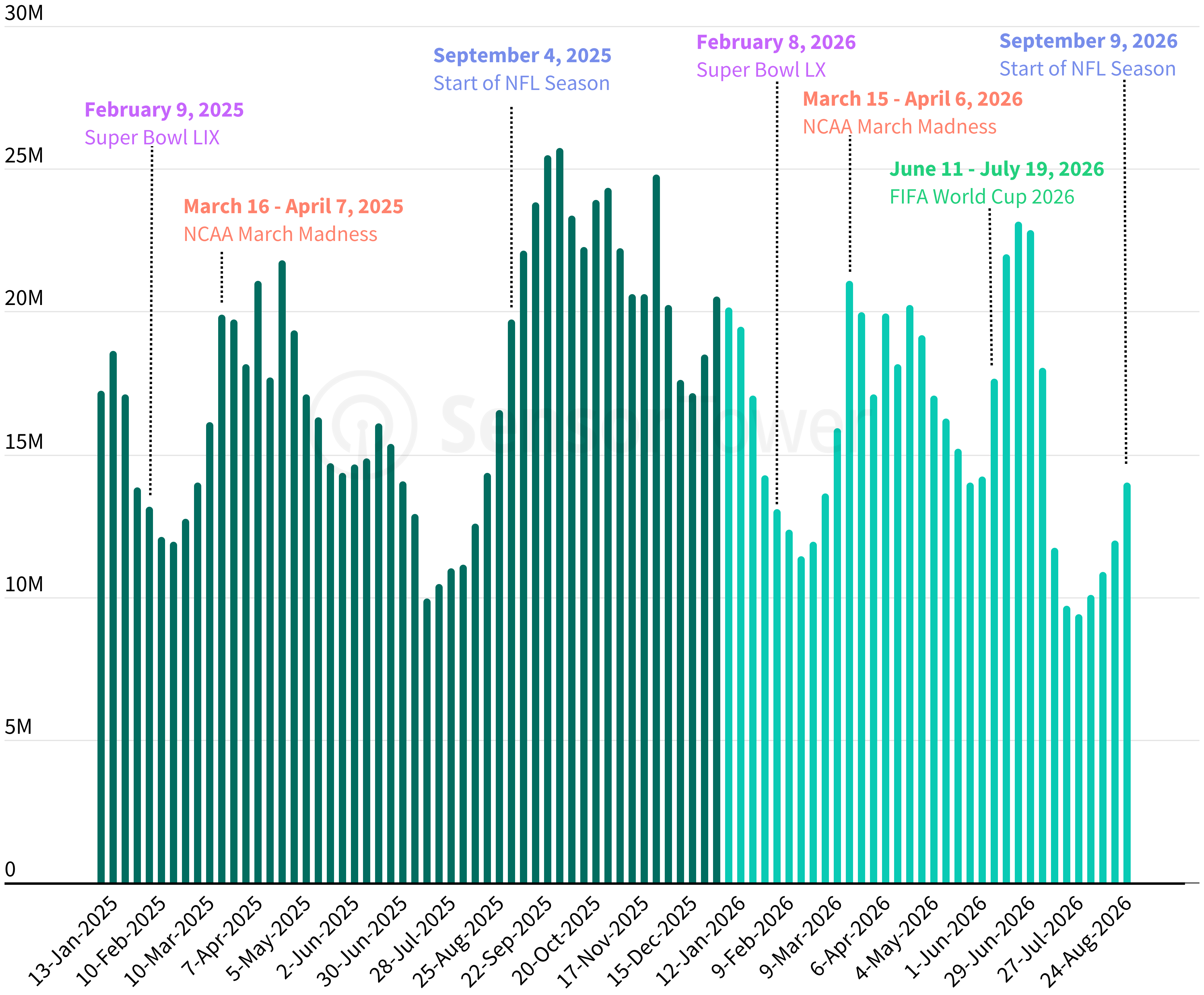
The NFL Season and World Cup Drive Sports App Consumption

US sports app consumption remains heavily event-driven, anchored by the fall NFL season and marquee tournaments. The NFL regular season drives sustained peak engagement, with weekly time spent surpassing 20 million hours from September through November. Engagement stays elevated through spring, sustained by NCAA March Madness alongside the NBA and NHL playoffs.

In 2026, international tournaments created an unseasonal summer engagement wave for advertisers. The FIFA World Cup generated a massive mid-year spike exceeding 23 million weekly hours, eliminating the traditional summer slump.These event-driven windows provide marketers with high-value entry points to capture engaged sports audiences.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Time spent on Sports Entertainment apps in the United States across iOS and Google Play. Sports Entertainment apps classified using Sensor Tower's App IQ taxonomy as of September 2026.

Weekly Time Spent (Hours) on Sports Entertainment Apps
iOS and Google Play Combined in the United States



Sports Betting and CPG Brands Prioritize Different Sporting Events

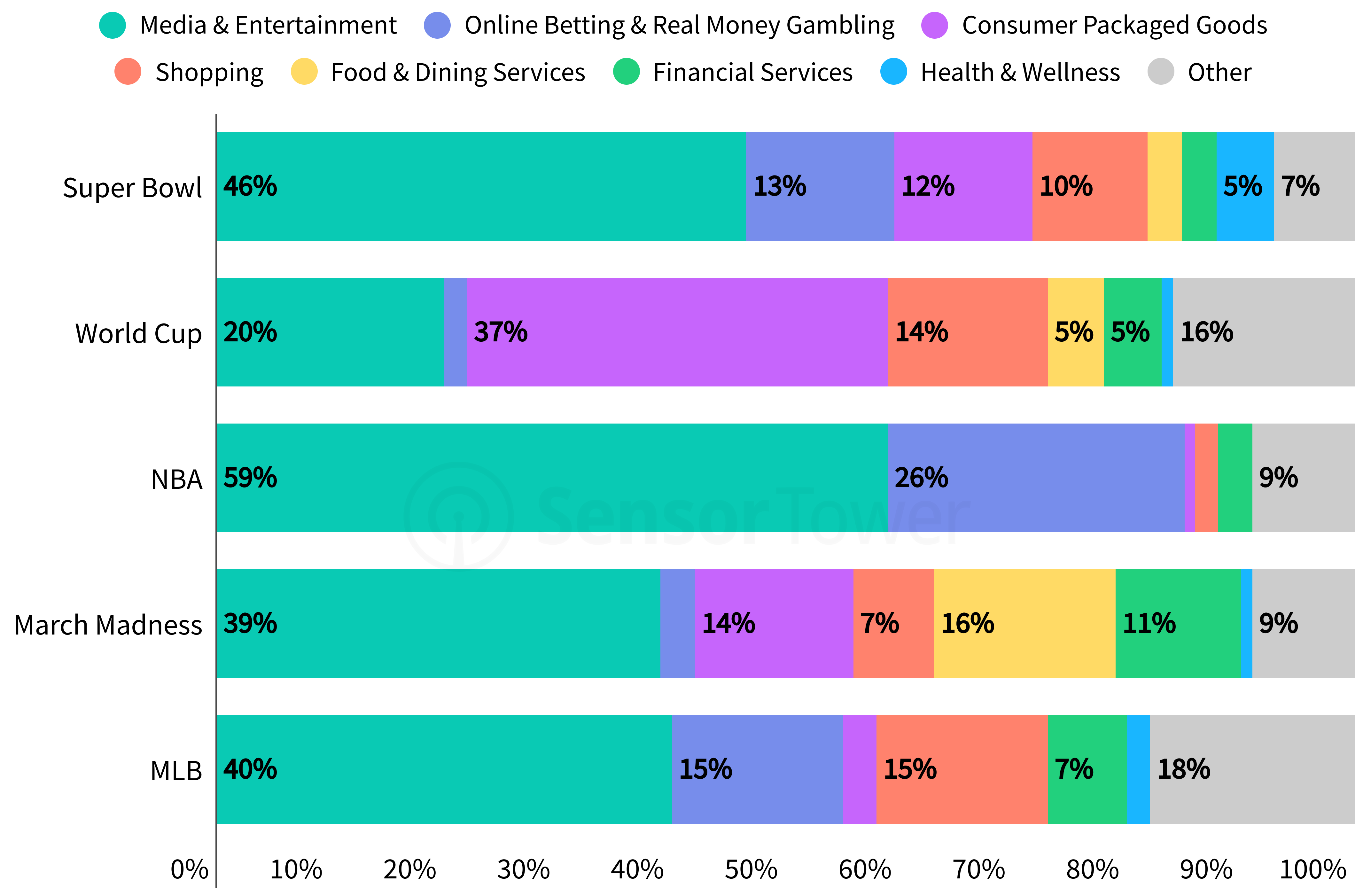
The NBA has the highest concentration of Online Sports Betting advertisers, with the category accounting for 25.6% of ad impressions, nearly twice the share seen for MLB and the Super Bowl. In contrast, March Madness has the most diversified advertiser mix, with meaningful contributions from Food & Dining (16%), Consumer Packaged Goods (14%), and Financial Services (11%).

CPG advertisers skew toward broad-reach sporting events. CPG represents 37.0% of World Cup-related ad impressions, compared with 13.9% for March Madness and 11.7% for the Super Bowl, while contributing little to the NBA (0.6%) and MLB (3.4%). This suggests global and broad-audience events attract a more diverse mix of consumer brands.

The analysis is from our Sports Report 2026:
Click here to download the full report covering the latest trends across the global sports ecosystem, covering mobile, web, digital advertising, and sports wagering.

Source: Sensor Tower

Top Advertising Category by Sporting Event in the United States
By share of ad impressions during the 90 days before each championship game or final



Note: Ad impressions estimates as of June 2026. Sporting event-related creatives were identified using keyword searches across ad creative text, including terms such as "NFL" and "Super Bowl" for the Super Bowl; "World Cup" and "FIFA" for the World Cup; "NBA" and "play-in tournament" for the NBA; "MLB" for MLB; and "March Madness" and "NCAA" for March Madness.

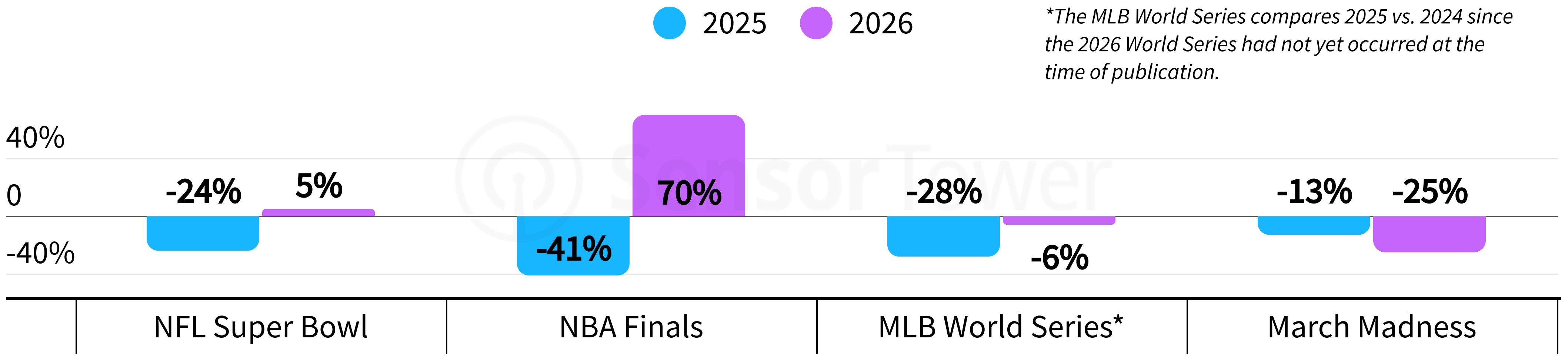
Sports-Themed Advertising Growth Varied by Advertiser Category

Sports-themed ad impressions recovered unevenly across major sporting events during the 2025–26 season. NBA-related ads rebounded sharply, growing 70% YoY after declining 41% the previous season, while Super Bowl-related ads returned to modest growth. In contrast, ad impressions around MLB and March Madness continued to decline.

Software emerged as one of the fastest-growing advertiser categories around the NBA and MLB, driven primarily by Google. Sports-themed ad impressions from software brands increased 21x around the NBA and 9x around MLB. Google leveraged these campaigns to showcase AI-powered experiences across Search, Lens, and Google Cloud, positioning major sporting events as a platform to demonstrate practical AI applications.

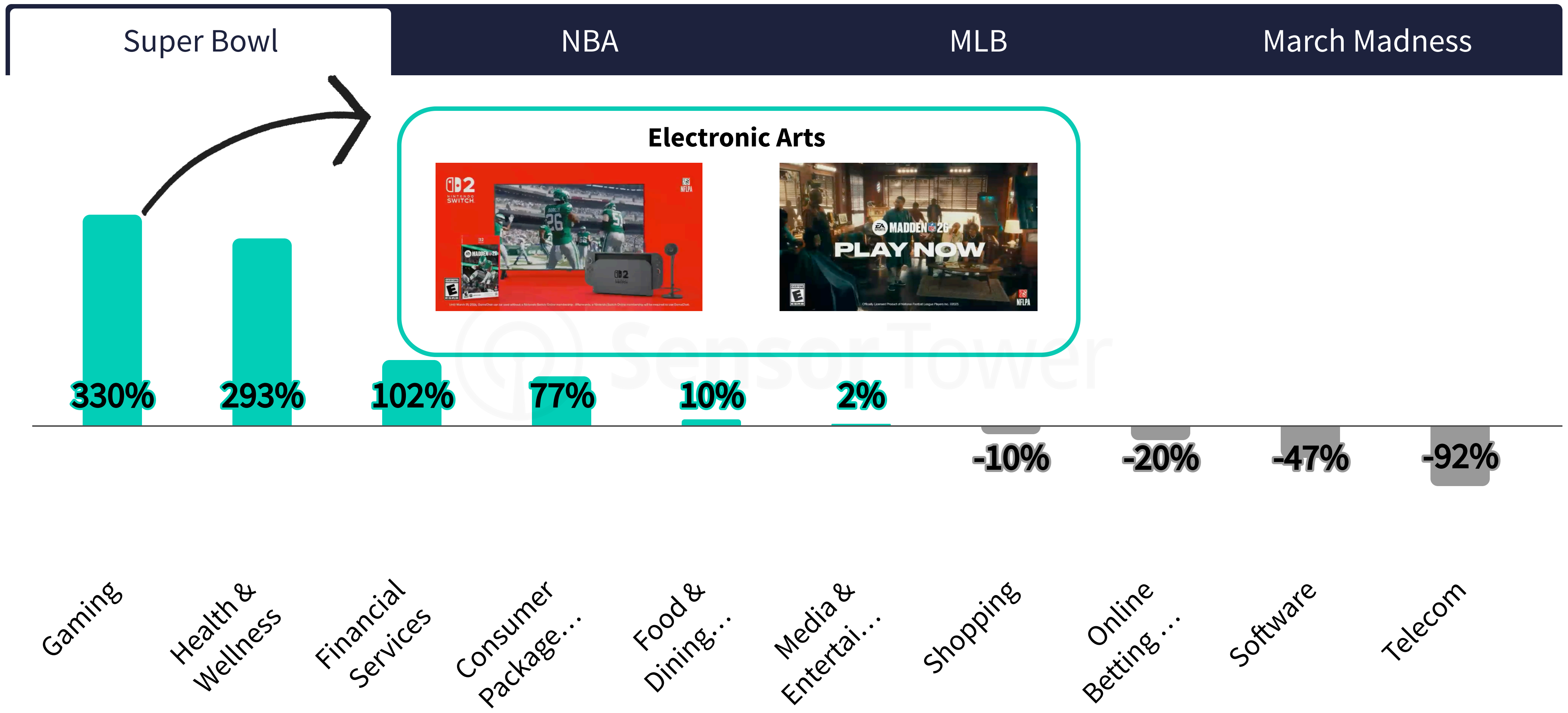
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad impressions estimates as of June 2026 in the United States. Includes select digital ad channels across social, display & video, and TV & streaming. See Appendix (page 56) for a list of ad channels included in each market.

YoY Growth in Sports Themed Ad Impressions
90 days leading up to each championship game or final



The MLB World Series compares 2025 vs. 2024 since the 2026 World Series had not yet occurred at the time of publication.

YoY Growth in Sports Themed Ad Impressions by Advertiser Category
90 days leading up to each championship game or final



Uber Eats Concentrates NFL Advertising Around Marquee Game Days

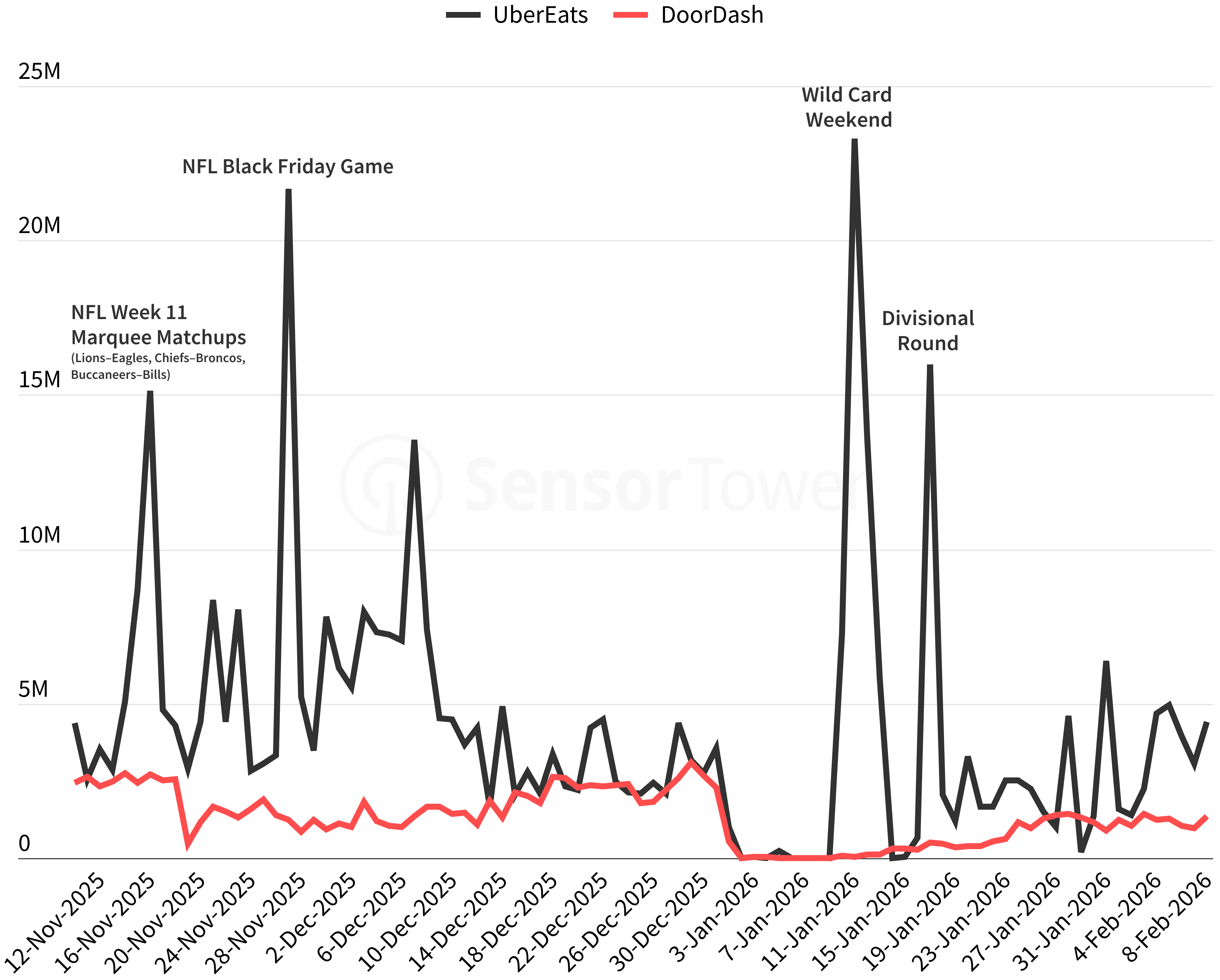
Uber Eats concentrated its NFL-themed advertising around marquee matchups and playoff weekends, with ad impressions peaking at 21 million during the NFL Black Friday Game and 23 million during Wild Card Weekend.

As an official NFL and Super Bowl sponsor, Uber Eats leveraged league branding and game-specific messaging throughout its campaigns. By contrast, DoorDash focused on broader "game day" occasions, positioning food and alcohol delivery as an essential part of the football viewing experience.

The analysis is from our Sports Report 2026:
Click here to download the full report covering the latest trends across the global sports ecosystem, covering mobile, web, digital advertising, and sports wagering.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad impressions estimate as of June 2026. NFL- and game day-themed creatives were identified using keyword searches across creative text, including terms such as "NFL," "Super Bowl,"and "game day."

Uber Eats vs. DoorDash: NFL / Game Day-Themed Ad Impression Trend
United States, 90 Days Leading Up to Super Bowl LIX

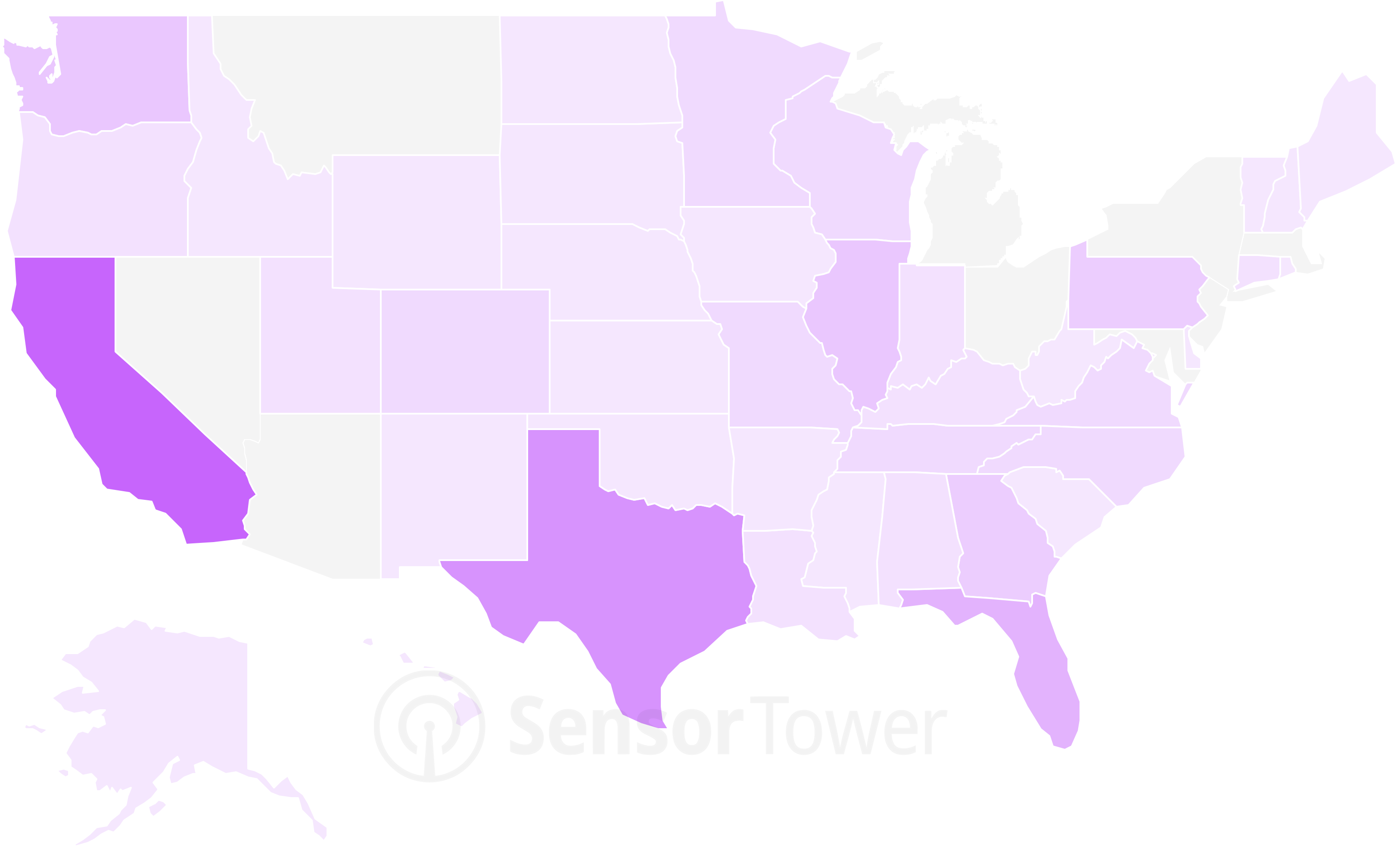


Sportsbooks and Prediction Markets Targeted Different Geographic Opportunities

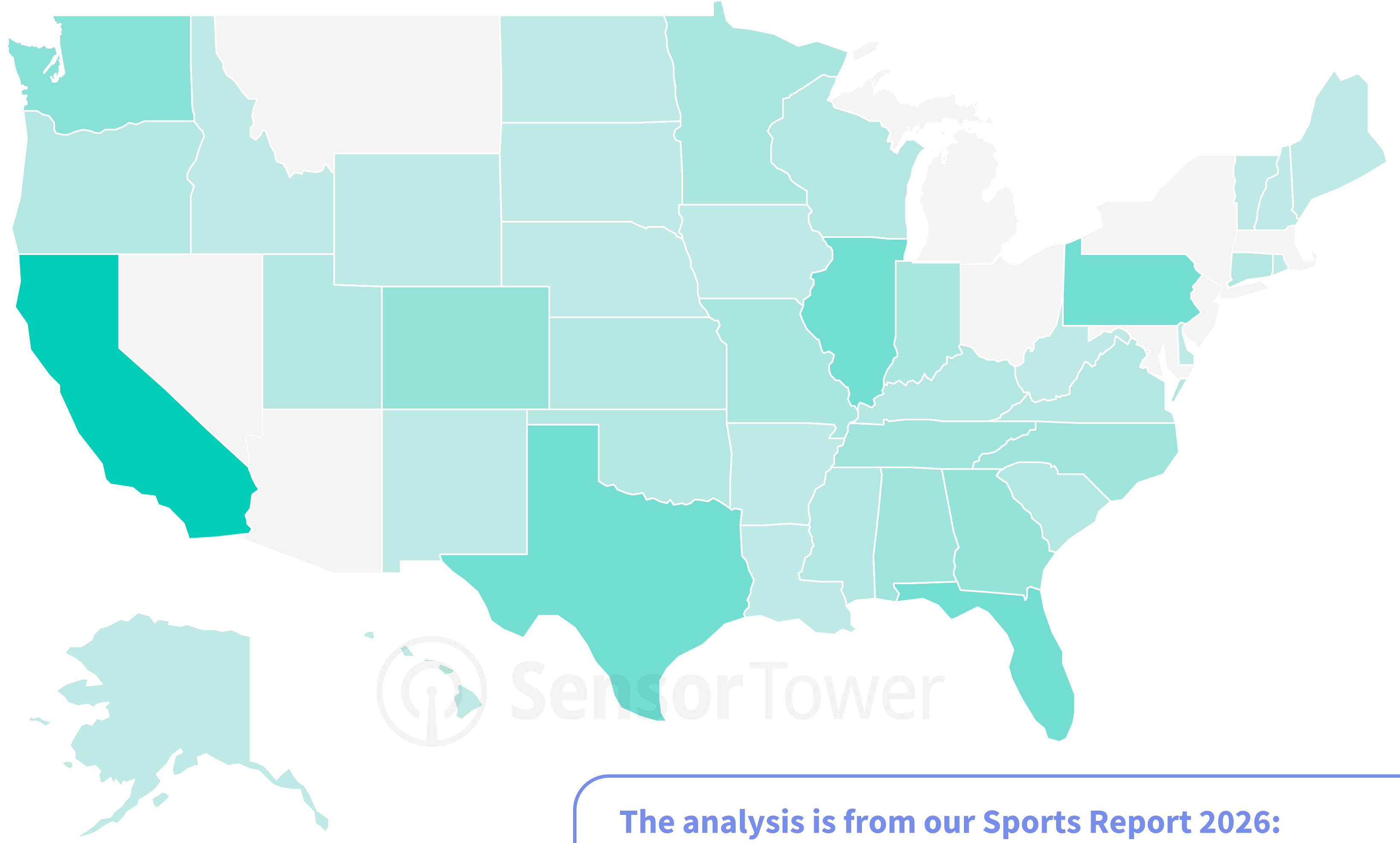
Regulation continued to shape advertising strategies across sports wagering categories. While traditional sportsbooks focused investment in regulated betting states, prediction markets and DFS platforms advertised more broadly across the United States, particularly in large markets such as California and Texas.

Kalshi

Share of Ad Impressions by State



Share of Average Monthly Active Users by State



The analysis is from our Sports Report 2026:
Click here to download the full report covering the latest trends across the global sports ecosystem, covering mobile, web, digital advertising, and sports wagering.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad impressions and active user estimates as of H1 2026. Gray indicates states where the selected brand is unavailable or not legally permitted to operate.

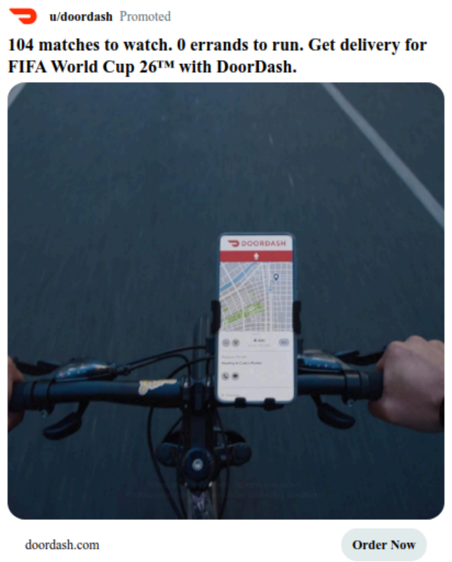
Sponsors Activate World Cup Creatives

Brands leverage their FIFA World Cup partnerships by embedding products directly into essential matchday rituals. From celebratory beverages and zero-friction delivery to backyard hosting and immersive travel, sponsors connect star athlete power with high-utility consumer touchpoints across all 104 matches.

Example Creative on Instagram

Coca-Cola anchors its primary tournament campaign on core Coke, leveraging emotional matchday messaging ("hype, excitement, and goooals") to position the beverage as the essential celebration staple across all tiers of football fandom.

Example Creative on Reddit



DoorDash positions its on-demand platform as an essential matchday assist, framing delivery as the solution to eliminate distraction during the packed 104-match schedule. By removing real-world errands, the campaign drives order frequency by encouraging fans to stay glued to the screen.

Example Creative on Facebook

The Home Depot targets host-economy consumers by framing backyard DIY projects as an essential phase of tournament preparation. By linking home improvement tools directly to watch-party culture, the brand engages residential hosts looking to upgrade outdoor viewing spaces prior to matchday.

Example Creative on YouTube

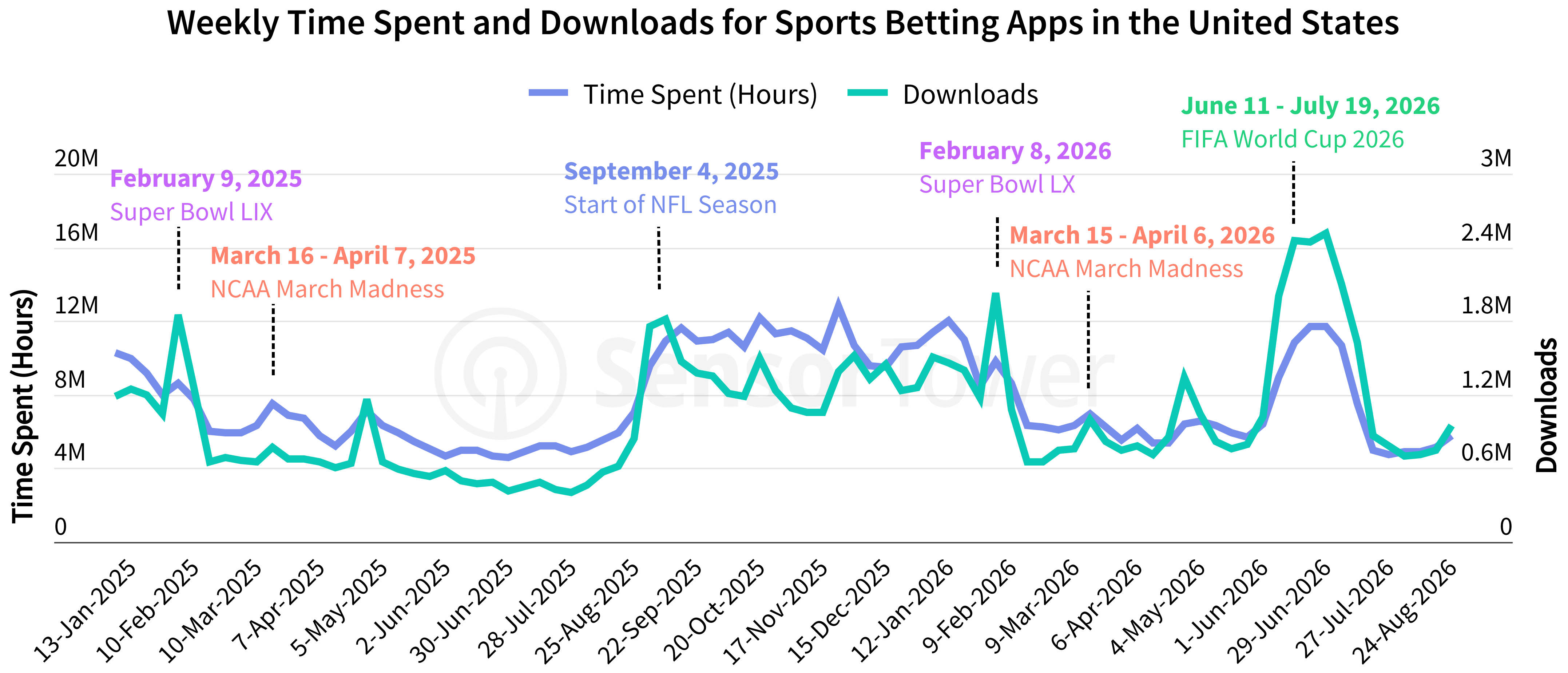
Airbnb positions its platform beyond standard lodging by spotlighting authentic, host-led soccer experiences in host cities, such as playing pickup games with former legends or designing custom jerseys, to turn tournament travel into a unique cultural immersion.

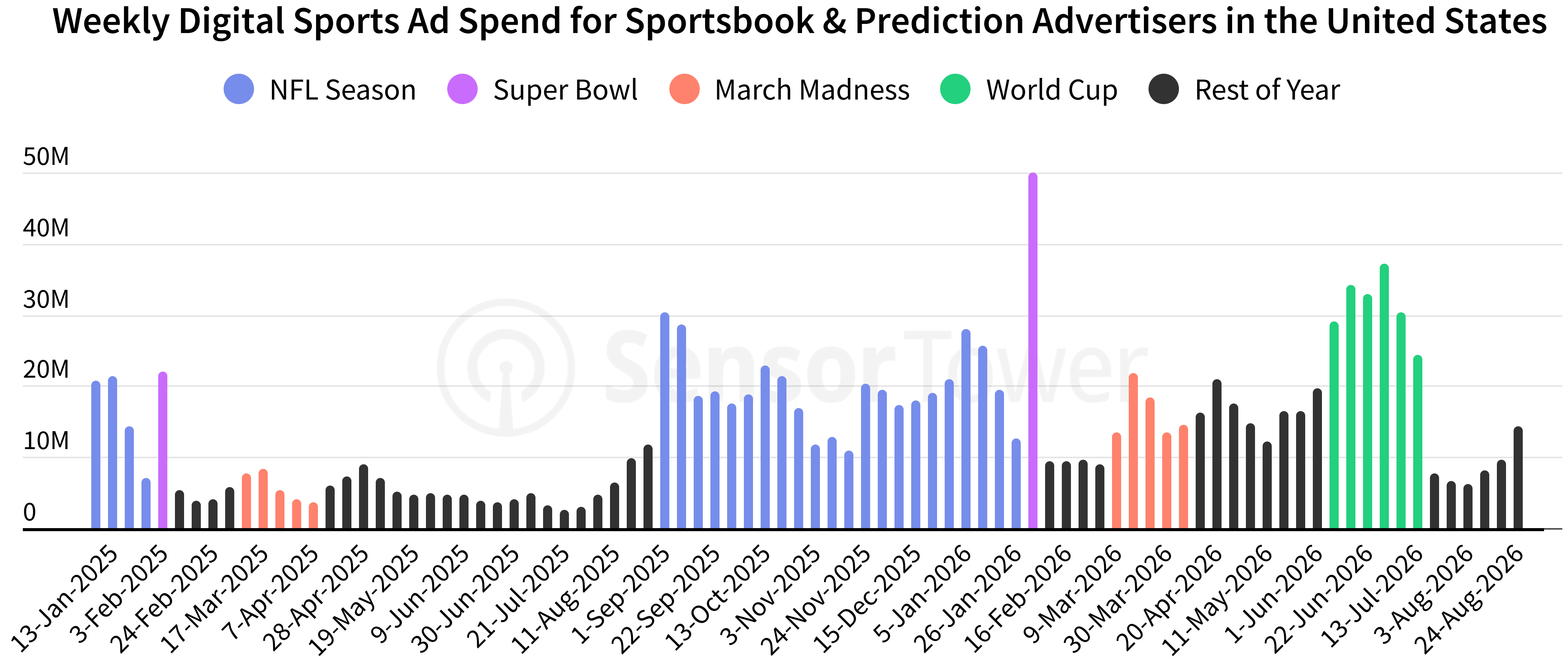
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Example top digital ad creatives in the United States.

Prediction Markets Surge Ad Spend for World Cup Acquisition

The NFL season dominates US sports betting attention, maintaining a high engagement baseline of 8 million to 12 million weekly in-app hours. Sportsbooks ramp up ad spend to $30 million at Kickoff week before usage stabilizes, ultimately peaking near $50 million during Super Bowl LX week.

The 2026 FIFA World Cup generated a record surge in user acquisition and new downloads. Notably, prediction markets Kalshi and Polymarket surged ad spend by 135% and 292% MoM in June 2026, driving massive download spikes of 300% and 269% MoM respectively to capture new users outside the traditional NFL calendar.



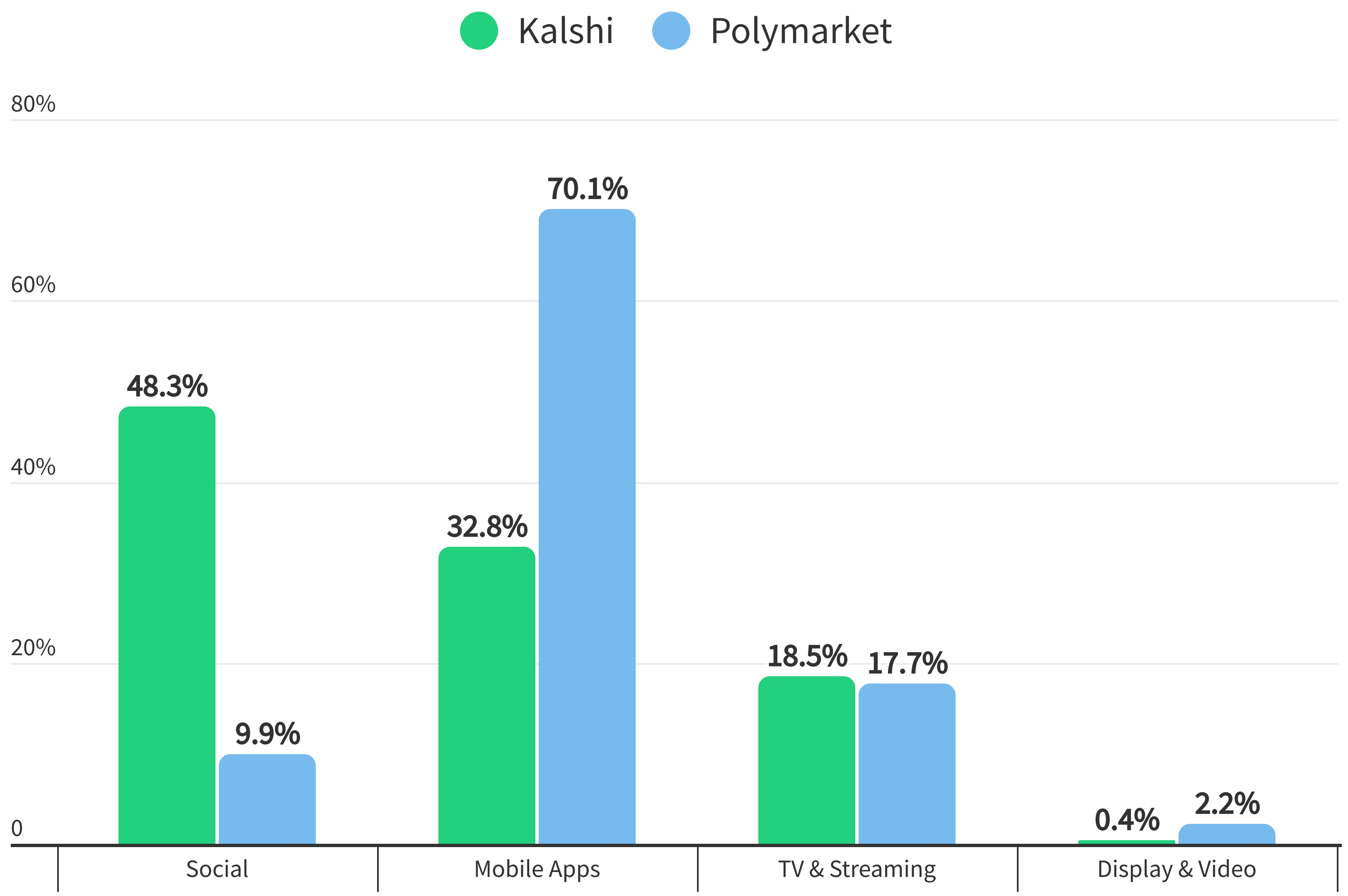


Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Note: Time spent and downloads for Sports Betting apps in the United States across iOS and Google Play. Sports Betting apps are classified using Sensor Tower's Game IQ taxonomy as of September 2026, inclusive of prediction market platforms such as Kalshi and Polymarket. Digital ad spend includes a selection of advertising channels. Ad spend estimates as of September 2026.

Kalshi Builds Brand Trust While Polymarket Drives Direct Conversion

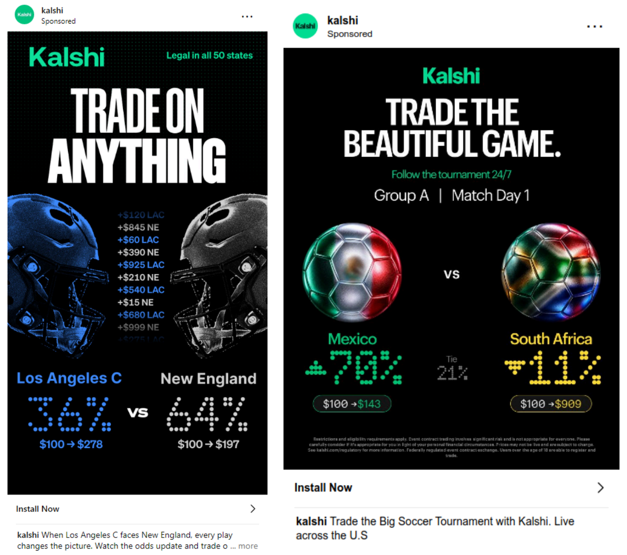
Kalshi and Polymarket deploy divergent ad strategies to capture user acquisition. Polymarket drives mobile-first performance, allocating 70% of its ad spend to Mobile Apps for immediate direct conversion. In contrast, Kalshi diversifies across Social (48%), Mobile (33%), and TV & Streaming (18%) to establish brand trust.

Ad Spend Distribution by Channel (%)



Kalshi

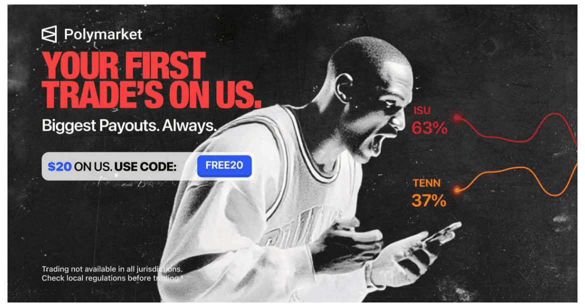
Example Creative on Instagram



Kalshi emphasizes regulatory peace of mind by leveraging trust hooks like "first federally regulated exchange" and "legally trade in all 50 states." Instead of cash bonuses, they use emotional storytelling around iconic sporting events like the FIFA World Cup, NFL season, and NBA to frame prediction markets as a legitimate, mainstream financial product.

Polymarket

Example Creative on Mobile Apps

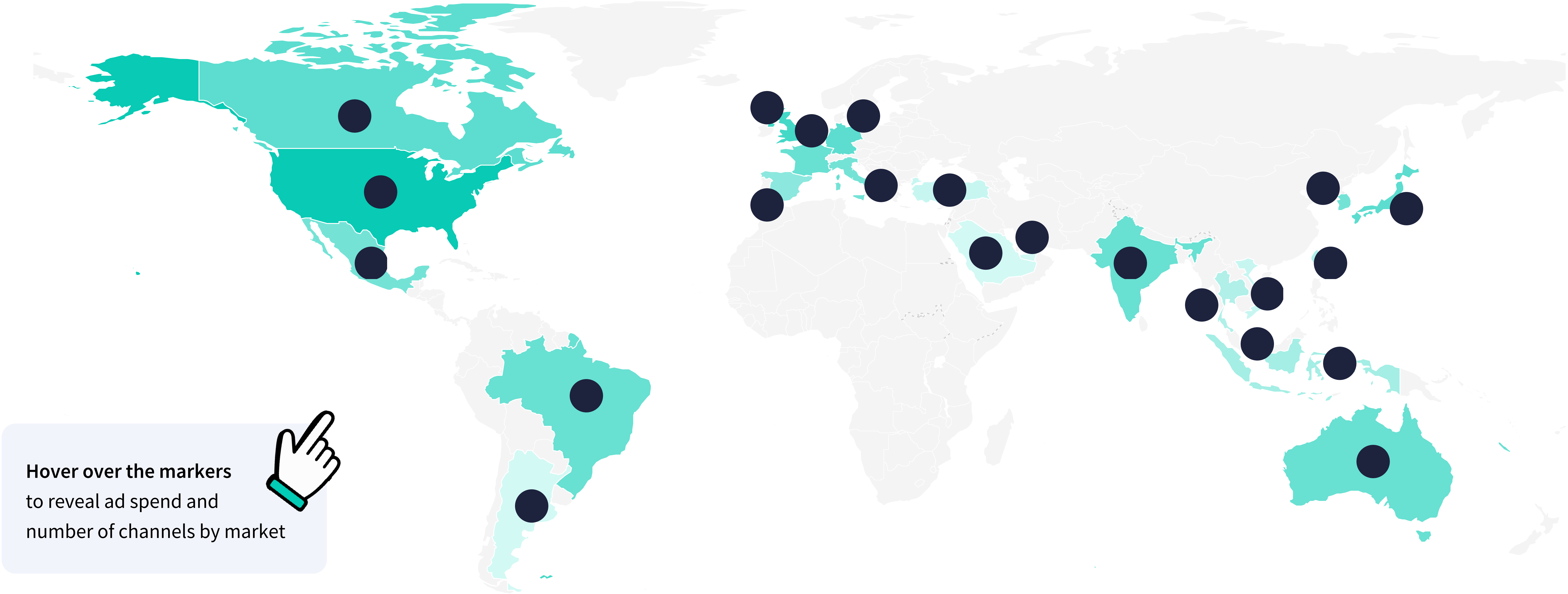


Polymarket mirrors a classic sports betting user acquisition engine. They lead with aggressive promotional offers like "GET $50 WITH CODE FREE50," highlight payout multipliers like "60X your money," and promote "NO HOUSE" low fees to drive immediate bottom-funnel conversions.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Example top digital ad creatives in the United States.

Digital Advertising
Overview

Global Overview | State of Digital Advertising 2026



Note: Included ad channels vary by market. Ad spend estimates for August 1, 2025 through July 31, 2026.

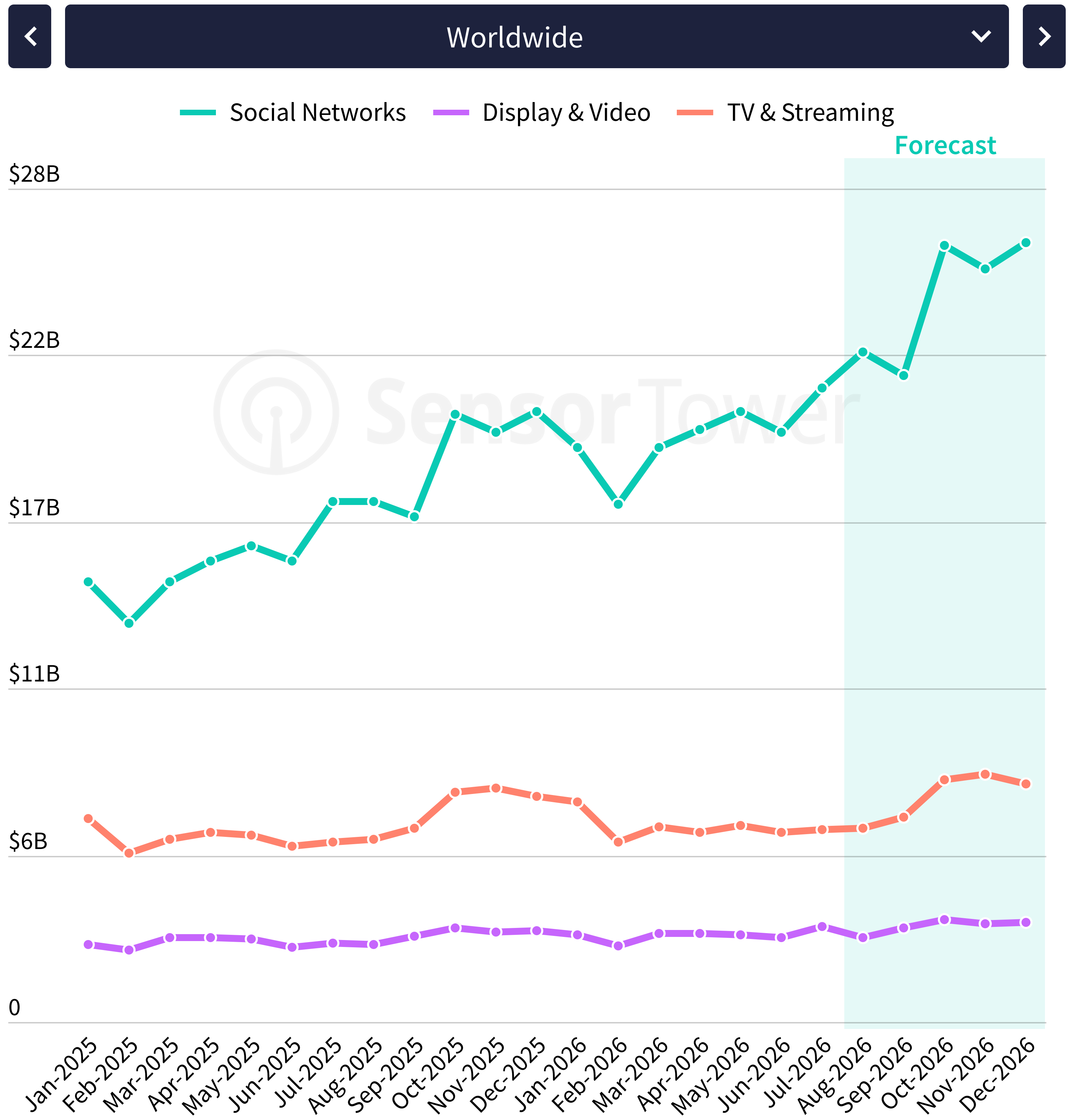
Monthly Ad Spend on Social Channels Is Projected to Surpass $25 Billion in Q4 2026

Social channels such as Facebook, TikTok, and Reddit accounted for the majority of global digital ad spend and saw the fastest growth. Advertisers also tend to increase spending during the Q4 holiday season, pushing projected monthly ad spend across social channels above $25 billion in Q4 2026.

In the United States, where Linear TV is included in this analysis, TV & Streaming ranks second behind Social Networks in digital ad spend. However, the gap has widened as cord-cutters shift viewing time from traditional TV to leading social apps and YouTube.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.

Monthly Digital Ad Spend by Ad Channels



Included Ad Channels

Only select ad channels are available in each market

Ad Channel	Included?
Social Networks	
Facebook	✓
Instagram	✓
LINE	✓
LinkedIn	✓
NAVER	✓
Pinterest	✓
Reddit	✓
Snapchat	✓
TikTok	✓
X	✓
Search	
ChatGPT	○
Display & Video	
Desktop Display	✓
Desktop Video	✓
Mobile Apps	✓
Mobile Display	✓
Mobile Video	✓
TV & Streaming	
Linear TV	✓
OTT	✓
YouTube	✓

Continued Growth of Social Ad Spend Fuels the Digital Advertising Market Into 2026

Global ad spend across digital channels is on track to approach $380 billion in 2026, up 20% year-over-year (YoY), largely driven by rapid growth in Social Networks. Social channels are projected to generate nearly $260 billion in ad spend, accounting for 68% of the total and growing 28% YoY.

TV & Streaming and Display & Video are also contributing to overall growth. OTT and YouTube saw strong growth (+17% and +10% YoY, respectively), helping offset a decline in Linear TV ad spend, while mobile app ad spend climbed 21% YoY.

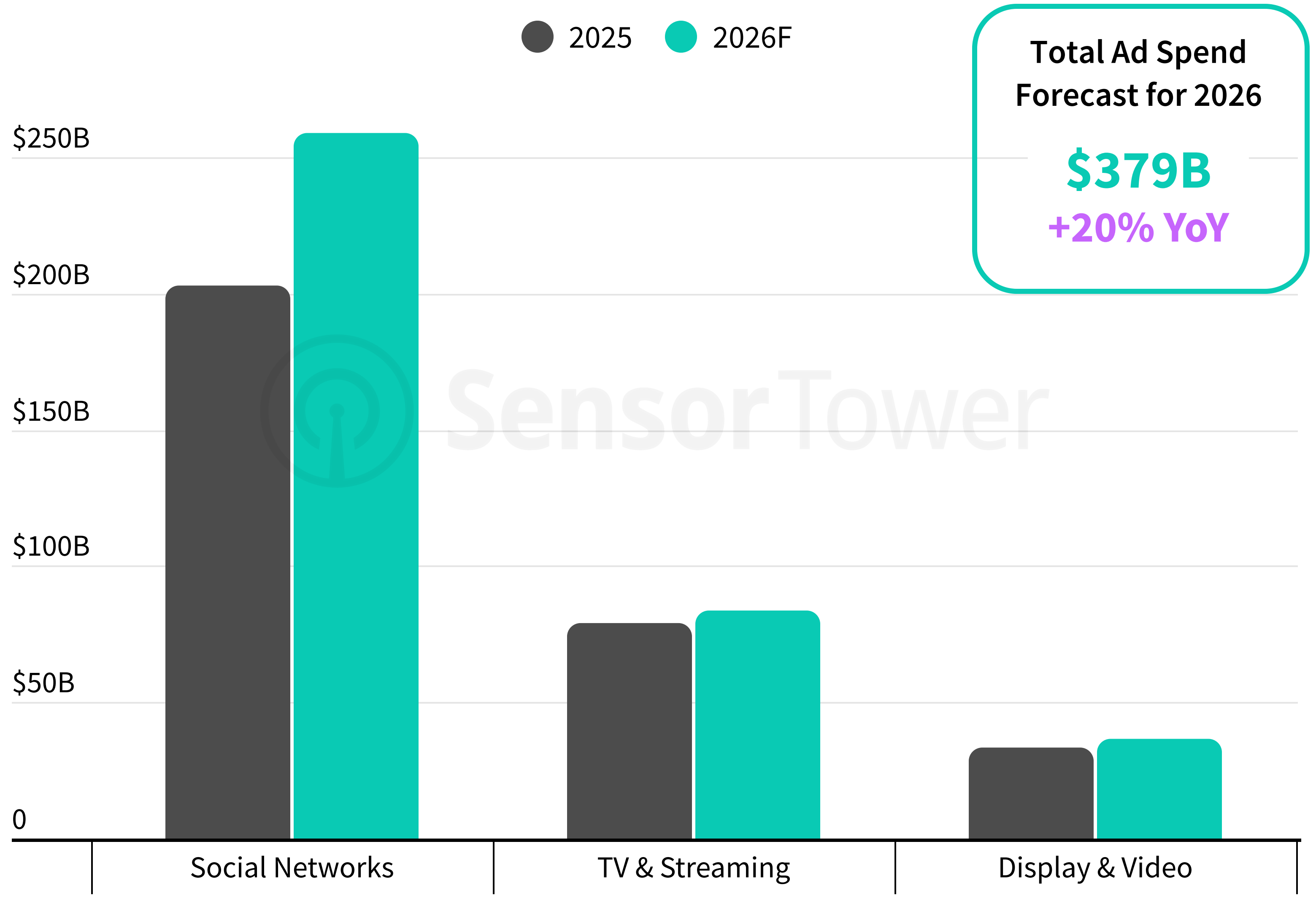
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.

Digital Ad Spend
by Ad Channels

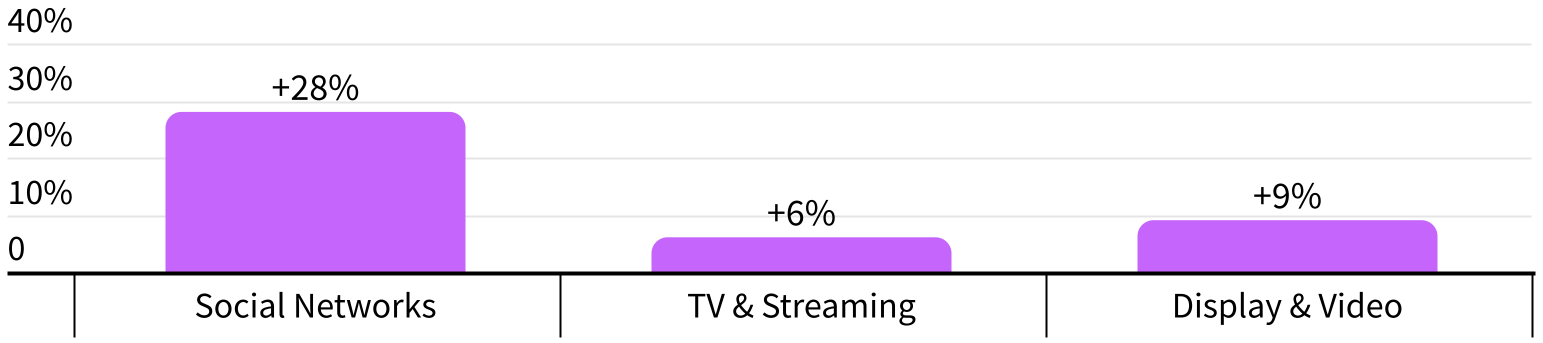
Worldwide

Total Ad Spend Forecast for 2026

$379B
+20% YoY



Year-over-Year Digital Ad Spend Growth Projection for 2026



Included Ad Channels

Only select ad channels are available in each market

Ad Channel	Included?
Social Networks	
Facebook	✓
Instagram	✓
LINE	✓
LinkedIn	✓
NAVER	✓
Pinterest	✓
Reddit	✓
Snapchat	✓
TikTok	✓
X	✓
Search	
ChatGPT	
Display & Video	
Desktop Display	✓
Desktop Video	✓
Mobile Apps	✓
Mobile Display	✓
Mobile Video	✓
TV & Streaming	
Linear TV	✓
OTT	✓
YouTube	✓

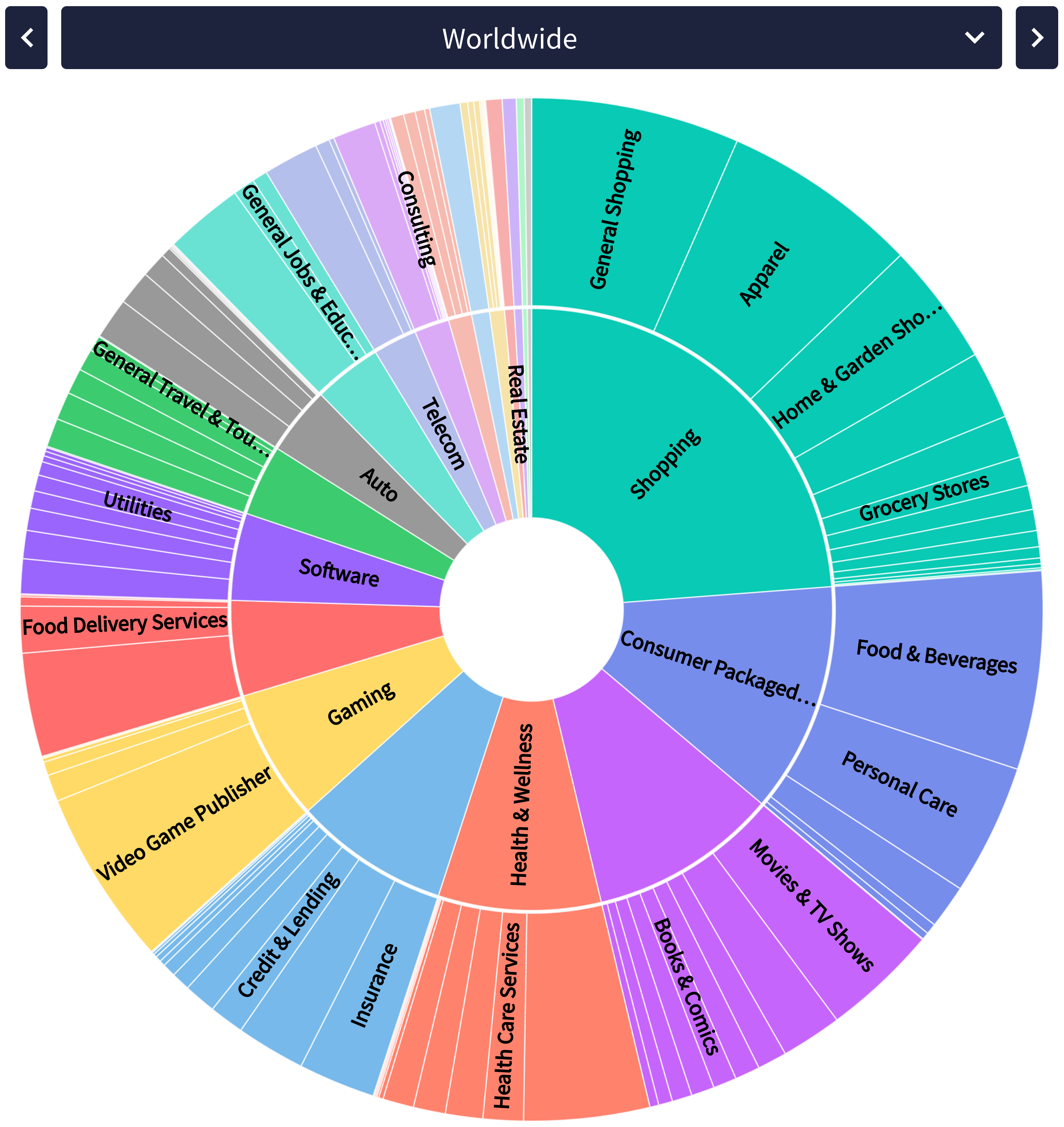
Shopping Advertising Accounts for Nearly a Quarter of Every Dollar in Digital Ad Spend

Shopping was the top category for ad spend between August 2025 and July 2026, led by General Shopping (6.6% of total spend), Apparel (6.2%), and Home & Garden Shopping (3.9%). Top shopping advertisers included Amazon, SHEIN, Walmart, and Temu.

Although Generative AI advertising has received a lot of attention, partiuculary during major sporting events like the Super Bowl and the FIFA World Cup, the subcategory still only contributes about 1% of the total ad spend.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. General spend includes creatives that aren't associated with a particular subcategory, creatives that feature products from several subcategories, or corporate ads.

Share of Digital Ad Spend by Category
12 Months Between August 2025 - July 2026



Included Ad Channels

Only select ad channels are available in each market

Ad Channel	Included?
Social Networks	
Facebook	✓
Instagram	✓
LINE	✓
LinkedIn	✓
NAVER	✓
Pinterest	✓
Reddit	✓
Snapchat	✓
TikTok	✓
X	✓
Search	
ChatGPT	○
Display & Video	
Desktop Display	✓
Desktop Video	✓
Mobile Apps	✓
Mobile Display	✓
Mobile Video	✓
TV & Streaming	
Linear TV	✓
OTT	✓
YouTube	✓

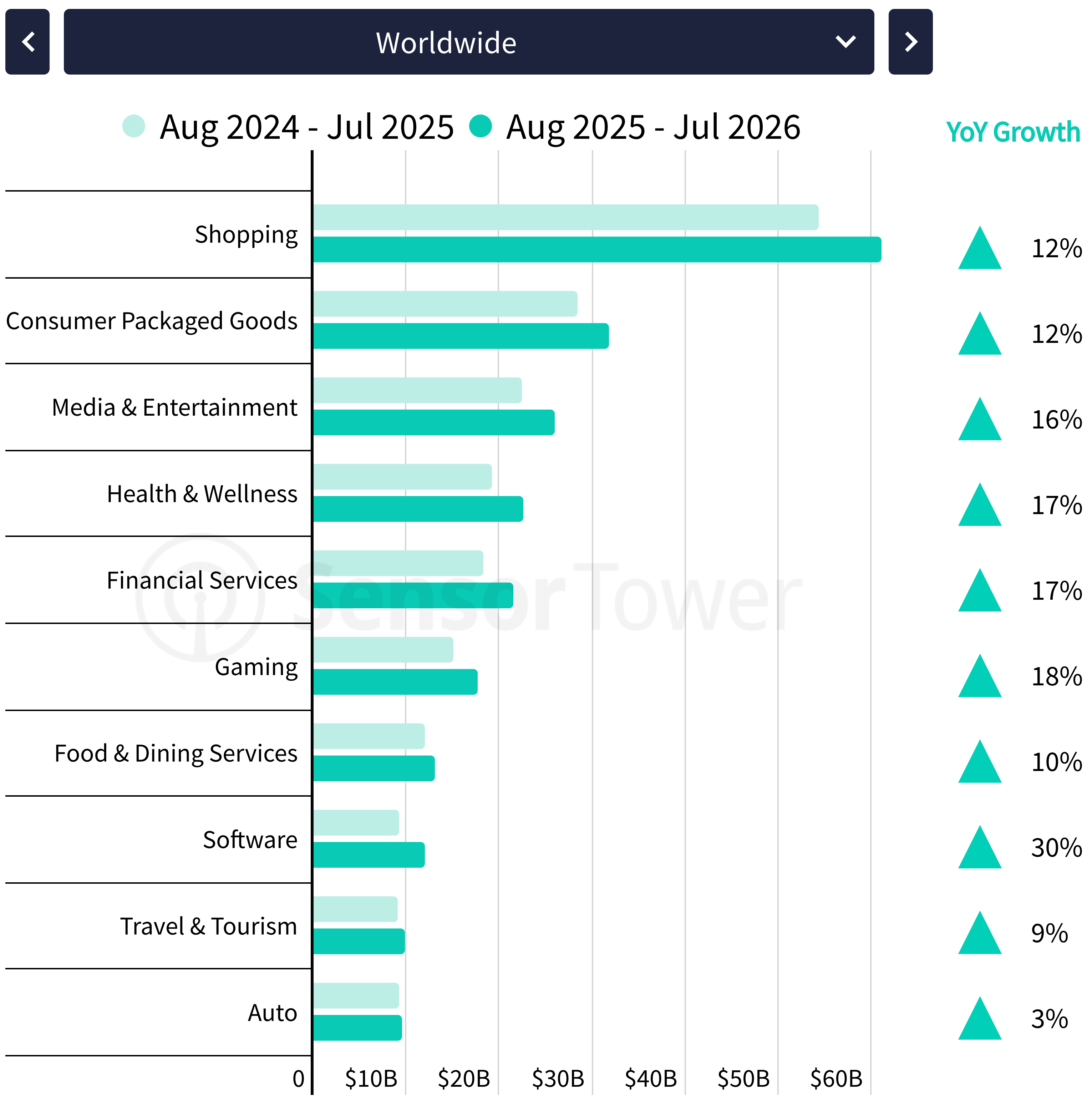
The AI Boom Boosts Software Advertising

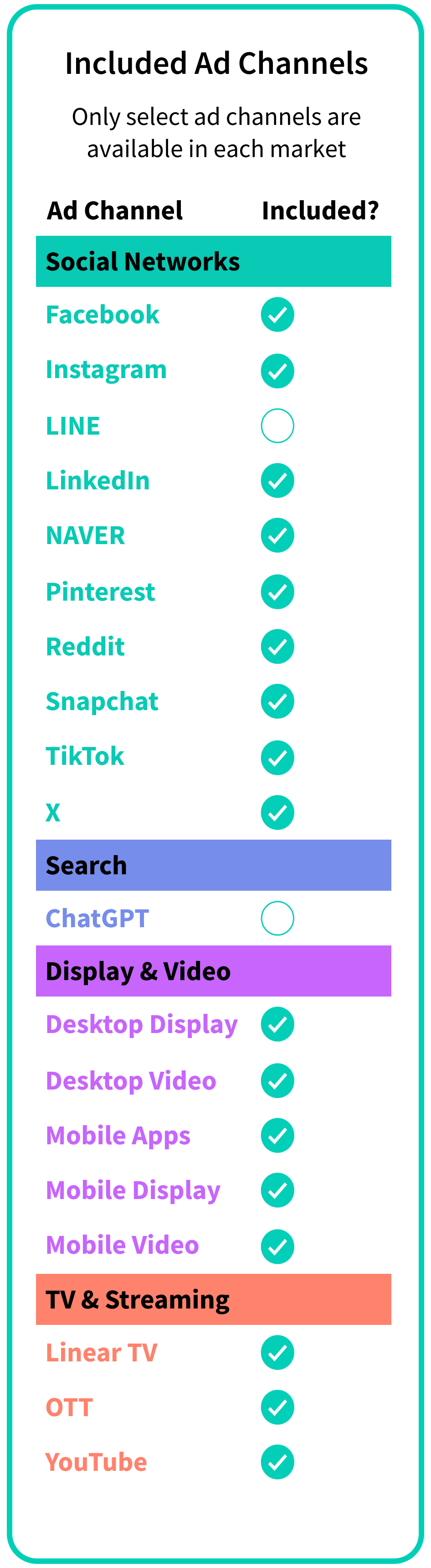
Double-digit YoY growth was common among the top advertising categories, with each of the top eight categories, including Shopping, Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG), and Media & Entertainment, seeing strong growth. Software led the way with 30% YoY growth, boosted by a $2 billion increase in Generative AI advertising (+240% YoY).

Gaming also saw strong growth as new publishers invested significant ad spend behind both new and established titles, including Gossip Harbor, Kingshot, Royal Kingdom, and Vita Mahjong.

Top Categories by Digital Ad Spend

August 2025 - July 2026





Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.

Procter & Gamble Was the Top Global Advertiser, While Other Brands Dominated Regionally

Procter & Gamble was the largest digital advertiser globally between August 2025 and July 2026, taking the top spot from Amazon, which led the prior year. However, among the markets included in the analysis, P&G was the top advertiser only in the United States and Canada.

The leading advertiser varies significantly by region, highlighting how major brands concentrate their advertising efforts in different markets. Amazon led by ad spend across Western Europe, while Mercado Libre led in Latin America and Sea Limited led in Southeast Asia. SHEIN has increasingly focused on the Middle East, ranking as the top advertiser by spend in both Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.

Top Advertisers by Digital Ad Spend
August 2025 - July 2026

Worldwide

Rank	Overall	Shopping	Consumer Packaged Goods	Media & Entertainment	Health & Wellness	Financial Services	Gaming	Food & Dining Services
1	Procter & Gamble	Amazon.com	Procter & Gamble	The Walt Disney Company	AbbVie	Progressive Casualty Insurance	Tencent	Yum! Bra
2	Amazon.com	Shein Group	L'Oreal	Comcast	Eli Lilly	Capital One Financial Corporation	Century Games	McDona
3	The Walt Disney Company	Walmart, Inc.	The Coca-Cola Company	Amazon.com	Johnson & Johnson	Liberty Mutual	Dream Games	Restaura Brands Internat (RBI)
4	Comcast	Temu (Whaleco)	Unilever	ByteDance	Bayer HealthCare	Geico	Scopely	Domino Pizza
5	Google	Nestle	PepsiCo	Warner Bros. Discovery	Procter & Gamble	JPMorgan Chase	Take-Two Interactive Software	DoorDas Inc.
6	Nestle	Samsung	Nestle	Paramount Skydance Corporation	Haleon	Allstate	Microsoft	Uber Technol
7	L'Oreal	Target	Anheuser-Busch InBev	Meta Platforms (formerly Facebook)	Sanofi Group	American Express	Flutter Entertainment	Inspire Brands
8	Adobe Systems	eBay Inc.	The Hershey Company	Netflix	Novartis	TurboTax	Kalshi	Starbuc
9	Walmart, Inc.	Home Depot	Mondelez International	Spotify	Hims & Hers Health	State Farm	MICROFUN	Instacar
						The United Services		

Included Ad Channels

Only select ad channels are available in each market

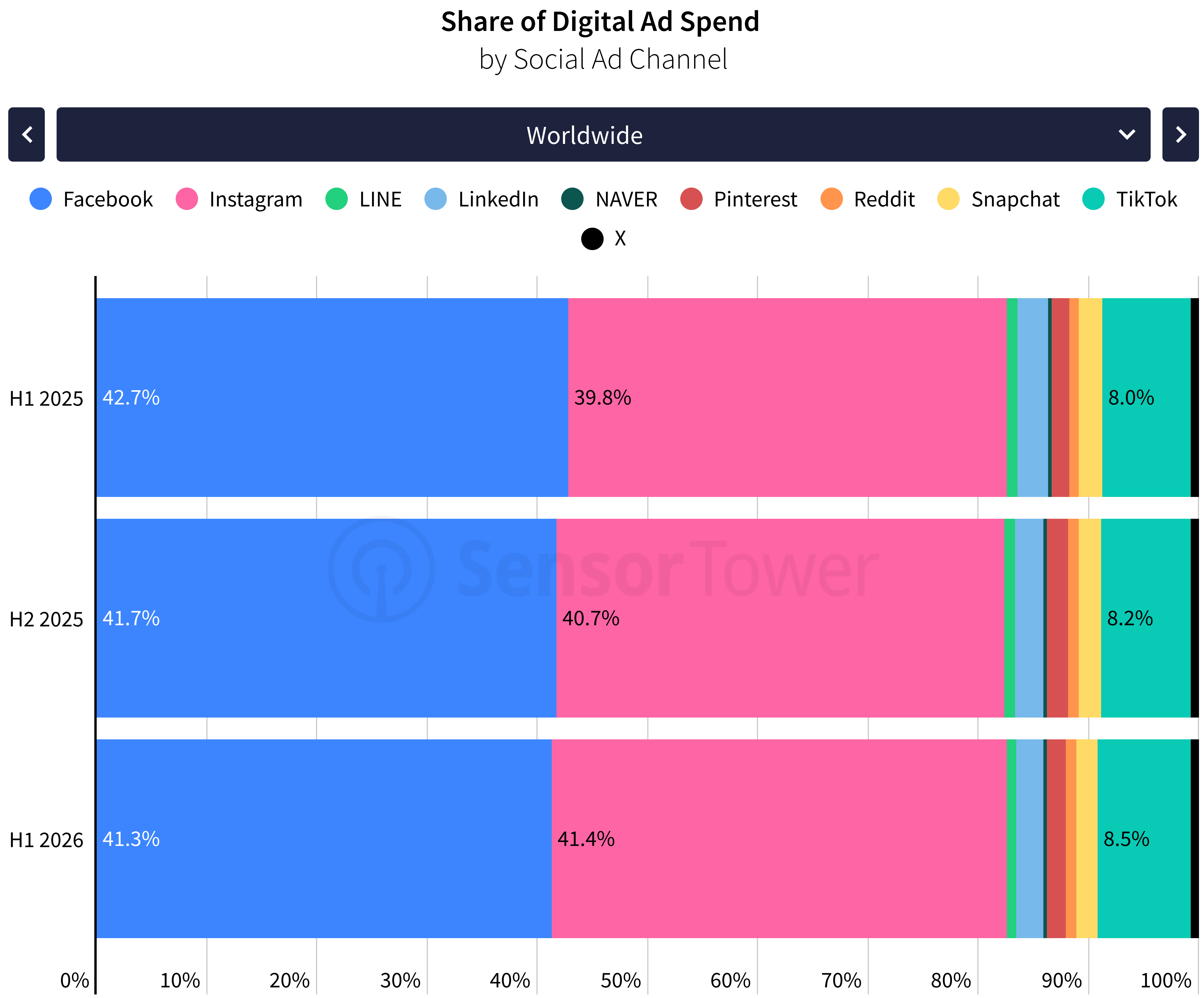
Ad Channel	Included?
Social Networks	
Facebook	✓
Instagram	✓
LINE	✓
LinkedIn	✓
NAVER	✓
Pinterest	✓
Reddit	✓
Snapchat	✓
TikTok	✓
X	✓
Search	
ChatGPT	○
Display & Video	
Desktop Display	✓
Desktop Video	✓
Mobile Apps	✓
Mobile Display	✓
Mobile Video	✓
TV & Streaming	
Linear TV	✓
OTT	✓
YouTube	✓

Social Advertising
Trends

Meta's Social Networks Account for 83% of Social Ad Spend, With a Shift Toward Instagram

Meta remains the dominant social advertising platform, accounting for 83% of social ad spend, though the mix is shifting toward Instagram. In H1 2026, Instagram surpassed Facebook to become the leading social ad channel for the first time.

TikTok and Reddit also gained share as advertisers sought to reach younger audiences. TikTok in particular expanded its share outside the United States, including in major markets such as Japan and the United Kingdom.



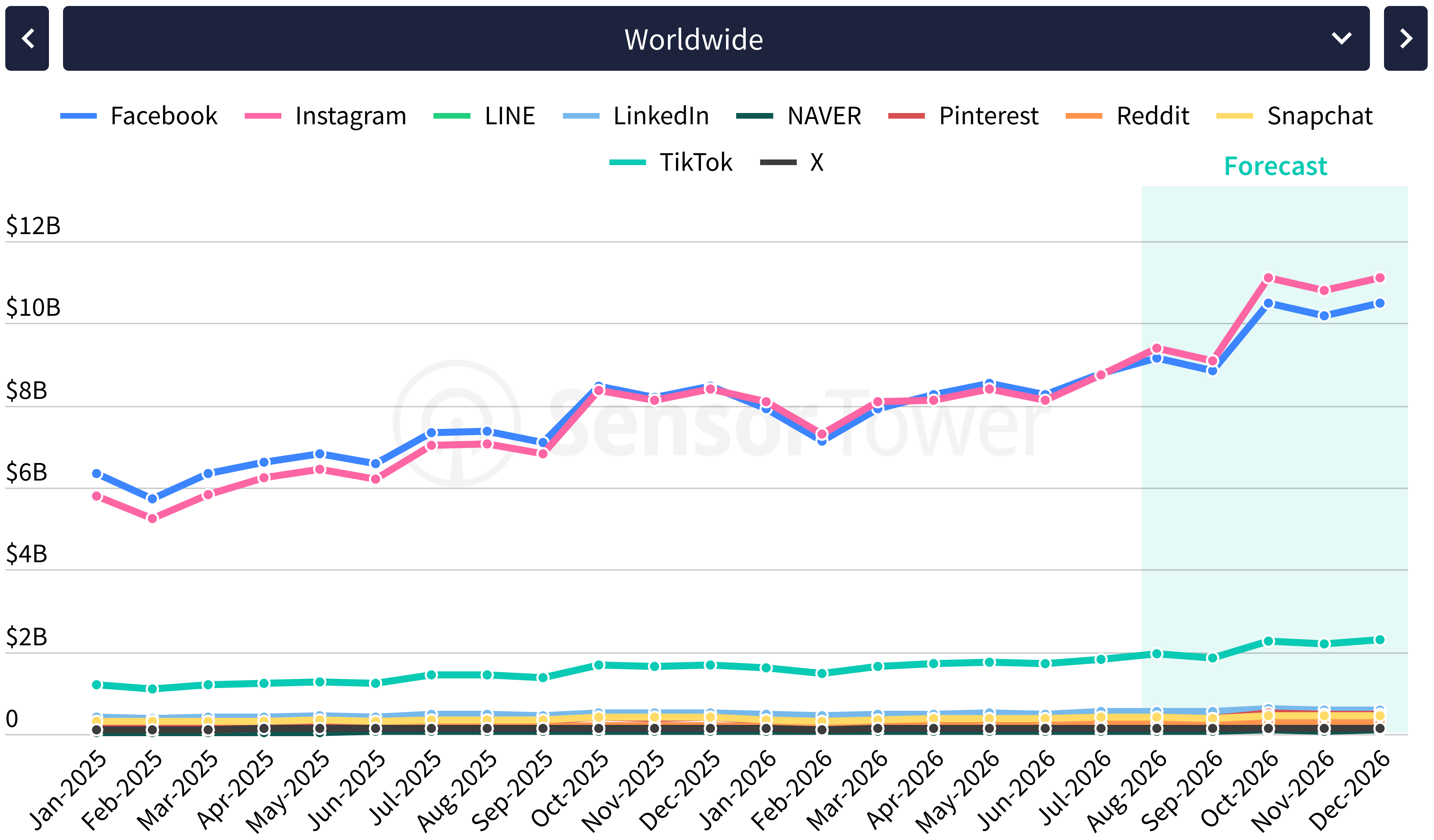
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.

Instagram Surpassed Facebook as the Top Social Ad Channel

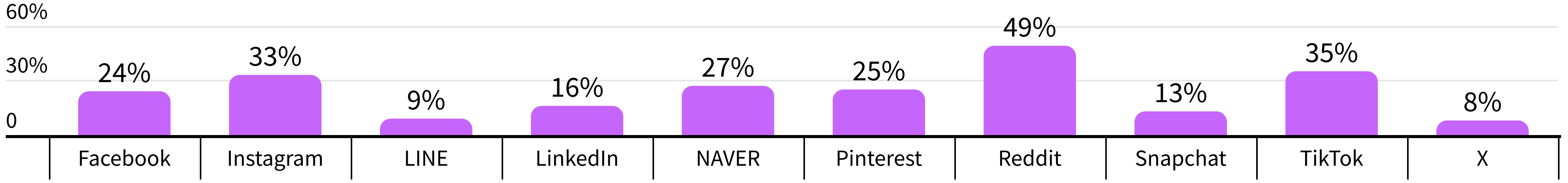
Instagram has performed particularly well during recent holiday seasons, suggesting it could maintain its lead over Facebook in Q4 2026.

Reddit, while still a relatively small but rapidly growing channel, is forecast to be the fastest-growing social platform in 2026. Reddit's web visits also increased 10% from August 2025 through July 2026 compared with the prior year. TikTok ranked second, with ad spend expected to grow 35% YoY in 2026, while its True Audience—the unique users across app and web—increased 8% YoY over the same period.

Monthly Digital Ad Spend by Social Ad Channel



Year-over-Year Digital Ad Spend Growth, 2026 Forecast vs. 2025



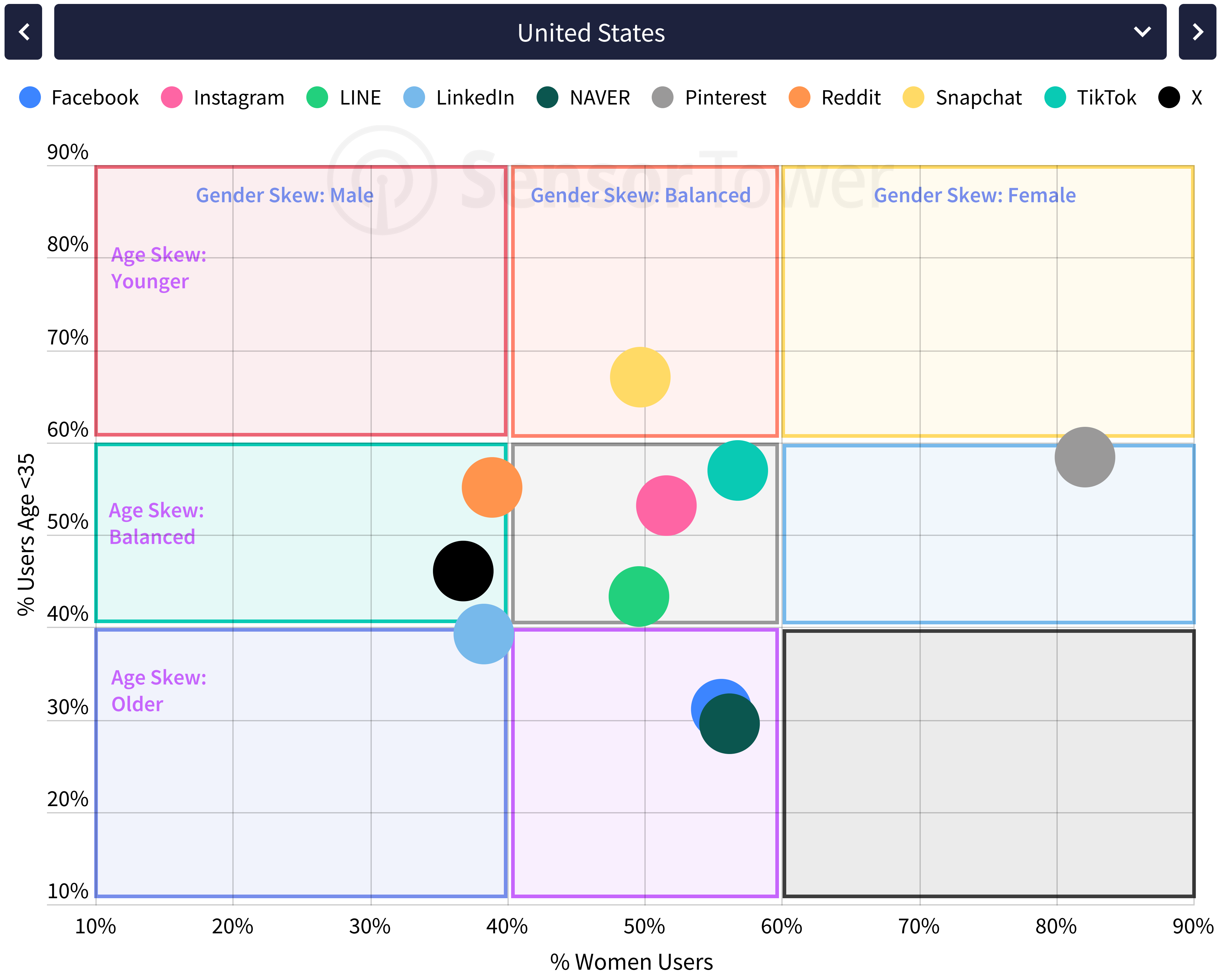
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.

Find Your Audience: Discover Which Demographic Groups Use Top Social Networks

<u>Sensor Tower Audience Insights</u> breaks down how the user bases of different social apps varies. For example, Pinterest users are more likely to be young women, while older men are more likely to use X and LinkedIn. This can make these channels useful for reaching these specific demographic groups and can help you adjust your ad campaigns to speak to these audiences.

Several of the most successful ad platforms are broadly appealing. Instagram and TikTok fall in the middle of both gender and age breakdowns. Advertisers can select audience targeting within these social platforms if they are attempting to reach a certain demographic group.

Demographics for Social Mobile App Users



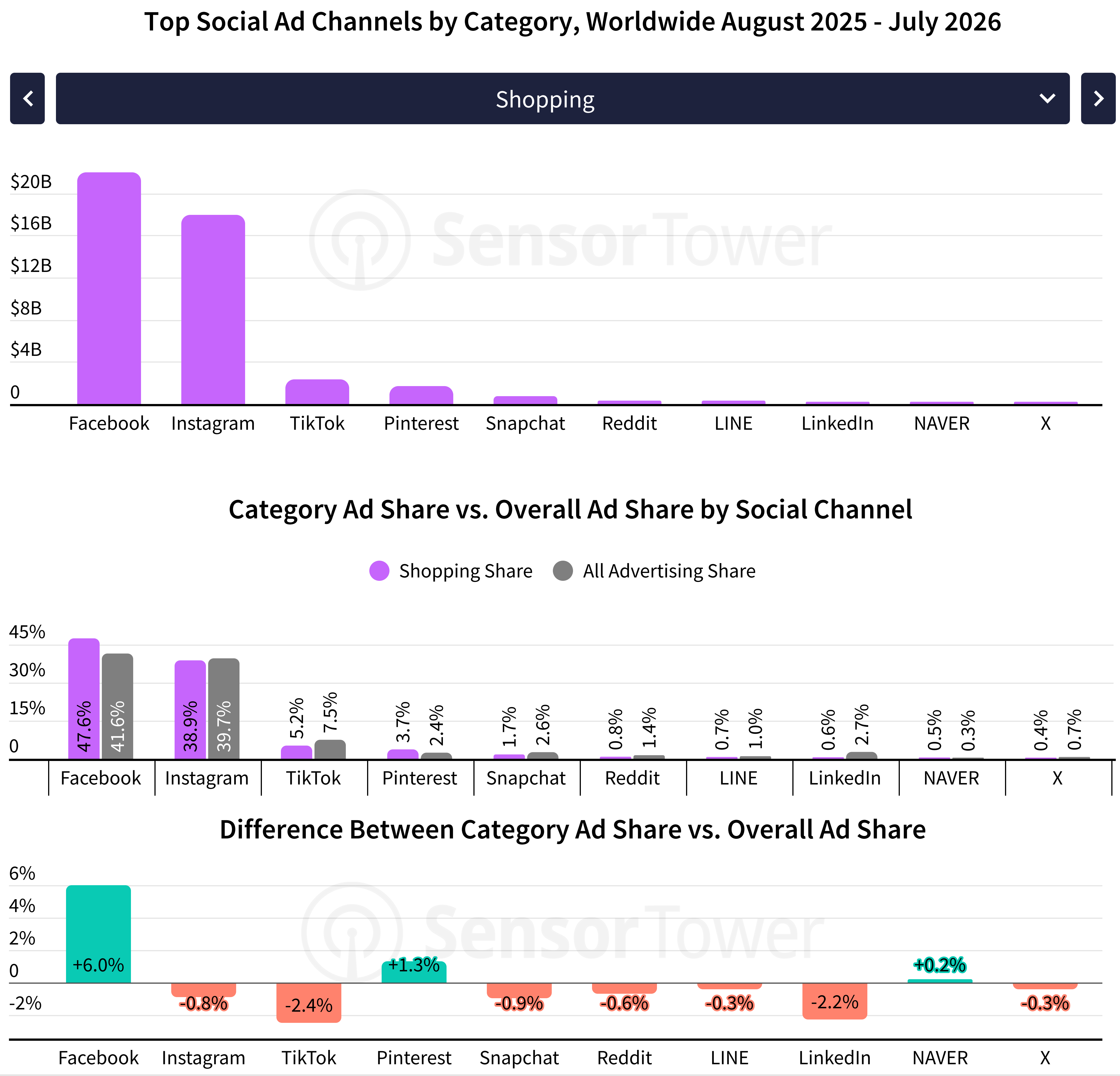
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Demographics for mobile app users on Android in Q2 2026. Gender represented as Men and Women only and is not representative of all gender identities.

See Which Social Networks Are Prioritized by Advertisers in Your Category

Given the different audiences across leading social platforms, advertisers in different categories tend to allocate more ad spend to certain channels. For example, LinkedIn is a natural fit for Software and Jobs & Education advertisers. LinkedIn accounted for 19.6% of social ad spend for Software, compared with just 2.7% across all categories.

TikTok and Snapchat attract a larger share of ad spend from Food & Dining Services advertisers, while Health & Wellness advertisers allocate more of their social ad spend to Instagram, Reddit, and Facebook.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of advertising channels and markets. Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Available ad channels vary by market. Exlcudes China Mainland.



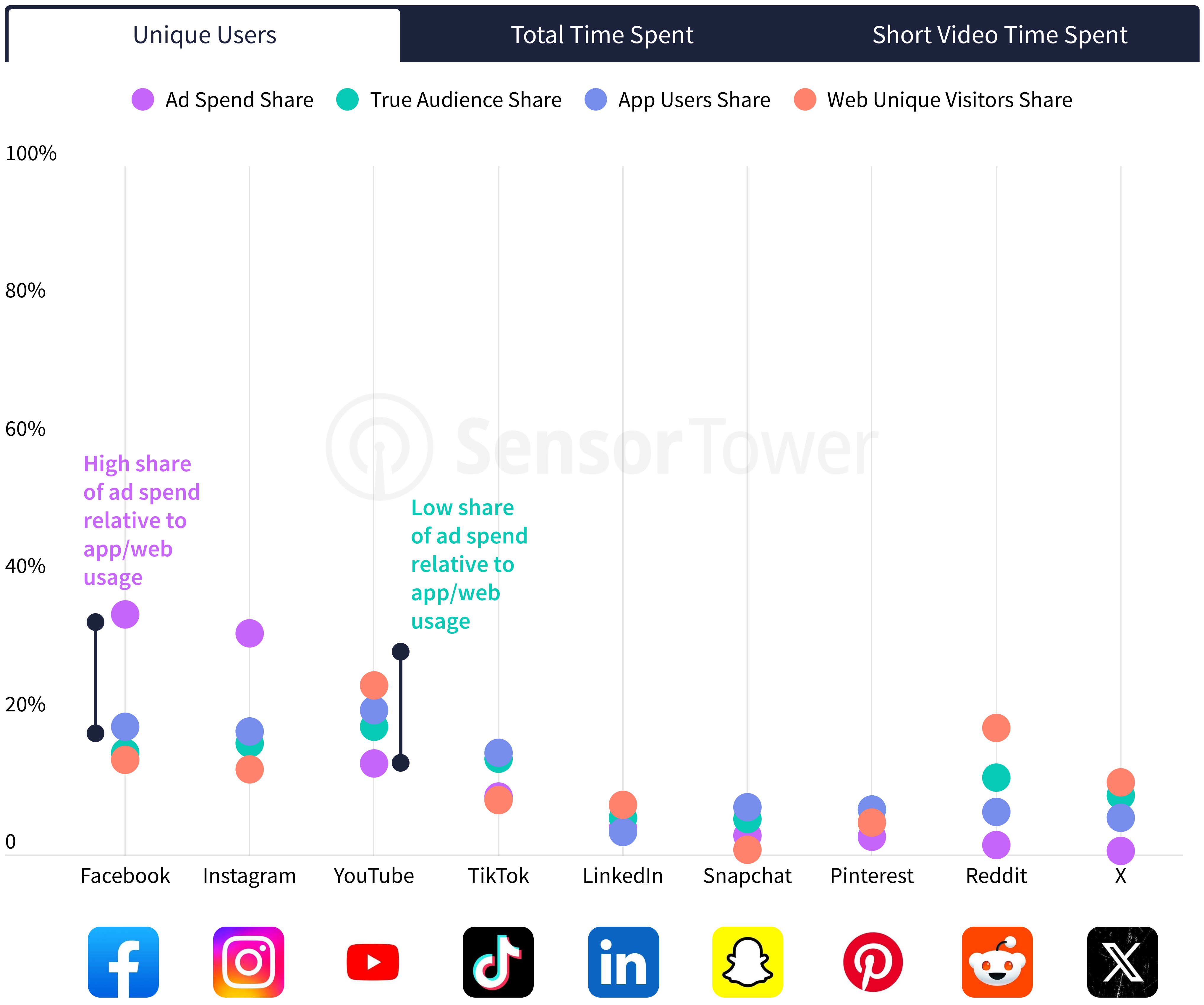
Does More Short Video Translate to More Ad Revenue?

Facebook and Instagram capture a disproportionately large share of ad spend despite accounting for a smaller share of social audiences and time spent. Instagram accounts for nearly 32% of social ad spend across the included channels, but just 16% of total audience (across mobile and web) and 19% of total time spent.

While most leading social apps have launched their own short-video features to compete with TikTok, greater adoption of these formats has not immediately translated into a proportional increase in ad revenue. YouTube Shorts, for example, accounts for 31% of time spent across these channels on short video, while YouTube accounts for just 13% of digital ad spend. TikTok shows a similar disparity. This suggests that advertising in the main feeds of Facebook and Instagram remains highly valuable, even as users increasingly shift their time toward short video.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: United States between August 2025 - July 2026. Ad spend includes a selection of social channels in the United States. True audience includes unique users across mobile and web. Mobile time spent metrics across iOS and Google Play. Market share calculated among included social apps, and for unique users it counts users who use more than one social app multiple times.

Social Network Share of Ad Spend vs. Market Share for Other Metrics in the United States



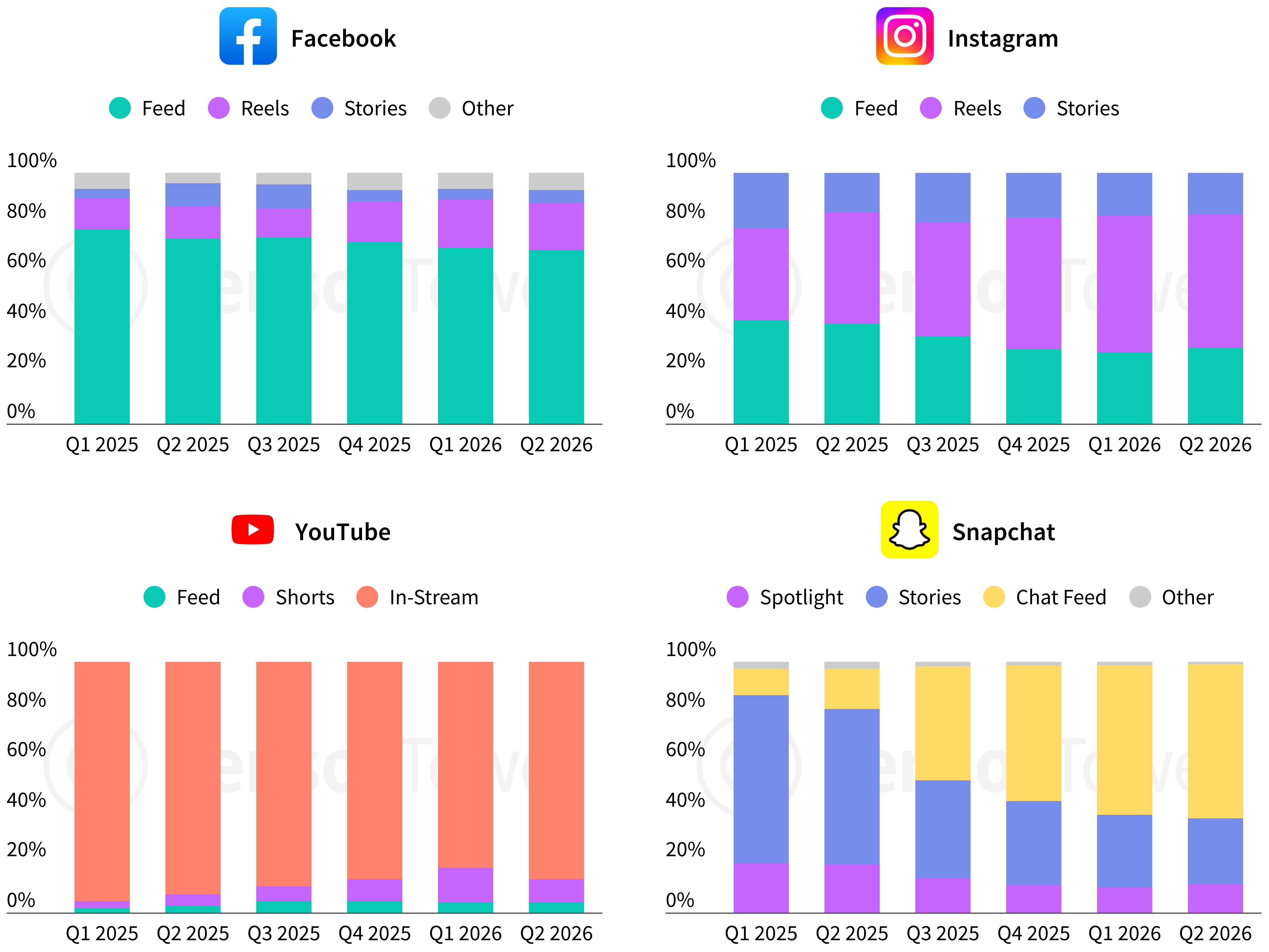
Ad Revenue from Short Videos is on the Rise

As short video continues to take a higher share of social users' time, advertisers have commensurately added the medium into their media mix on select channels. For example, 53% of digital ad spend on Instagram came from Reels in Q2 2026, up from 37% in Q2 2025. This corresponded with a big drop in the share of ad spend from Stories and a more modest drop from the Main Feed.

Facebook and YouTube still monetize primarily through their main feed and in-stream ads, respectively. This could suggest that these platforms are first prioritizing increasing adoption of their short video features (Facebook Reels and YouTube Shorts) before ramping up the number of ads shown on the surfaces.

Share of Ad Spend

by Placement for Top Social Apps in the United States

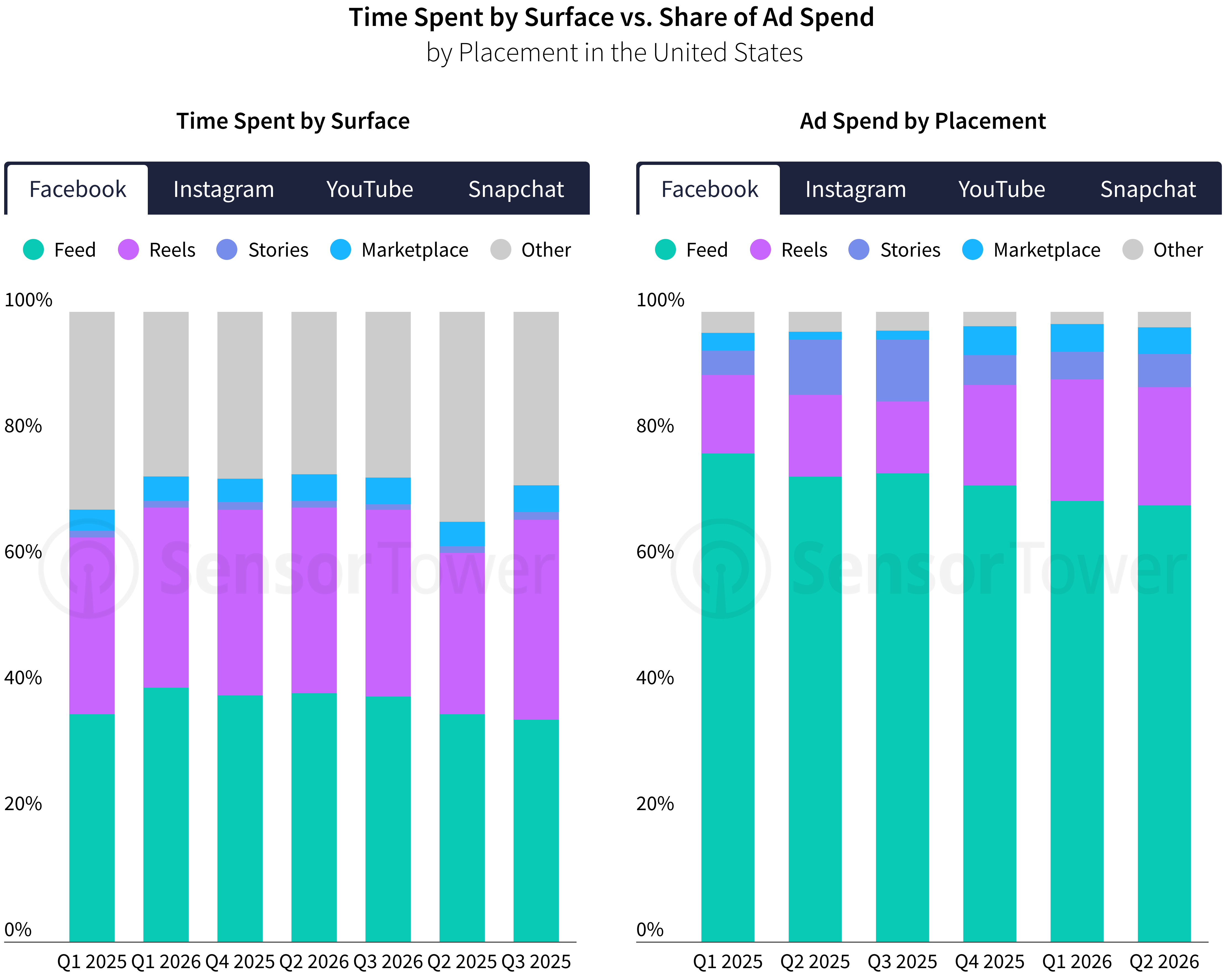


Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August 2026.

Facebook and YouTube Are Ramping Up Short-Video Ads as Usage Climbs

Facebook's share of US ad spend allocated to Reels climbed more than 6 percentage points between Q1 2025 and Q2 2026. The main feed still captures a disproportionately high share of Facebook's advertising, but the gap is narrowing as Reels now accounts for more than 30% of time spent on Facebook. Interestingly, Reels is already the leading ad surface on Instagram.

YouTube is also increasing the share of ad spend allocated to Shorts, though in-stream ads remain the dominant format. Snapchat, meanwhile, has moved in the opposite direction, with the share of ad spend allocated to Spotlight declining since the beginning of 2025.



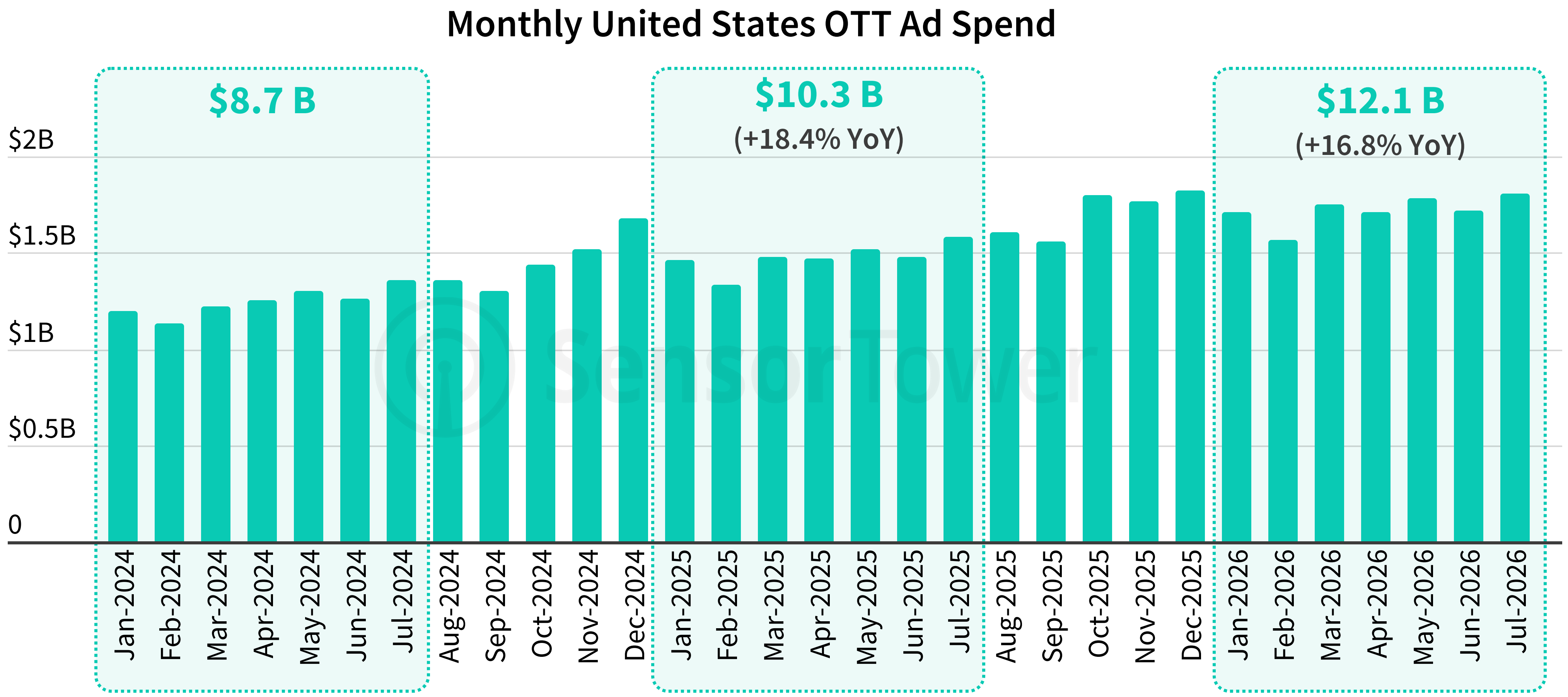
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Time spent by surface estimated for Android phones in the United States.

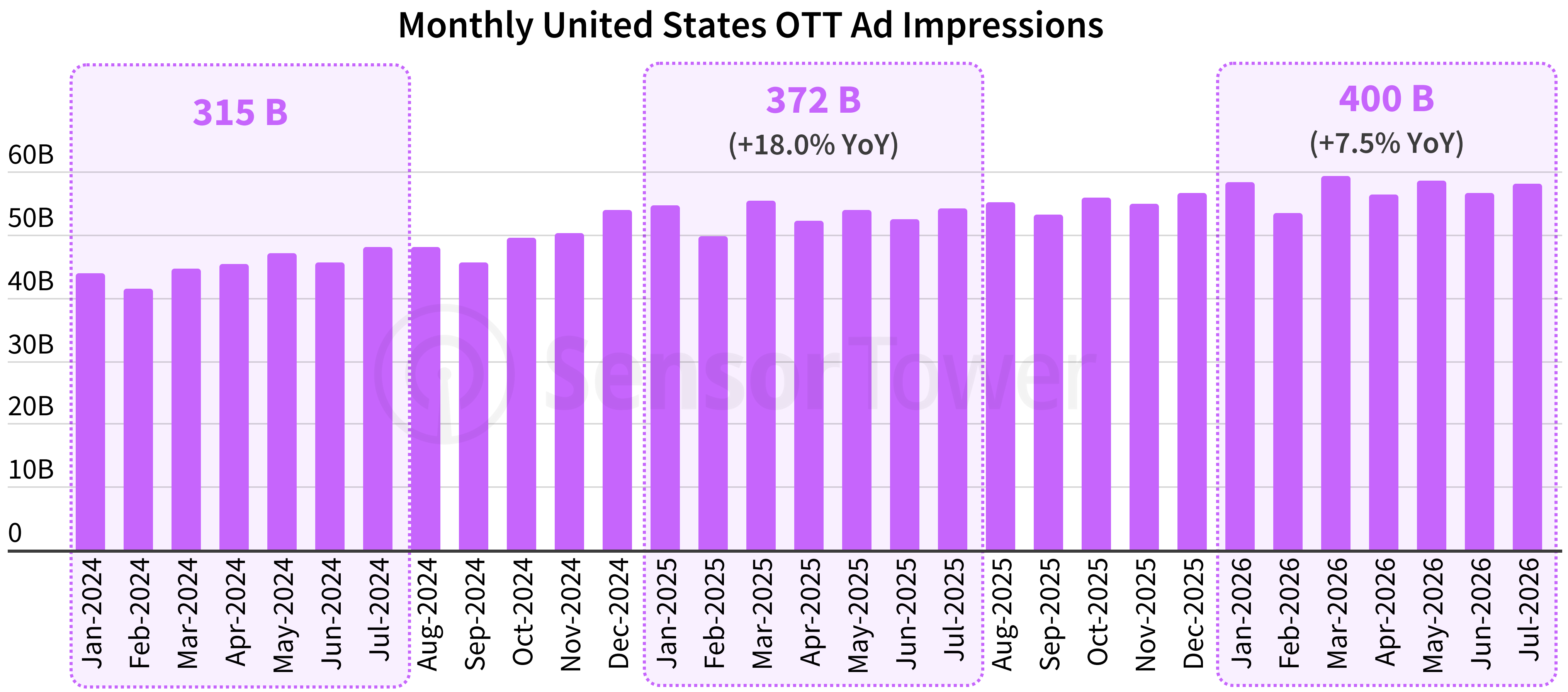
Over-the-Top (OTT)
Advertising Trends

OTT Ad Spend Growth Outpaces YouTube and Linear TV

United States OTT ad spend reached $12 billion in the first seven months of 2026, up 17% year-over-year (YoY). OTT led video-based channels in growth velocity, outperforming YouTube (+6% YoY) while traditional Linear TV contracted (-3% YoY).

Streaming platforms continue to capture video market share, driven by rapid adoption in digital-native sectors led by Software (+70% YoY) and Gaming (+51% YoY). Meanwhile, high-volume core categories maintained strong velocity, with Health & Wellness (+39% YoY) and Financial Services (+29% YoY) driving the vast majority of absolute market growth.





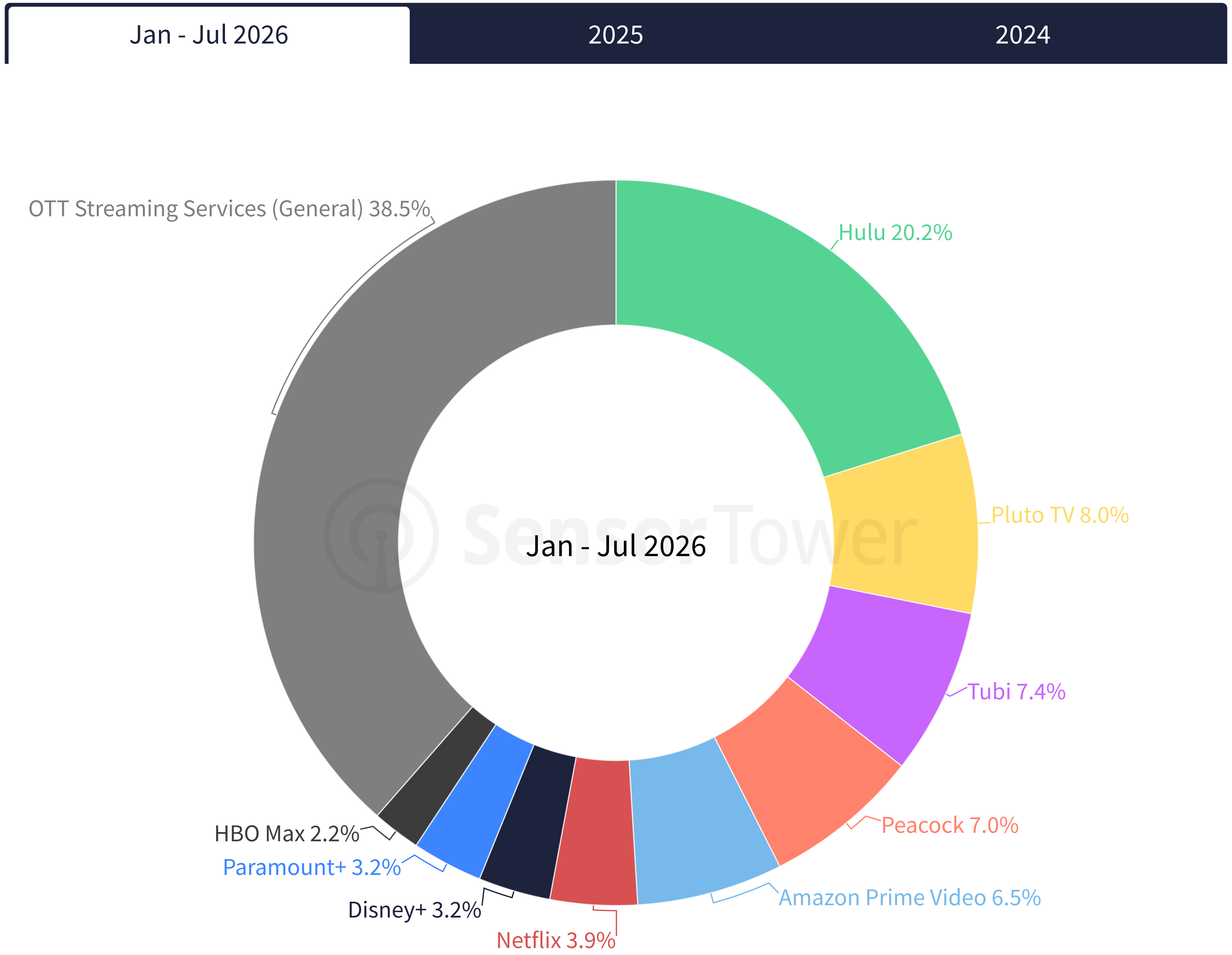
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August, 2026.

Hulu Commands the Largest Share While Peacock Gains Ground

Hulu maintained its market leadership among U.S. OTT platforms, capturing 20% of total OTT ad impressions in the first seven months of 2026. Free Ad-Supported Streaming Television (FAST) services followed closely, with Pluto TV (8%) and Tubi (7%) securing stable market share.

Peacock recorded the strongest expansion among major streaming apps, rising to 7% of total ad Impressions (+1.7 percentage points vs. 2025). This momentum was propelled by live sports rights and expanded premium ad inventory. In particular, Financial Services (+133% YoY) and Health & Wellness (+101% YoY) advertisers more than doubled their ad commitments on Peacock during the first seven months of 2026.

Share of United States Ad Impressions
by OTT Streaming Service

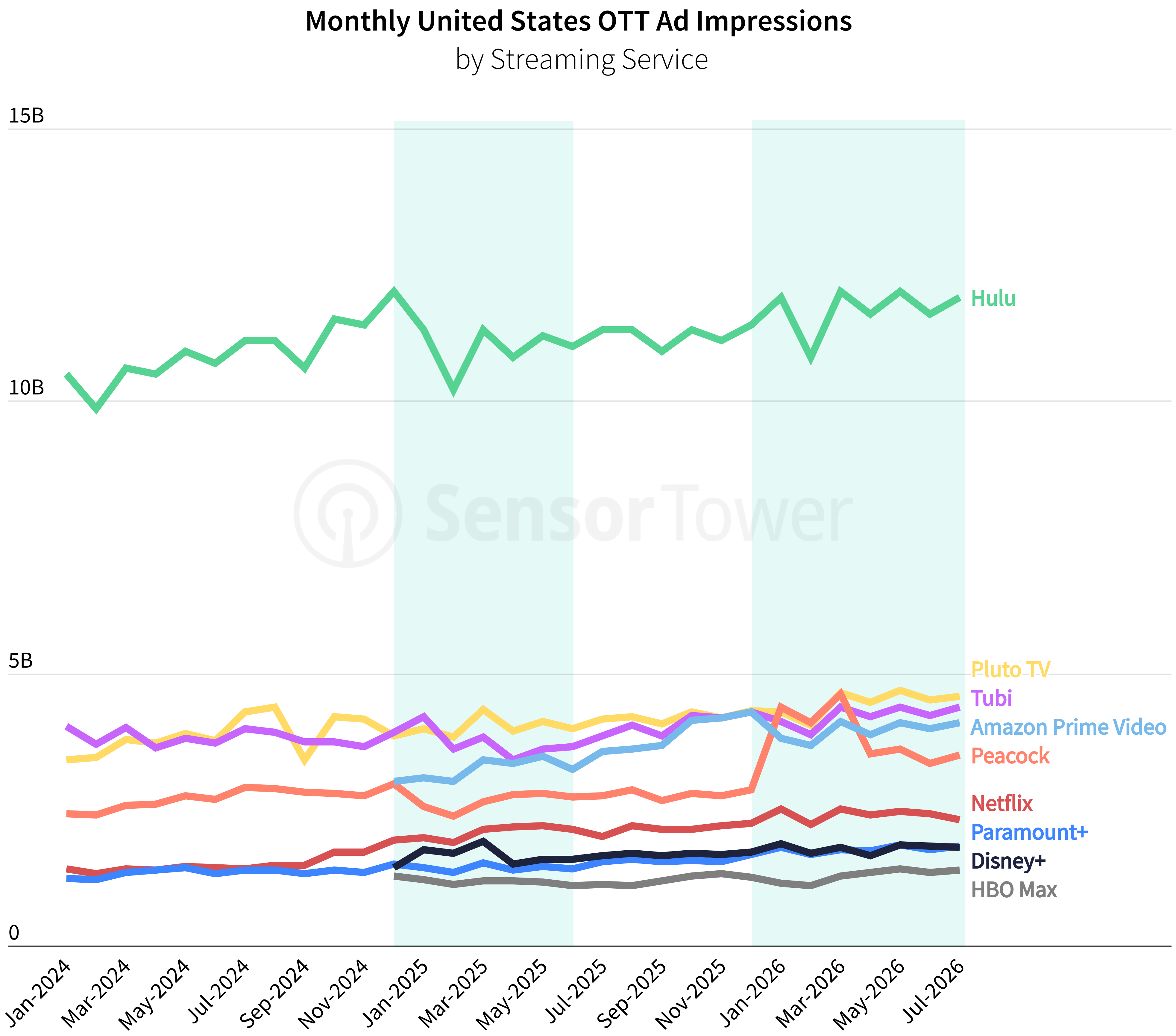


Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August, 2026. Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, and HBO Max estimates became available in mid-November, 2024 and are only displayed separately for 2025 and 2026. Ad spend for these streaming services before 2025 are counted towards Other OTT Streaming Services.

Live Sports Surge Propels Peacock OTT Ad Impressions

Hulu continues to anchor the US streaming ad market, averaging nearly 12 billion monthly impressions with steady +6% YoY growth through the first seven months of 2026. Meanwhile, growth velocity was led by Peacock (+45% YoY), Paramount+ (+23% YoY), and Amazon Prime Video (+19% YoY), signaling a broader industry pivot toward ad-supported tiers.

Peacock achieved significant inventory scale in Q1 2026, surpassing 4 billion monthly impressions (+56% QoQ) as advertisers leveraged NBCUniversal's "Legendary February" sports slate (Super Bowl LX, Winter Olympics, and NBA All-Star Game). Following Q1, Peacock established a higher post-event inventory baseline, maintaining over 3 billion monthly impressions through July.

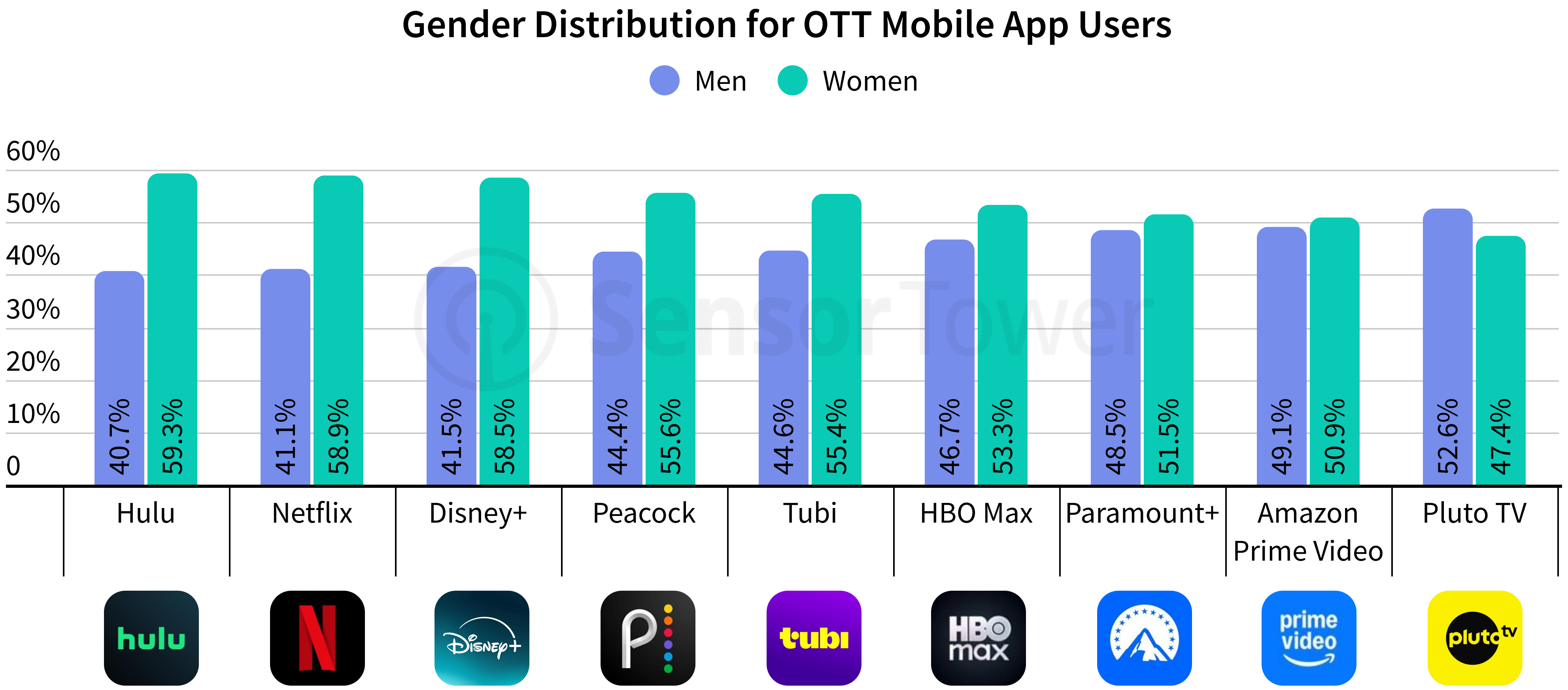


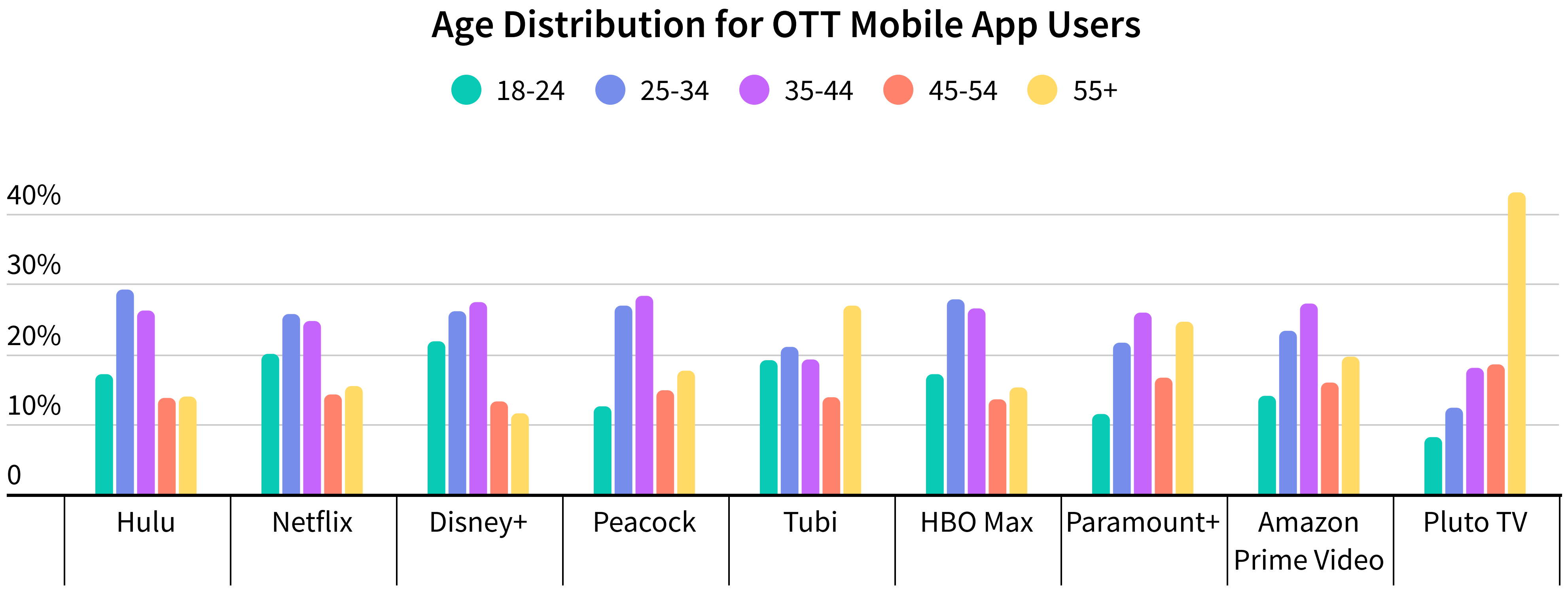
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August, 2026. Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, and HBO Max estimates became available in mid-November, 2024 and are only displayed separately from January 2025 through July 2026.

Netflix and Disney+ Command Gen Z Streaming Reach

Mobile app users across major SVOD platforms (Hulu, Netflix, Disney+, and Peacock) share similar demographic profiles, leaning predominantly female and capturing strong youth engagement. Notably, Netflix and Disney+ command the youngest user bases, with viewers age 18-24 representing at least 20% of their active mobile audience.

Conversely, FAST services like Tubi and Pluto TV leverage free linear experiences to attract an older demographic base. Notably, Pluto TV uniquely stands out as the only major streaming app to skew predominantly male (53% male).





Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Demographics are for mobile app users on Android in the United States in Q2 2026. Gender represented as Men and Women only and is not representative of all gender identities.

How Audience Profiles Shape Streaming Ad Category Spend

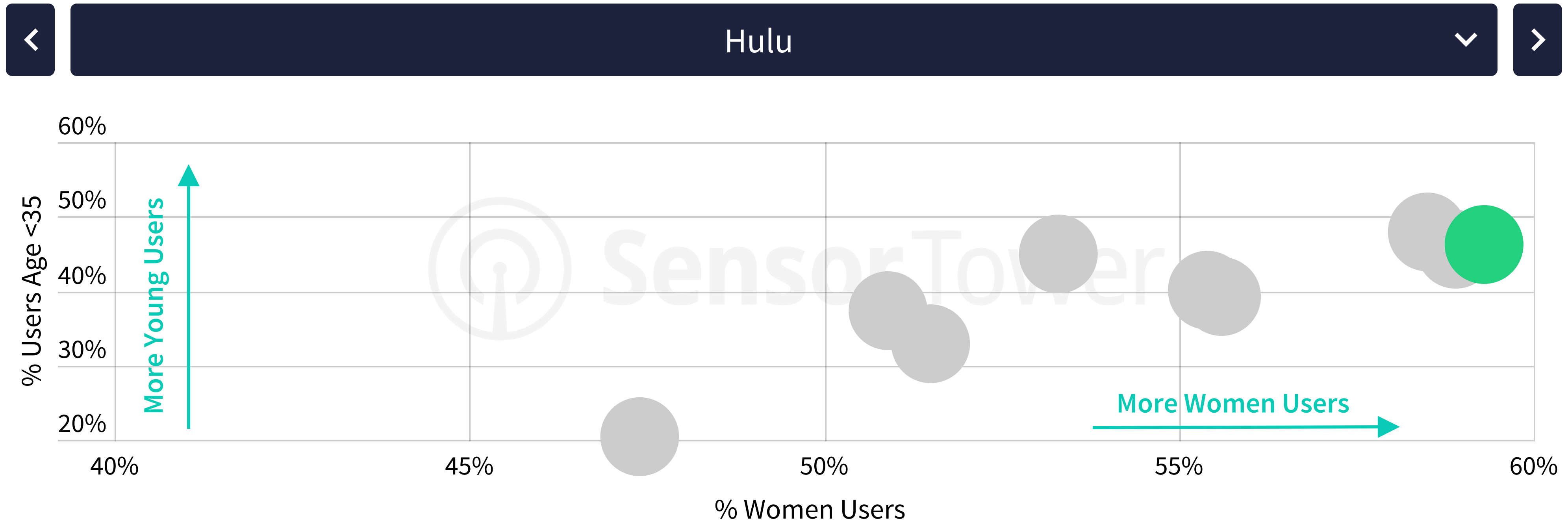
Health & Wellness led as the top category across major US OTT platforms, accounting for 18% of overall OTT ad spend, closely followed by Shopping at 16%.

Category spend distribution across platforms reflects strategic audience alignment. CPG brands concentrate budget on Netflix (19.2% of overall Netflix ad spend) and Amazon Prime Video (19.1%), leveraging Netflix's female-skewing base for household purchasing decisions and Prime Video's direct connection to retail shoppers.

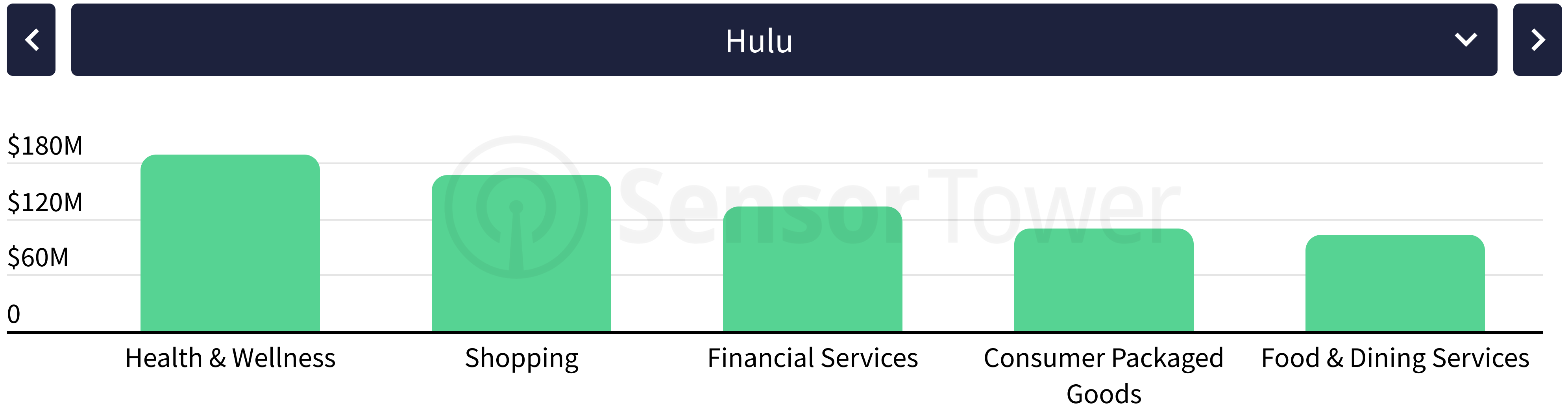
Financial Services brands capture a significantly higher ad spend share on Peacock (22%), Tubi (20%), and Pluto TV (18%) compared to the overall OTT market benchmark (14%). These platforms align effectively with financial advertisers seeking mature and male-leaning audiences through Peacock's marquee live sports broadcasts and Pluto TV's distinct male user base.

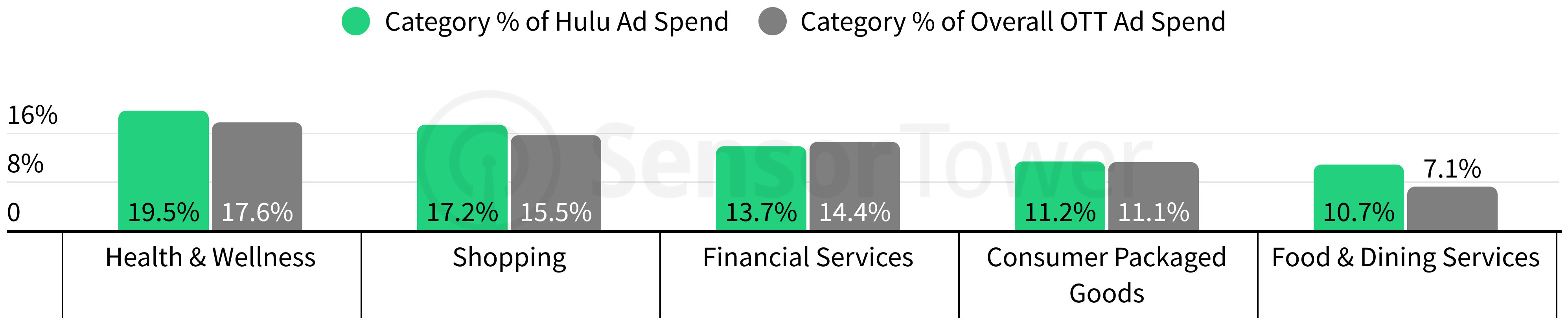
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August 2026. Demographics are for mobile app users on Android in the United States in Q2 2026. Gender represented as Men and Women only and is not representative of all gender identities.

Demographics for OTT Mobile App Users



Top Categories by United States Ad Spend for OTT Streaming Service



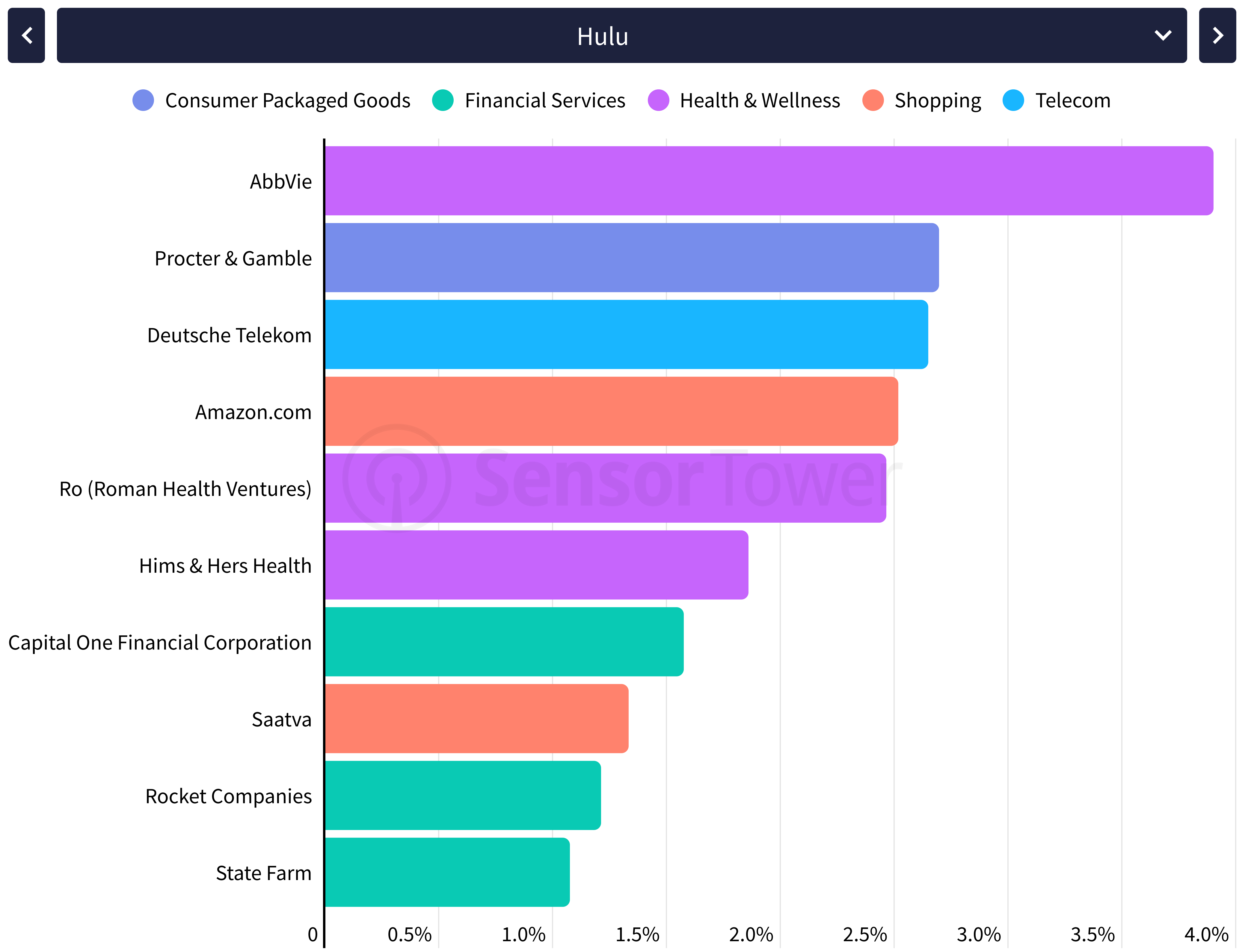


Telecom Giants Leverage OTT to Promote Home Internet

Procter & Gamble dominates advertiser concentration across US streaming, securing a top-10 share across all nine platforms and ranking as the #1 overall advertiser on Tubi, HBO Max, Paramount+, Amazon Prime Video, and Pluto TV.

Telecom brands heavily prioritize OTT streaming to capture cord-cutters. Deutsche Telekom allocated 31% of its total digital ad budget to OTT over the past twelve months, securing a top-10 spot across seven services, while Verizon allocated 24% and captured the #1 advertiser spot on Netflix. Deutsche Telekom strategically uses OTT inventory to promote T-Mobile 5G Home Internet, aligning broadband offerings directly with consumers' high-bandwidth streaming habits.

Top Advertisers by Share of Ad Spend by OTT Streaming Service
United States Between August 2025 - July 2026



Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August, 2026. Advertiser categories are based on their top category by US ad spend between August 2025 through July 2026.

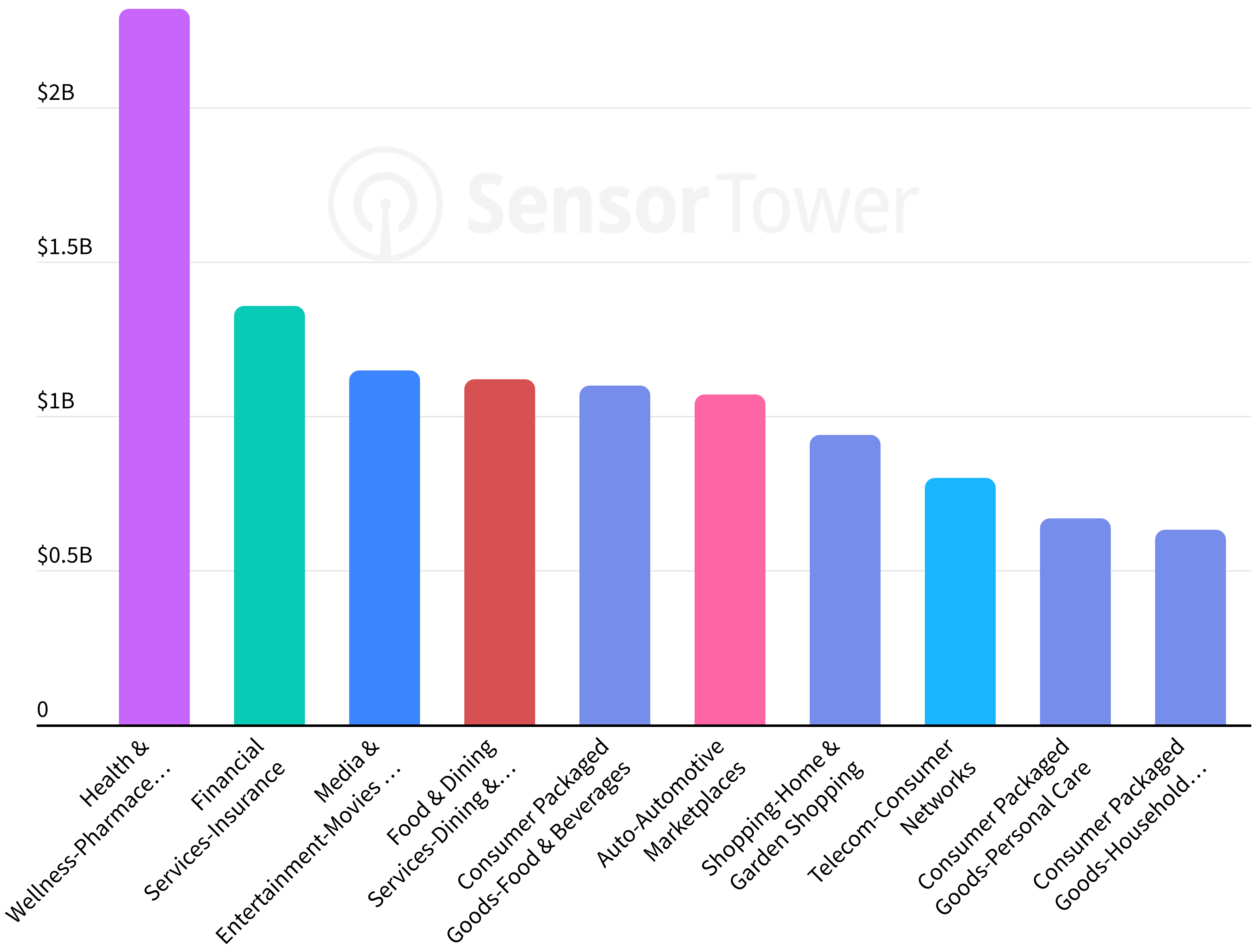
Insurance Carriers Scale Up OTT Ad Spend

Pharma and Insurance brands allocated 24% of their digital ad budgets to OTT over the past twelve months, more than double the overall national average for OTT share. Pharmaceuticals stood as the sole category exceeding $2 billion in total OTT spend, with AbbVie and Eli Lilly capturing nearly one-third of the vertical's total volume.

Insurance OTT ad spend surged 30% YoY, propelled by aggressive budget expansions from category leaders. Progressive Casualty Insurance retained its #1 ranking with 46% YoY growth to command over one-fifth of total category spend, while Liberty Mutual surged 81% YoY to enter the top three. Concurrently, established giants Geico (+23%) and State Farm (+27%) maintained steady double-digit expansions, solidifying connected TV as an essential channel for high-intent user acquisition.

Top Categories by US Ad Spend on OTT Streaming Services

United States Between August 2025 - July 2026



Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August, 2026. Includes August 2025 through July 2026.

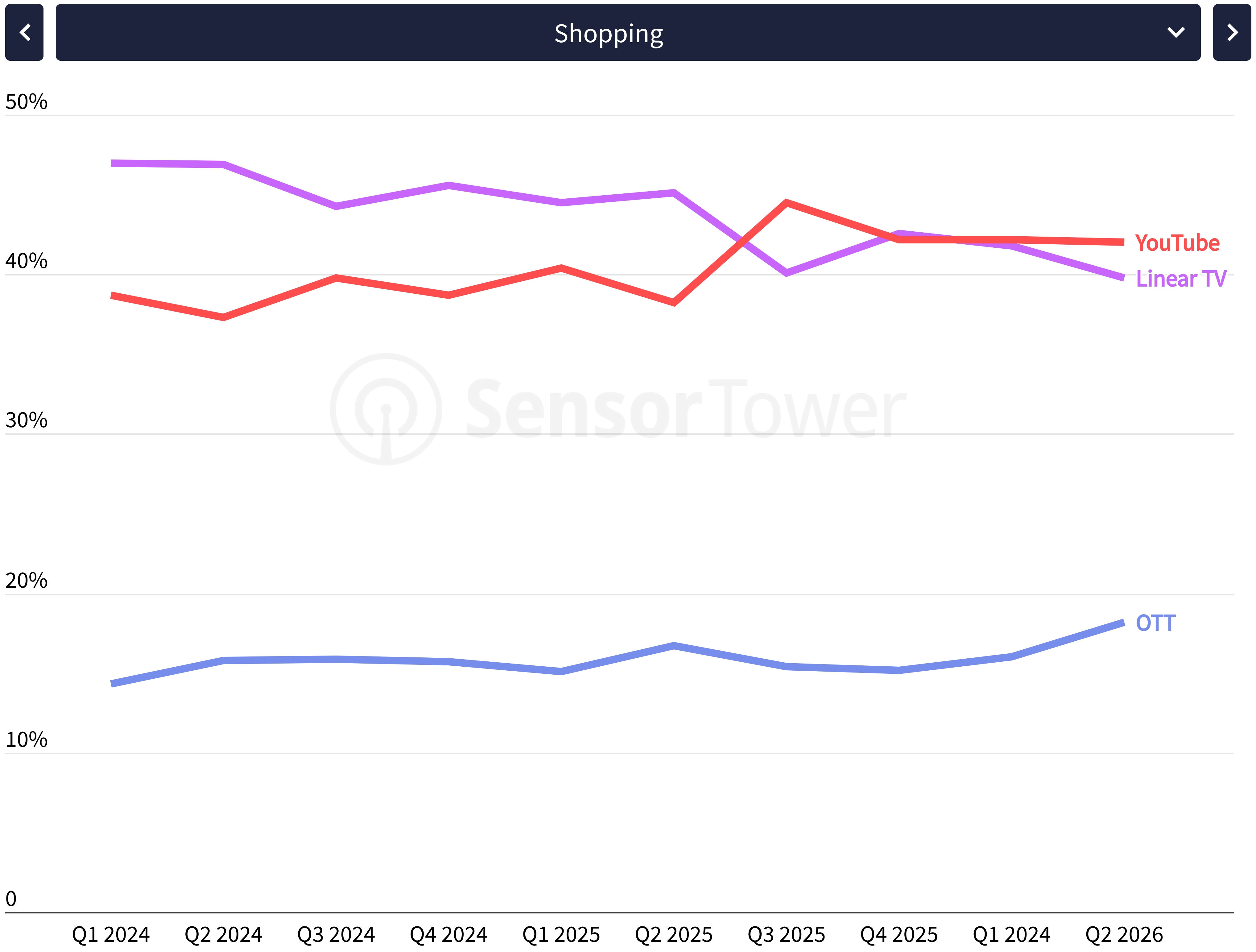
Linear TV Share Declines as OTT Gains Momentum

Within the video ad landscape (Linear TV, OTT, and YouTube), Linear TV lost impression share across major verticals between Q1 2024 and Q2 2026, led by steep declines in Telecom (-16 ppts to 44%), Travel & Tourism (-12 ppts to 35%), Financial Services (-10 ppts to 36%), and Food & Dining (-10 ppts to 48%).

OTT captured the majority of this budget shift, highlighted by Telecom more than doubling its OTT impression share to 26% (+14 ppts). Concurrently, Auto, Health & Wellness, and Food & Dining each recorded ~8 percentage point gains, reflecting how brand advertisers are reallocating capital toward streaming to align with shifting consumer viewing habits.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad impression estimates as of August, 2026.

Quarterly Ad Impression Share Across Linear TV, OTT, and YouTube
United States



Retail Media
Advertising Trends

What is Retail Media Insights?

Pathmatics by Sensor Tower's Retail Media Insights provides marketers with complete visibility into the co-branded digital advertising ecosystem and retail media networks. Your customized marketing insights reports empower you with a view into spend, media mix, impressions and share of voice for display, video, mobile, OTT, and paid social across your selected retail partners and competitors.

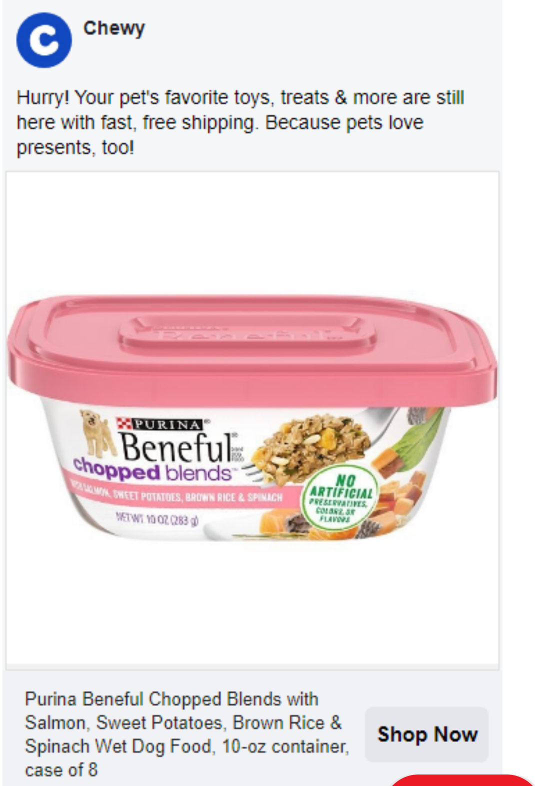
- Benchmark yourself against your competitors' co-branded campaigns to understand seasonality and trends
- Uncover retailer media network and competitor media mix & marketing strategy

Learn More & Request a Demo Here

Retailer: Target

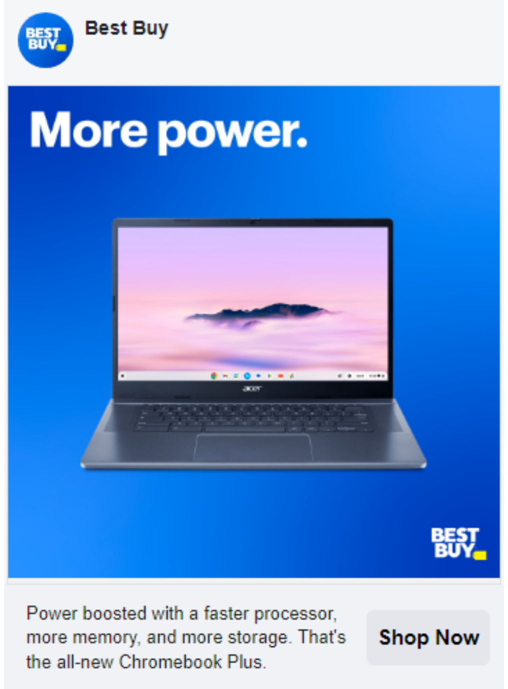
Advertiser: Hasbro

Retailer: Chewy



Advertiser: Purina PetCare

Retailer: Best Buy



Advertiser: Google

Retailer: Home Depot

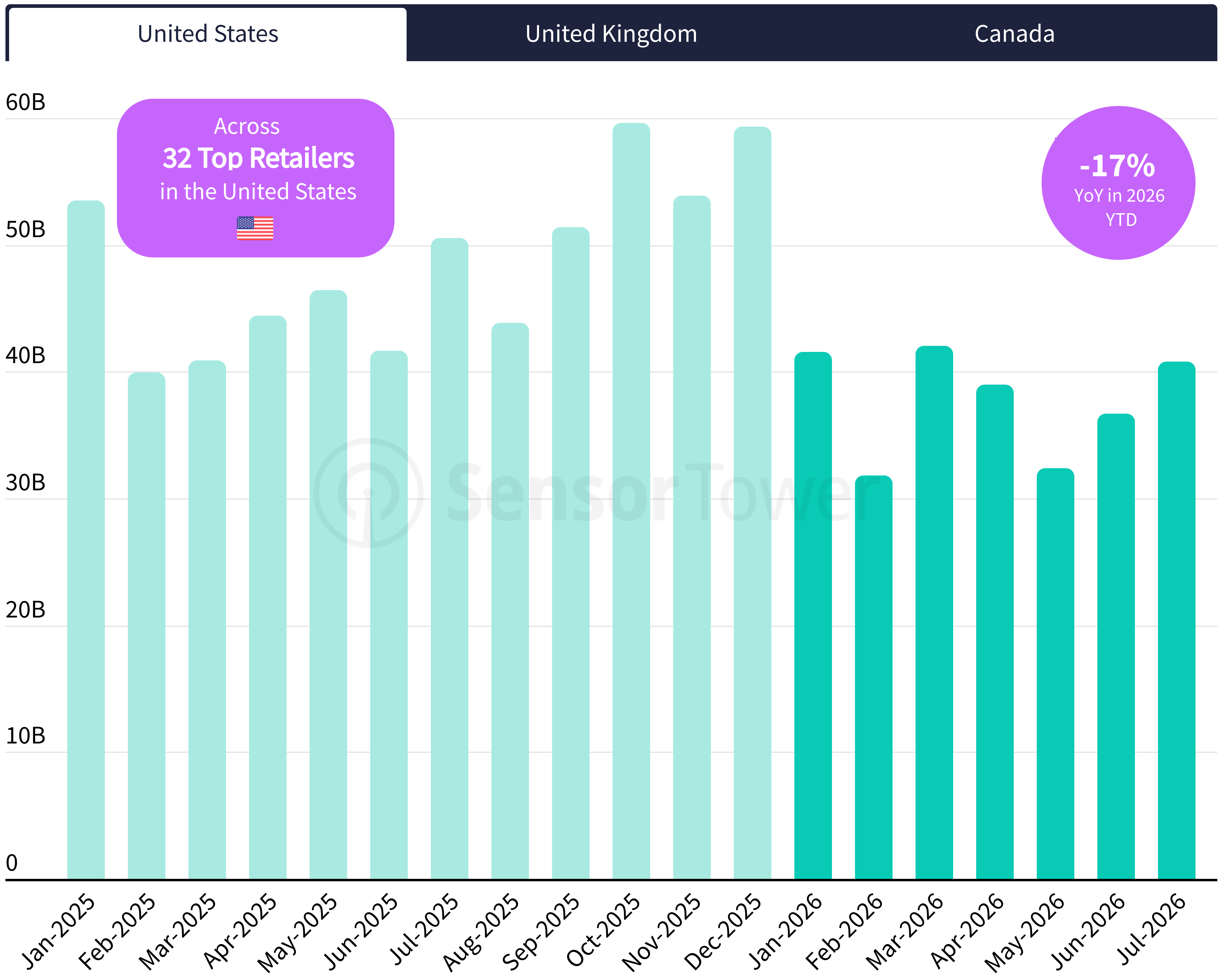
Advertiser: Behr Paint Company

Retail Media Contracts in the US While Scaling in the UK

Retail media ad impressions in the United States declined 17% YoY in the first seven months of 2026. Amazon remained the dominant retail media platform, capturing a 60% market share, though its ad impressions fell double-digit YoY, driving the broader market contraction. Walmart and Target also experienced YoY ad impression declines.

In contrast, UK retail media impressions across nine major networks climbed 47% YoY over the same period. This international expansion was driven by standout growth at Argos (+84% YoY) and Sainsbury's (+69% YoY), reflecting surging advertiser demand and aggressive ad inventory expansion.

Retail Media Ad Impressions in the United States, United Kingdom, and Canada

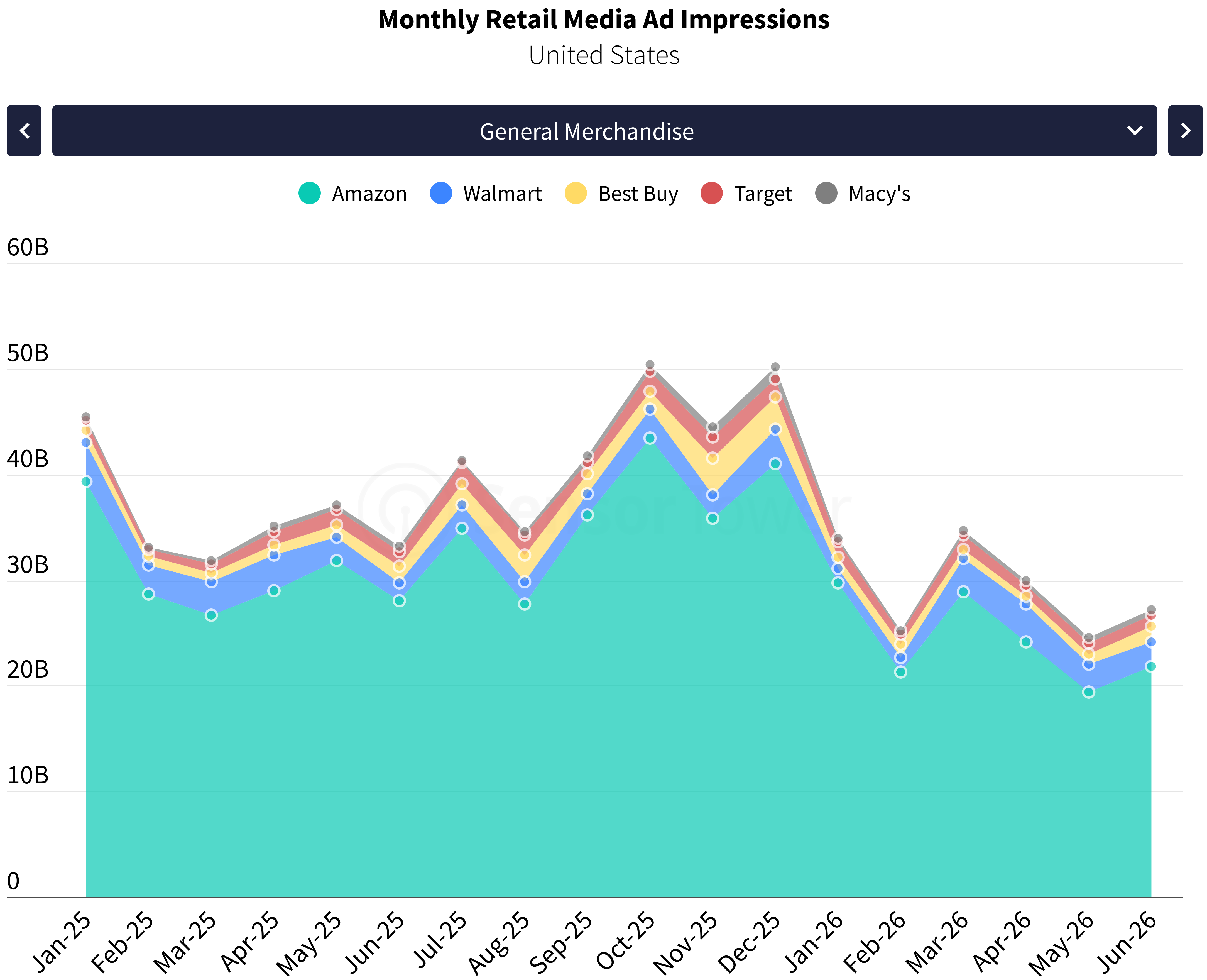


Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of top retailers. See *Appendix (page 73)* *for list of retailers included in each market.*

Seasonal Windows Drive Targeted RMN Impression Surges

Retail media advertisers capitalize on key seasonal shopping windows to concentrate ad spend on high-performing networks. General merchandise, electronics, and beauty brands scale heavily during Q4 to capture holiday gifting demand, led by Amazon at 120B ad impressions (+22% QoQ), Best Buy at 8.3B (+28% QoQ), and Sephora at 2.8B (+50% QoQ).

Outside Q4, vertical platforms capture high-intent shoppers during category-specific promo peaks. The August back-to-school window lifted Best Buy to 2.6B impressions (+29% MoM) and Ulta Beauty to 963M (+52% MoM). Similarly, spring home improvement momentum in April 2026 drove massive MoM surges for Home Depot (+336% to 762M) and Lowe's (+441% to 689M).



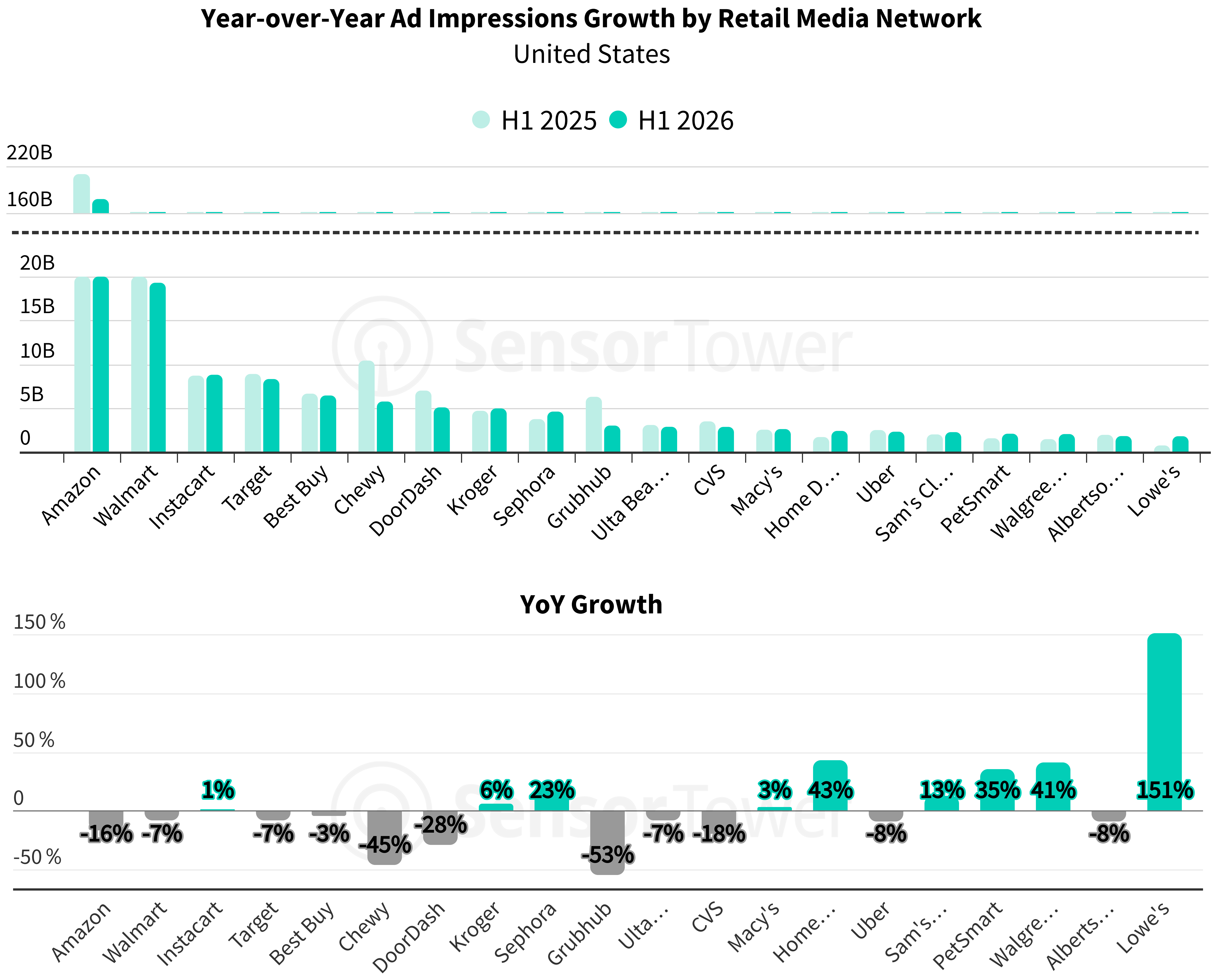
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Retail media ad impression estimates as of July, 2026.

Home Improvement RMNs Lead YoY Growth

Amazon maintained unmatched scale with more than 170 billion ad impressions in H1 2026, despite a 16% YoY pullback as broad retail media networks mature. Core competitors like Walmart (-7%) and Target (-7%) also saw YoY impression declines, reflecting shifting advertiser priorities across established general merchandise platforms.

In contrast, specialized networks surged as advertisers diversified spend into high-intent verticals. Lowe's delivered explosive 151% YoY impression growth, while Home Depot expanded by 43%. In addition, several category specialists across pharmacy, pet, and beauty, including Walgreens (+41%), PetSmart (+35%), and Sephora (+23%), outpaced general retailers.

The analysis is from our Retail Media Report 2026:
Click here to download the full report covering the latest trends in retail media advertising, including channel allocation , category shifts, and advertiser strategies.



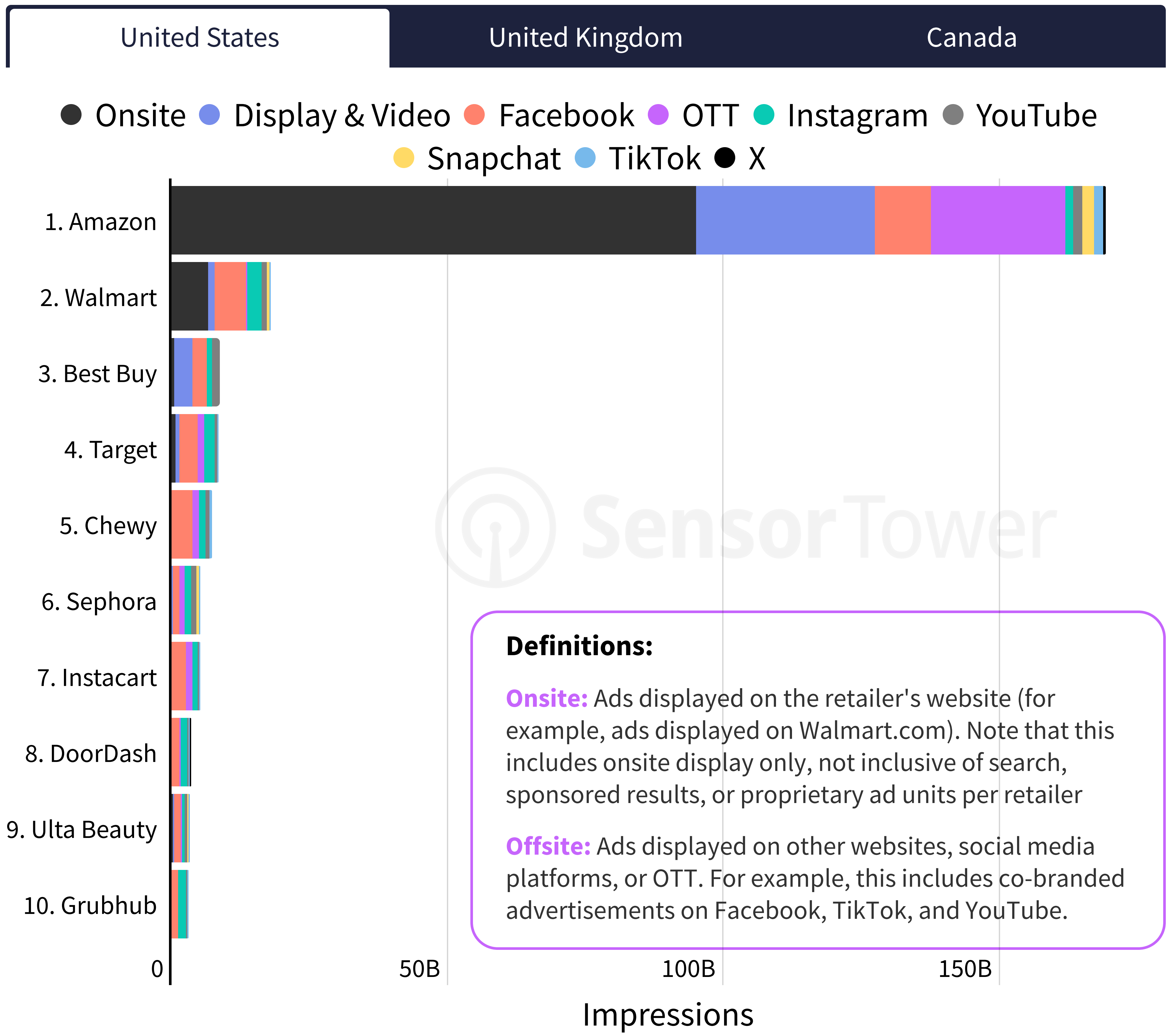
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Retail media ad impression estimates as of July, 2026.

Amazon Continues to Dominate US Retail Media

Amazon continues to dominate U.S. retail media with nearly 170 billion ad impressions through the first seven months of 2026, delivering over nine times the scale of second-place Walmart (17.9 billion). The majority of Amazon's ad impressions were delivered onsite (56%), capturing high-intent shoppers directly at the point of purchase.

Walmart also maintained a notable onsite footprint at 37%. In contrast, competing retail networks such as Target, Best Buy, and Chewy remained heavily dependent on offsite channels for over 90% of their total ad reach.

Top Retail Media Retailers by Impressions
January - July 2026



Definitions:

Onsite: Ads displayed on the retailer's website (for example, ads displayed on Walmart.com). Note that this includes onsite display only, not inclusive of search, sponsored results, or proprietary ad units per retailer

Offsite: Ads displayed on other websites, social media platforms, or OTT. For example, this includes co-branded advertisements on Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of top retailers. See Appendix (page 73) for list of retailers included in each market.

RMNs Expand Streaming OTT Footprint

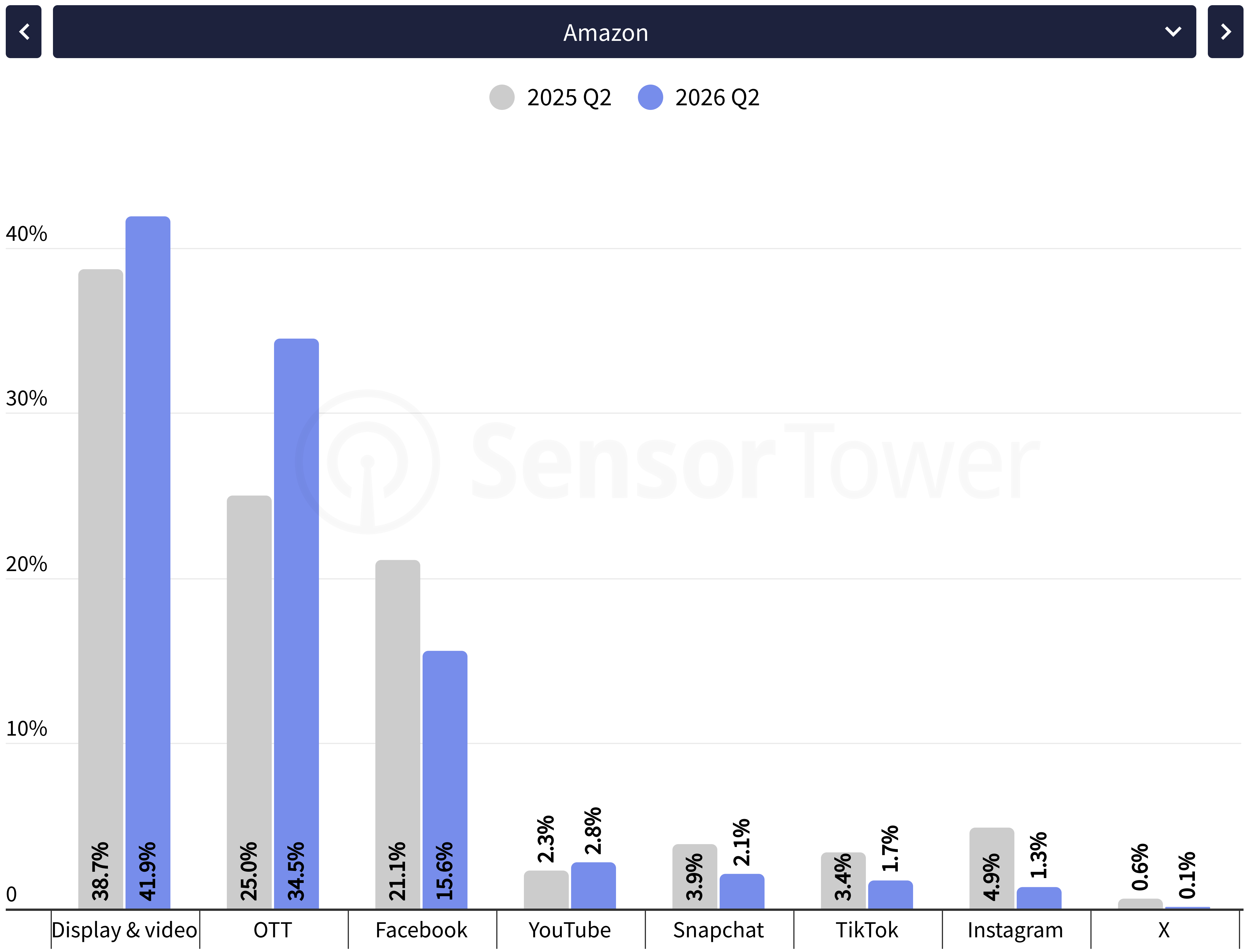
In Q2 2026, streaming OTT surged as a key growth channel for retail media, with 10 of the top 12 retailers expanding their OTT impression share. Amazon anchored market leadership with 35% of its offsite impressions in OTT (+10 ppts YoY), while platforms including Instacart (23%), Target (17%), DoorDash (15%), and Home Depot (15%) executed aggressive streaming pivots.

This surge aligns directly with consumer behavior. Sensor Tower audience data reveals that Cord Cutters (streaming viewers) are 187% more likely to be Shopaholics and 125% more likely to be Delivery Diners than the general population, solidifying OTT as an essential channel for engaging active digital shoppers.

The analysis is from our Retail Media Report 2026:
Click here to download the full report covering the latest trends in retail media advertising, including channel allocation , category shifts, and advertiser strategies.

Source: Sensor Tower

Offsite Retail Media Impression Share by Channel Across Top Retailers
2026 Q2 vs 2025 Q2, United States



Amazon & DoorDash Expand Beyond Core Categories

Amazon captures substantial media spend across non-endemic verticals such as Health, Finance, and Telecom, led by major advertisers like AT&T and American Express. Conversely, CPG and general shopping drive over 70% of ad impressions on Walmart Connect and Target Roundel. Category specialists maintain highly concentrated advertiser bases tied to their core inventory, with Chewy dominating Pet Supplies and Best Buy leading Consumer Electronics.

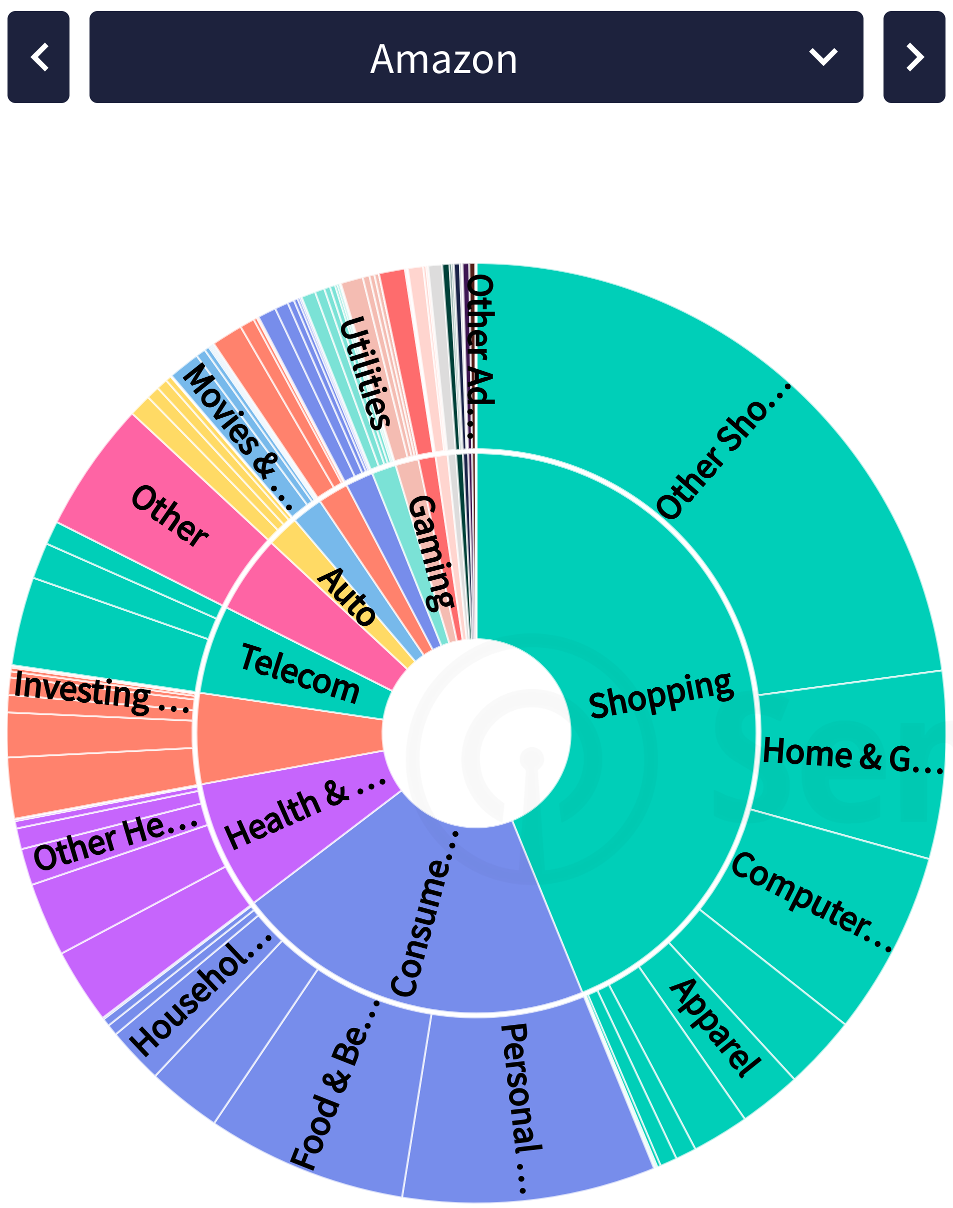
In the delivery sector, DoorDash outperforms rivals in non-endemic monetization, scaling ad impressions across Finance, Health, and Travel. Uber Ads remains anchored in immediate consumption occasions across dining, CPG, and grocery. Meanwhile, Grubhub shows extreme category concentration, allocating over 96% of its ad impressions to core food delivery.

Source: Sensor Tower

Share by Category and Top Advertisers by Ad Impression

United States, Q2 2026

Share by Category / Subcategory



Top Advertisers

Rank	Advertiser
1	AT&T
2	AMOREPACIFIC
3	Procter & Gamble
4	Comcast
5	Unilever
6	American Express
7	PepsiCo
8	Apple
9	Morgan Stanley & Co. International
10	Deutsche Telekom
11	Geico
12	Nestle
13	Samsung
14	L'Oreal
15	Mondelez International

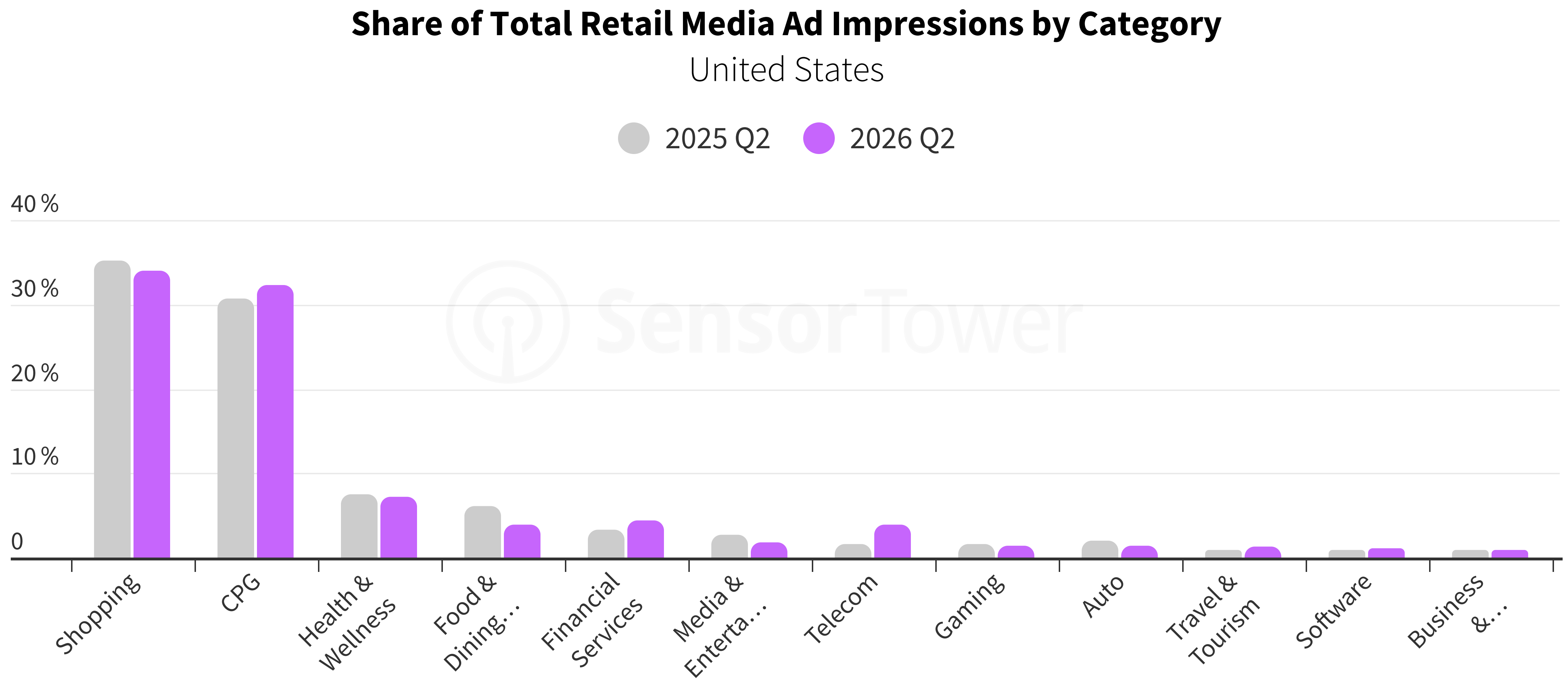
Telecom Brands Scale Up Retail Media Investments

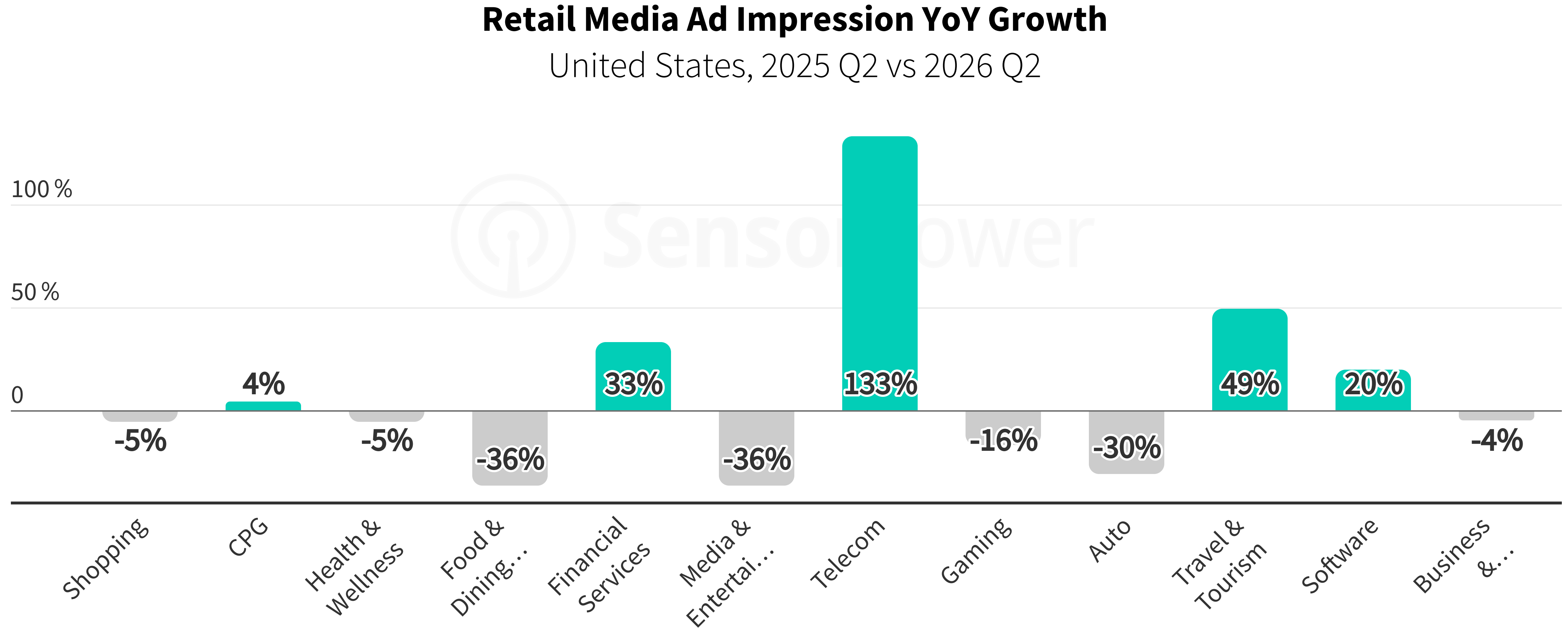
Shopping and CPG remain the primary foundation of retail media, together accounting for nearly two-thirds of total ad impressions in Q2 2026. However, overall market expansion was heavily fueled by non-endemic advertisers tapping into high-value first-party shopper data.

While traditional endemic categories saw flat or declining volume, with Shopping down 5% YoY and CPG up just 4%, non-endemic sectors recorded explosive growth. Telecom led all categories with a 133% YoY surge driven by wireless and broadband providers including AT&T and Comcast, followed by Travel & Tourism (+49%), Financial Services (+33%), and Software (+20%).

The analysis is from our Retail Media Report 2026:
Click here to download the full report covering the latest trends in retail media advertising, including channel allocation , category shifts, and advertiser strategies.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Retail media ad impression estimates as of July, 2026. Includes a selection of top US retailers. See Appendix (page 73) for list of retailers included in each market.





Household Brands Expand Their Presence on Grocery Retail Media

Amazon led retail media spend across nine of ten categories, while Walmart was the only other player to rank top-five across all ten verticals.

Household supplies advertisers aggressively expanded their YoY investments on grocery platforms, propelling Kroger and Meijer into the top five retailers for the category. Ad impressions on Kroger and Meijer surged 579% and 216% YoY, respectively, as CPG brands leverage high-frequency grocery touchpoints to drive lower-funnel conversions during routine shopping trips.

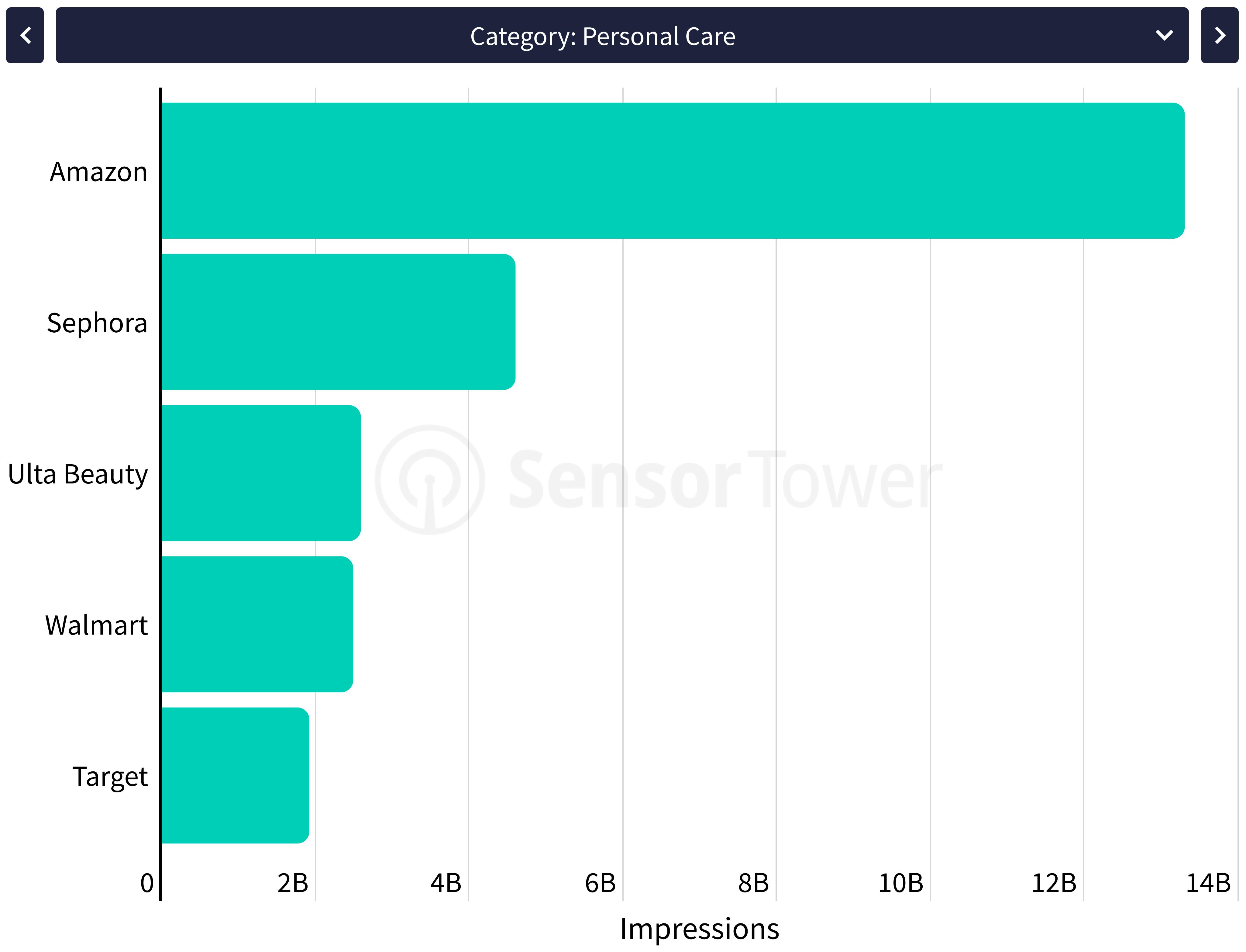
Definition:

Category: The category of the product being displayed in the advertisement. Cases where the retailer is advertising for its own brand, where the product is unidentifiable, or the advertisers are not currently tracked by Sensor Tower are excluded.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of top US retailers. Excludes cases when the advertisers are not currently tracked by Sensor Tower or advertising for retailer's own products. See *Appendix (page 73)* *for list of retailers included in each market.*

Top Retail Media Retailers by Category in the United States

January - July 2026

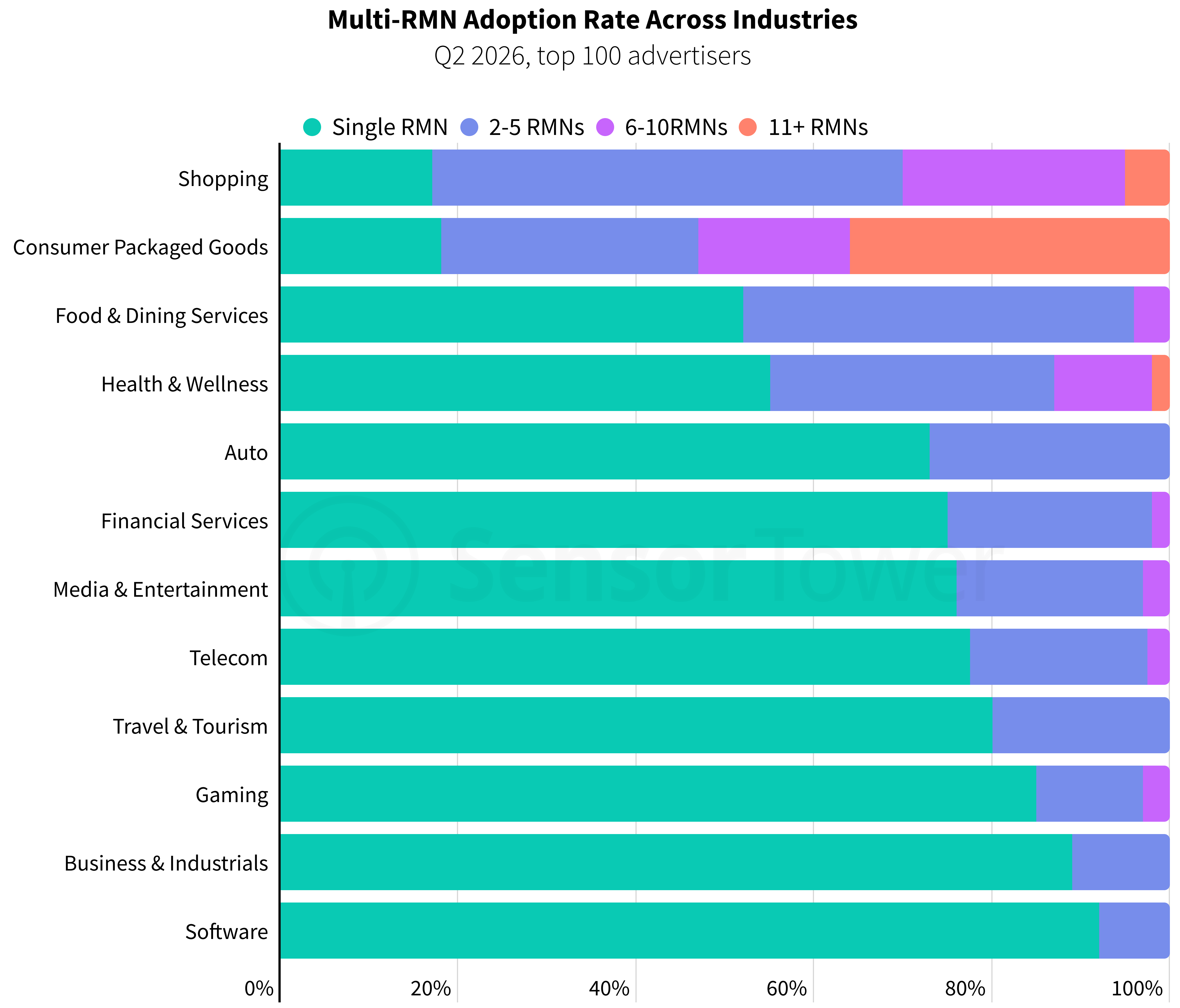


CPG Brands Lead RMN Diversification

Across the 32 studied retail networks, endemic categories showed the highest adoption of multi-RMN strategies in Q2 2026. More than 80% of top advertisers in Shopping and Consumer Packaged Goods (CPG) utilized two or more retail media networks to ensure widespread coverage. These brands prioritize market leaders like Amazon, Walmart, and Target alongside top grocery and delivery networks, including Kroger, Instacart, and DoorDash, to capture consumers across every digital point of sale.

CPG stands out as the most diversified industry across retail media. Half of top CPG advertisers utilize six or more RMNs, and over one-third run campaigns across more than 10 networks. Category powerhouses actively lead this trend, headed in Q2 2026 by Procter & Gamble (23 RMNs), The Coca-Cola Company (21 RMNs), and PepsiCo and Nestlé (20 RMNs each).

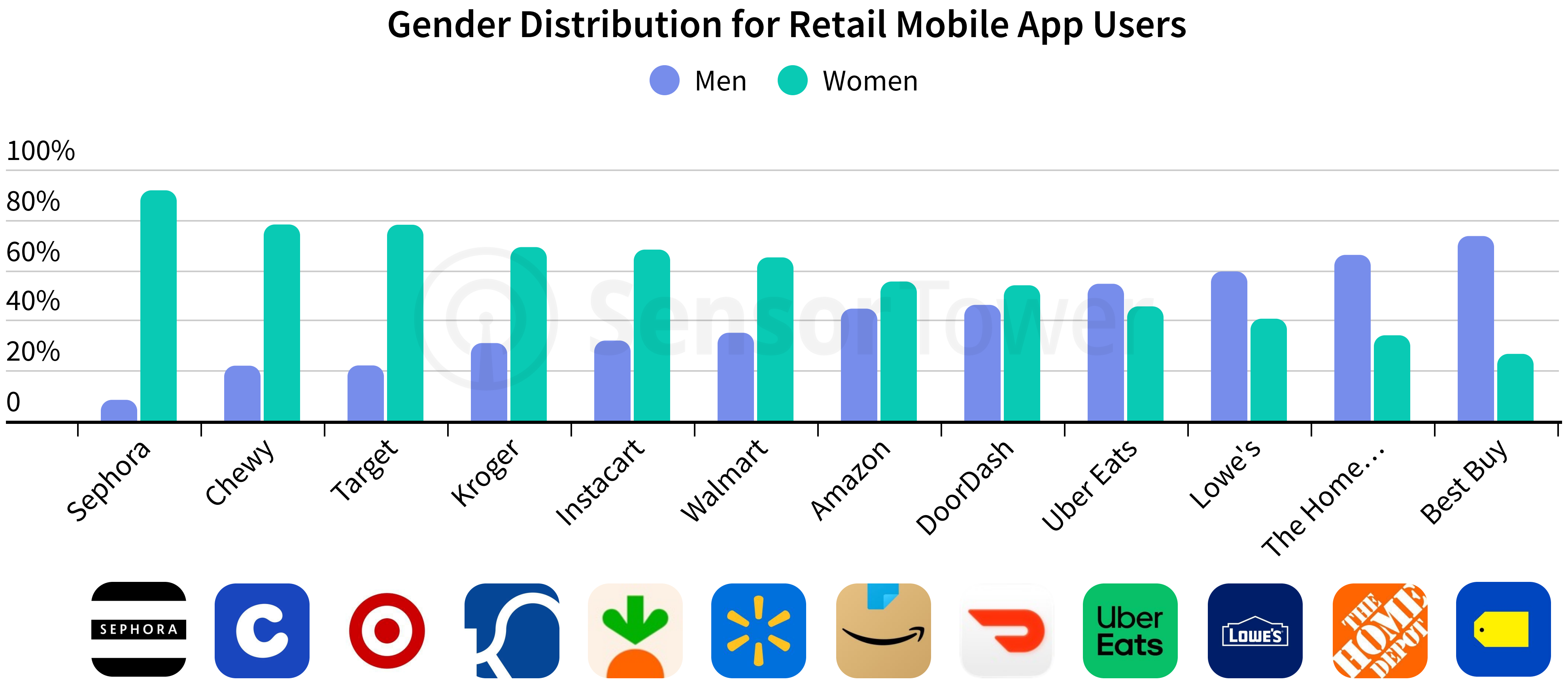
Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of top US retailers. See Appendix (page 73) for list of retailers included in each market.

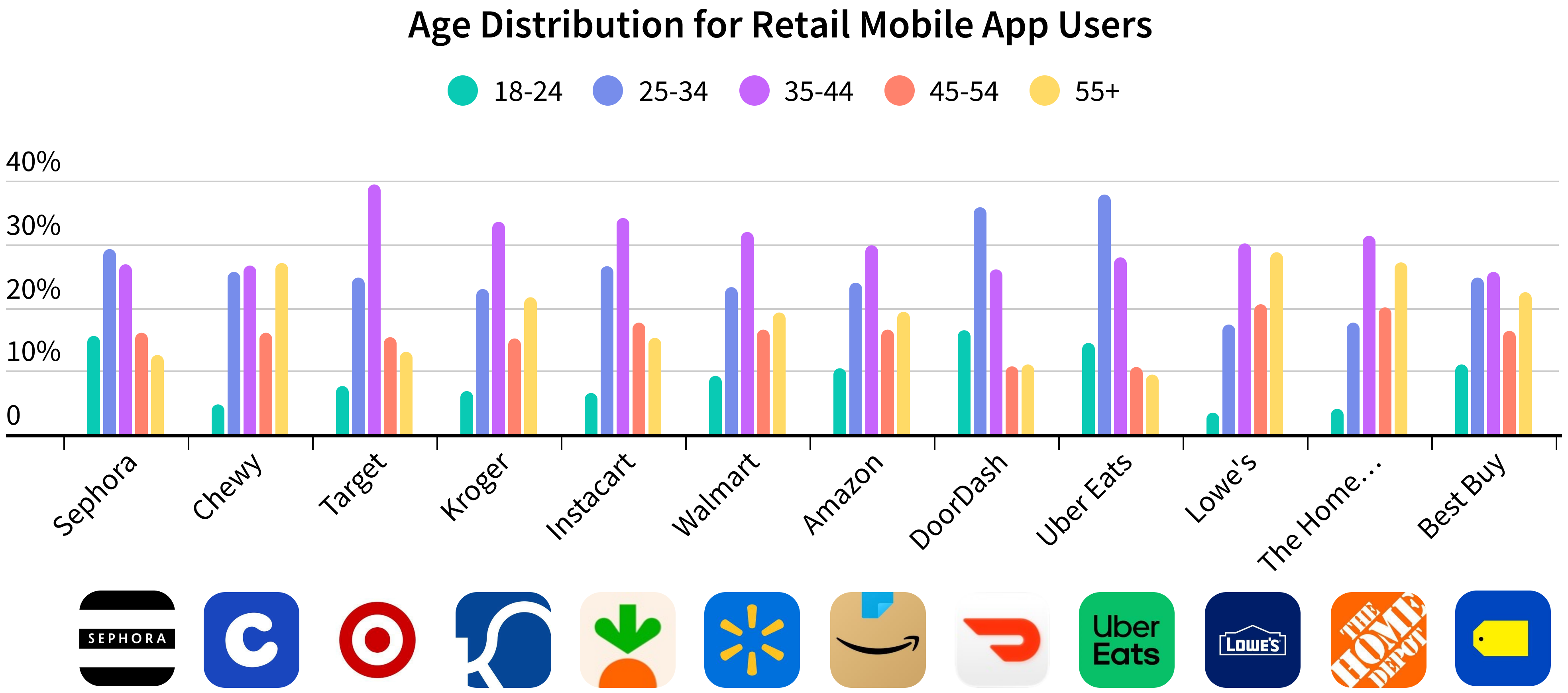


Does Your Retail Media Ad Strategy Fit with the Retailer's Audience?

Female shoppers dominate everyday lifestyle and consumables platforms, with women accounting for nearly or over 60% of app users across Target, Kroger, and Walmart. In contrast, DIY and consumer electronics platforms skew distinctly male, led by Best Buy with a 73% male audience concentration, followed closely by The Home Depot at 66%.

By age distribution, food delivery platforms such as DoorDash and Uber Eats attract the strongest concentration of younger adults (18–34). Meanwhile, home improvement platforms skew significantly toward mature consumers aged 45 and older.





Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Demographics for mobile app users on Android in the United States in Q2 2026. Gender represented as Men and Women only and is not representative of all gender identities

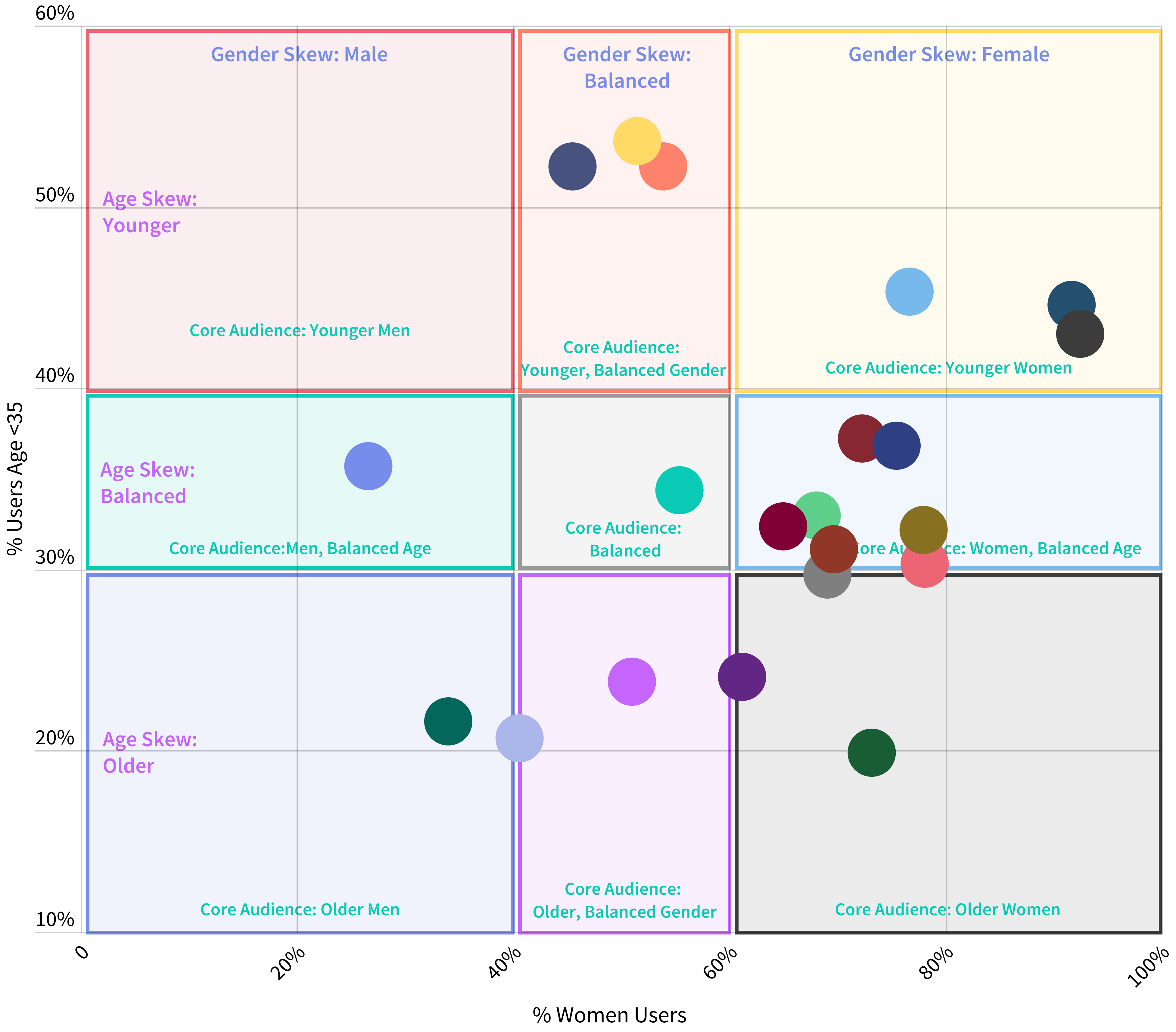
Amazon's Diverse Audience Enables Broad Advertiser Reach

While specialized retail media networks skew heavily toward demographic extremes, Amazon maintains a highly balanced audience of 55% women and 34% users under 35. This demographic neutrality provides a versatile foundation for advertisers seeking to achieve reliable, full-funnel mass-market reach.

For niche targeting, specialized networks offer concentrated demographic reach: food delivery apps like DoorDash, Uber Eats, and Grubhub dominate younger audiences, Sephora, Ulta, and Target command female engagement, while Best Buy and Home Depot lead in reaching male shoppers.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Demographics for mobile app users on Android in the United States in Q2 2026. Gender represented as Men and Women only and is not representative of all gendr identities.

Demographics for Retailer Mobile App Users



Non-Endemic Brands Expand Presence Across Retail Networks

Non-endemic advertisers are rapidly expanding their footprint across retail media networks. Four of Amazon's top ten co-branded partners represent financial, telecommunications, and B2B services rather than physical retail goods, led by AT&T (#3) and American Express (#4). This strategy is scaling across the broader retail ecosystem, highlighted by JPMorgan Chase and Lyft campaigns on DoorDash, alongside Disney+, ESPN+, and Hulu promotions on Kroger.

Retailer: Walmart

Co-Branded Advertiser: Apple Inc.

Product: MacBook Air

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Includes a selection of top US retailers. Excludes advertising for retailer's own products. Top product is based on number of impressions where the creative was captured.

Top Co-Branded Advertisers for United States Retailers by Impressions

January - July 2026

Retailer: Amazon

Rank	CoBranded Advertiser	Top Product	Category Level 3	Example Creative
1	Procter & Gamble	Align	Vitamins & Supplements	Video
2	Unilever	Hellmann's	Food & Beverages	Video
3	AT&T	Quantum Fiber	Consumer Networks	Image
4	American Express	Blue Business Plus Card	Credit & Lending	Image
5	Comcast	Comcast Business Internet	Business Networks	Image
6	PepsiCo	Doritos	Food & Beverages	Video
7	AMOREPACIFIC	Laneige Water Bank Serum	Personal Care	Image
8	Intuit	QuickBooks	Tax Preparation & Accounting	Image
9	Nestle	Pure Encapsulations	Vitamins & Supplements	Video
10	L'Oreal	CeraVe Anti-Dandruff Hair Care	Personal Care	Video

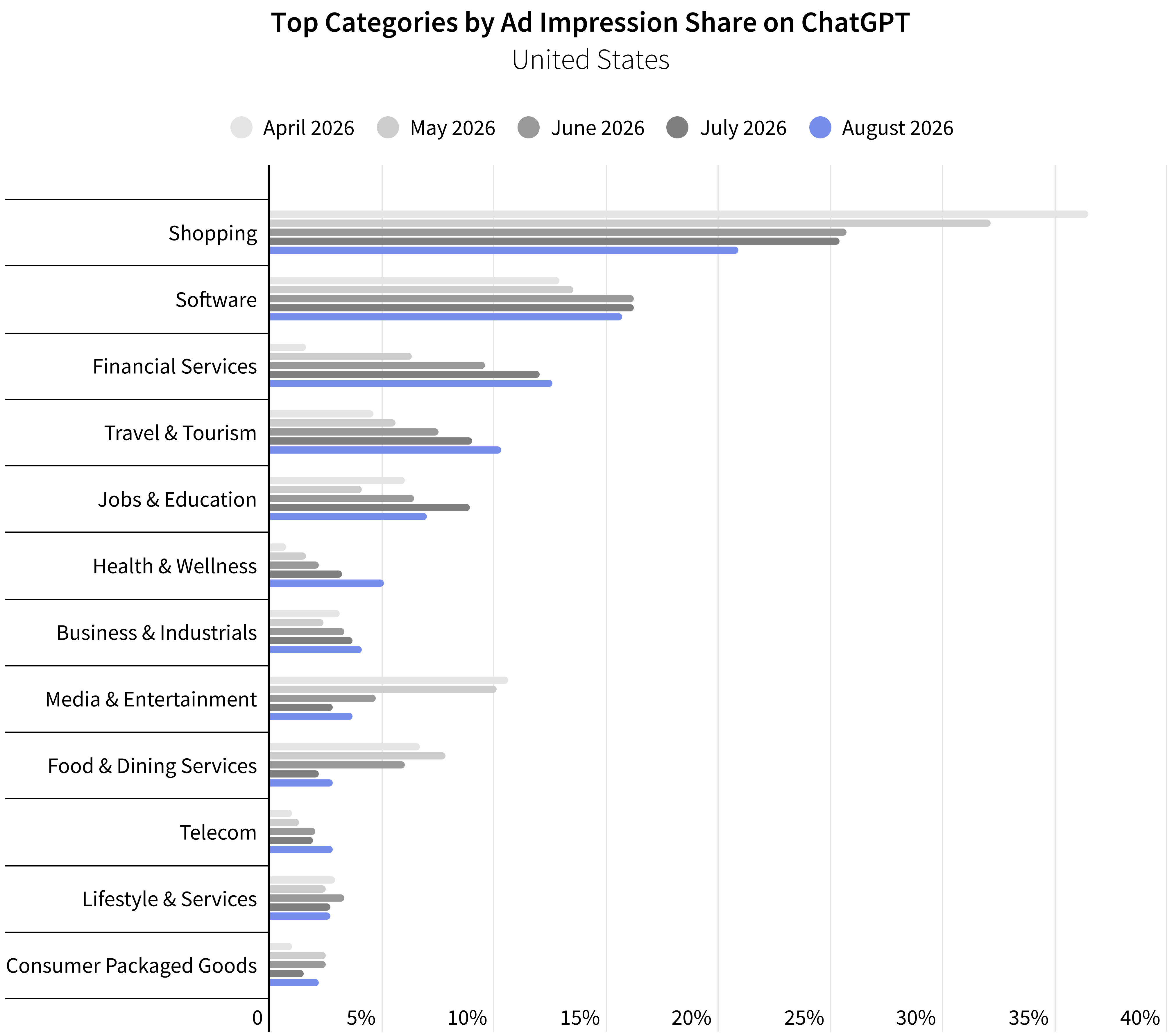
ChatGPT
Advertising Trends

ChatGPT Ad Share Diversifies Beyond E-Commerce

ChatGPT's ad impression distribution diversified rapidly between April and August 2026, transitioning from initial e-commerce dominance toward high-intent service verticals. While Shopping retained its top spot overall, its impression share contracted by nearly 16 percentage points, dropping from 36.5% in April to 20.9% in August as emerging advertiser categories scaled their platform presence.

Intent-driven categories recorded the sharpest market share gains over the past five months. Financial Services surged nearly eightfold to capture 12.6% of total impressions, and Travel & Tourism posted steady month-over-month growth to reach 10.3% (+5.7 ppts vs. April). Additionally, Health & Wellness expanded to 5.1% from 0.7%, reflecting an increasing advertiser focus on capturing high-intent conversational query environments.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad impression estimates as of August, 2026.



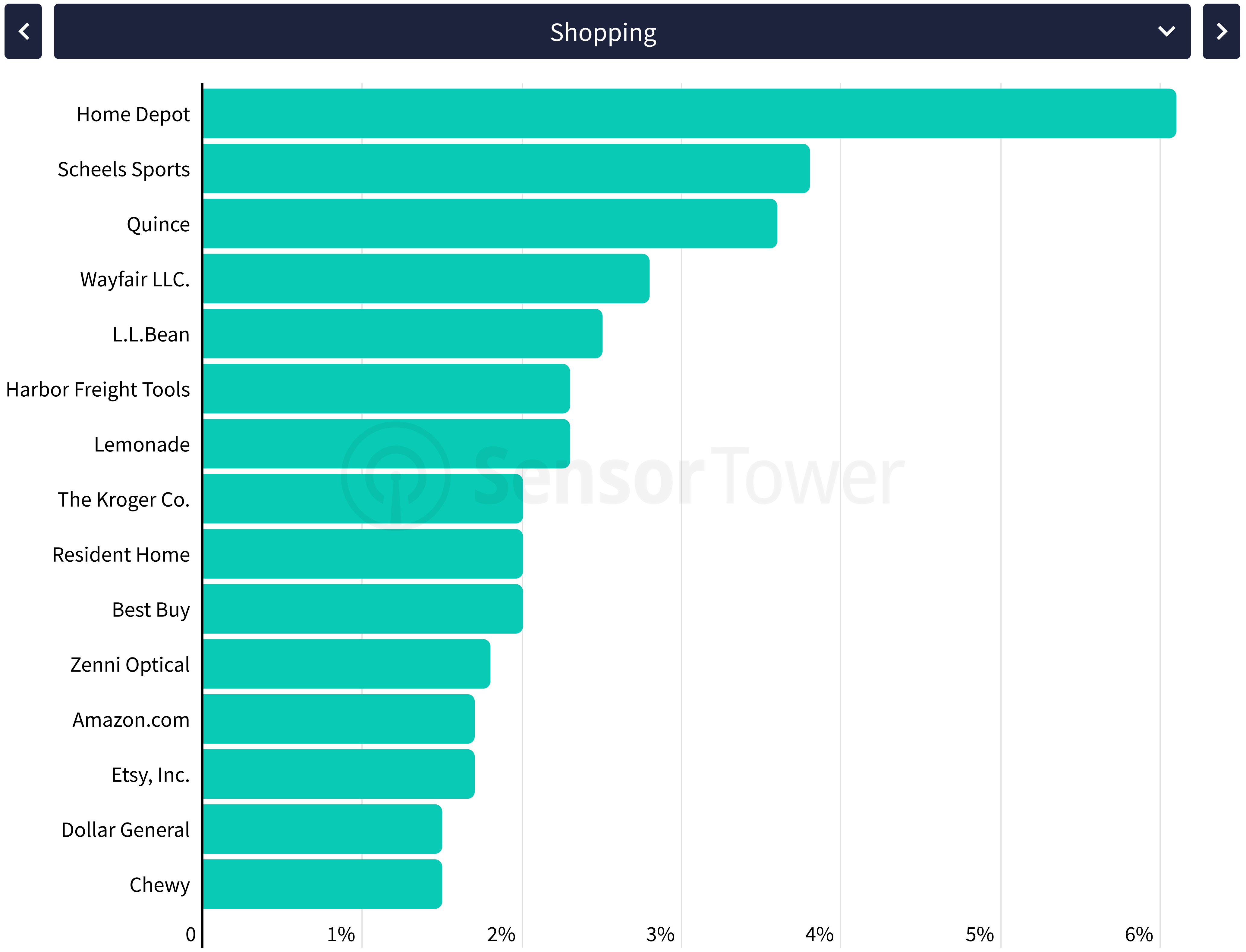
Travel Duopoly Dominates ChatGPT Ads While Shopping Remains Highly Distributed

Brand concentration within ChatGPT's ad auction varies dramatically by vertical, reflecting distinct category maturity and bidding strategies. In Travel & Tourism, Expedia (24%) and Booking Holdings (23%) capture nearly half of all category ad impressions, establishing a formidable duopoly in AI conversational travel planning.

Conversely, Shopping and Software exhibit fragmented, long-tail competition. Shopping displays a widely distributed landscape led by Home Depot (6%) and Scheels Sports (4%), with no single advertiser exceeding a 7% share. Software impressions are similarly spread across SaaS platforms, led by monday.com (5.8%), JotForm (4.6%), Shopify (3.5%), and Adobe (3.5%), underscoring a highly distributed auction where no single player has established market dominance.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Ad spend estimates as of August, 2026. Includes April through August 2026.

Top Advertisers by Share of Ad Impressions on ChatGPT
United States Between April 2026 - August 2026



ChatGPT Users Over-Index Heavily in Shopping, Finance, and Travel Personas

Audience Insights reveals that ChatGPT mobile app users are significantly more likely to fall into Shopping, Finance, and Travel personas compared to the general population. This trend is led by Sneakerheads (+83%), Crypto Traders (+81%), Frequent Car Renters (+64%), Flexible Payers (+52%), World Travelers (+48%), and Shopaholics (+48%).

This high-intent audience profile creates compelling strategic opportunities for advertisers across retail, fintech, financial services, travel, airlines, and hospitality to reach consumers actively seeking premium products, flexible payment solutions, and travel services.

Source: Sensor Tower
Note: Increased Likelihood of User Falling into Persona (vs. the General Population) for ChatGPT.

ChatGPT App Audience Persona Likelihood vs. General Population Baseline
United States Between April 2026 - August 2026

Example:
ChatGPT users are **1.81X** more likely to fall into the Crypto Traders persona than the general population

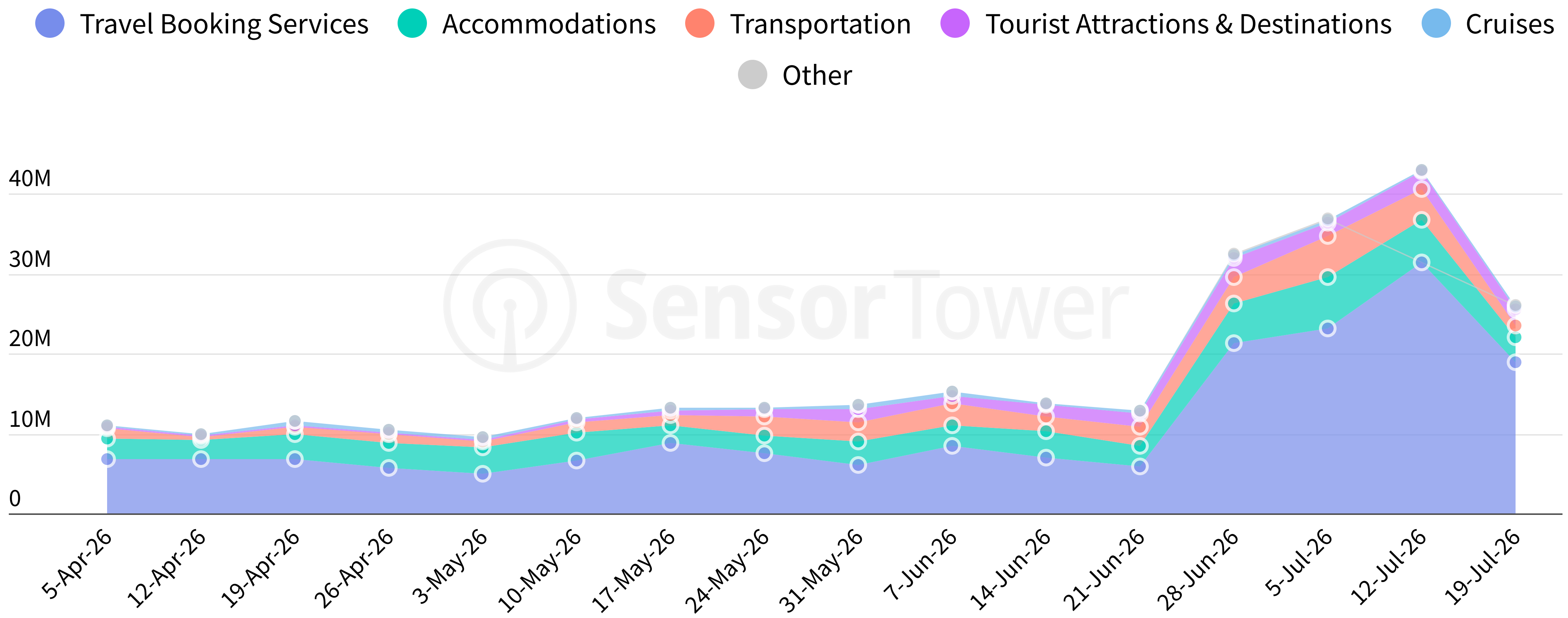
OTAs Scale ChatGPT Impressions for Summer Demand Surge

Travel ad impressions on ChatGPT experienced massive seasonal acceleration, leaping from a 10M weekly baseline throughout April and May to a peak of over 40M in mid-July 2026. ChatGPT dramatically increased the frequency of ads it displayed in late June, which online travel agencies (OTAs) aggressively capitalized on along with peak summer trip planning when intent-based queries surge on AI platforms.

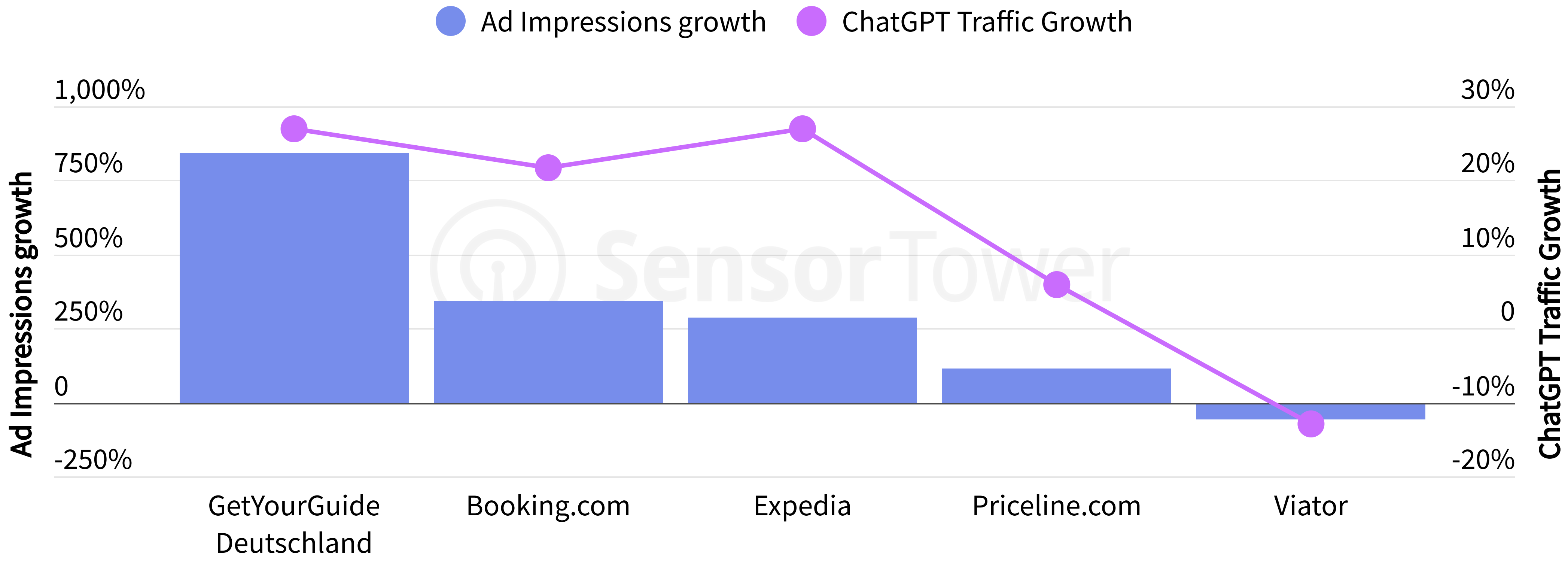
This strategic ad campaign push successfully converted ChatGPT users into direct website visitors, according to Sensor Tower's Web Insights. Inbound traffic from the platform increased across major OTAs, led by GetYourGuide Deutschland (+27% MoM), Expedia (+27%), and Booking.com (+22%), underscoring ChatGPT's growing efficacy as a downstream acquisition channel for travel advertisers.

Source: Sensor Tower

Weekly Travel & Tourism Ad Impressions on ChatGPT in the United States



Travel Brand Ad Impression Growth vs. ChatGPT Traffic Growth in July 2026 (MoM)



Appendix

Appendix A: Digital Advertising Ad Channels by Market

Data includes select channels in each market. Figures in this report represent the totals for these channels only, not across all digital formats.

- At this time, our technology allows us to report down to nine individual streaming services: Amazon Prime Video, Disney+, HBO Max, Hulu, Netflix, Peacock, Paramount+, tubi and PlutoTV. All other OTT campaigns outside of these nine services are grouped into a single OTT Streaming Services (General) bucket.

- Several new ad channels have been recently released and are not yet in this report, including Youtube in Taiwan and Mobile App in Japan. These are available for Sensor Tower customers at https://pathmatics.sensortower.com or you can request a demo here.

Included Ad Channels by Market

Key: ✓ Included ad channel | ★ Recently added channel (only included in select slides) | ○ Ad channel not included in market

AMER | EMEA | APAC

	United States	Canada	Argentina	Brazil	Mexico
Social Networks					
Facebook	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Instagram	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
LINE	○	○	○	○	○
LinkedIn	✓	✓	★	✓	○
NAVER	○	○	○	○	○
Pinterest	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reddit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Snapchat	✓	✓	○	○	○
TikTok	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Search					
ChatGPT	★	○	○	○	○
Display & Video					
Desktop Display	✓	✓	○	○	○
Desktop Video	✓	✓	○	○	○
Mobile Apps	✓	✓	○	✓	✓
Mobile Display	✓	✓	○	○	○
Mobile Video	○	○	○	○	○
TV & Streaming					
Linear TV	✓	○	○	○	○
OTT	✓	○	○	○	○
YouTube	✓	✓	○	✓	✓

Appendix B: Included Retail Media Retailers by Market

Retail media advertising data include select retailers in each market. Figures in this report represent the totals for these retailers only, not across all retailers in the market.

- Most of the analysis in this report focuses on the most recent quarter. However, for the analysis covering retail media impressions over time by market, any retailers that only have partial data available are excluded.
- Category and advertiser analyses exclude cases when the advertisers are not currently tracked by Sensor Tower or advertising for retailer's own products.

Included Retail Media Retailers by Market

Key: ✓ Included retailer ★ Recently added retailer (only included in select slides)

United States | United Kingdom | Canada

Retailer		Retailer		Retailer	
7-Eleven	✓	Family Dollar Stores, Inc.	✓	Publix Super Markets	✓
Ace Hardware	✓	Five Below	✓	Sam's West (Sam's Club)	✓
Ahold Delhaize	✓	General Nutrition Corporation (GNC)	✓	Sephora	✓
Albertsons Companies Inc.	✓	Home Depot	✓	Seven & i Holdings Co., Ltd.	✓
Amazon.com	✓	Hy-Vee, Inc.	✓	Target	✓
Best Buy Co., Inc.	✓	Instacart (Maplebear Inc.)	✓	The Kroger Co.	✓
Chewy, Inc.	✓	Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.	✓	Uber Technologies, Inc.	✓
Costco Wholesale Corp	✓	Macy's, Inc.	✓	Ulta Salon, Cosmetics & Fragrance, Inc	✓
CVS Health	✓	Meijer Inc.	✓	Walgreens	✓
Dollar General Corporation	✓	Petco	✓	Walmart Inc.	✓
DoorDash, Inc.	✓	PetSmart	✓		

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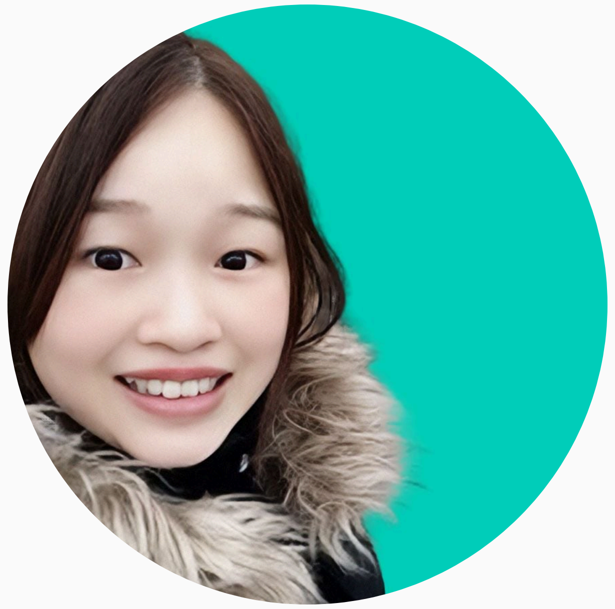
Meet the authors



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Yuwen has been analyzing the digital economy since 2021, specializing in digital advertising and non-game verticals including Retail, Streaming, and Food & Drink. She is the lead analyst for Sensor Tower's reports including the State of Food Delivery & Rideshare and the quarterly Digital Market Index.

Favorite App in 2025: rednote

Jonathan Briskman
Director, Market Insights

Jonathan leads Sensor Tower's Market Insights team, covering trends across the digital economy, from mobile and web to digital advertising. Since 2018, he has helped shape Sensor Tower's market research, including reports such as the State of AI Apps and the State of Digital Advertising.

Favorite App in 2025: Strava

About Sensor Tower

Sensor Tower is a global provider of digital intelligence solutions, empowering companies to understand consumer behavior and market performance across mobile apps, digital platforms, and gaming ecosystems. Headquartered in San Francisco, Sensor Tower's insights are trusted by more than 2,500 enterprises worldwide.

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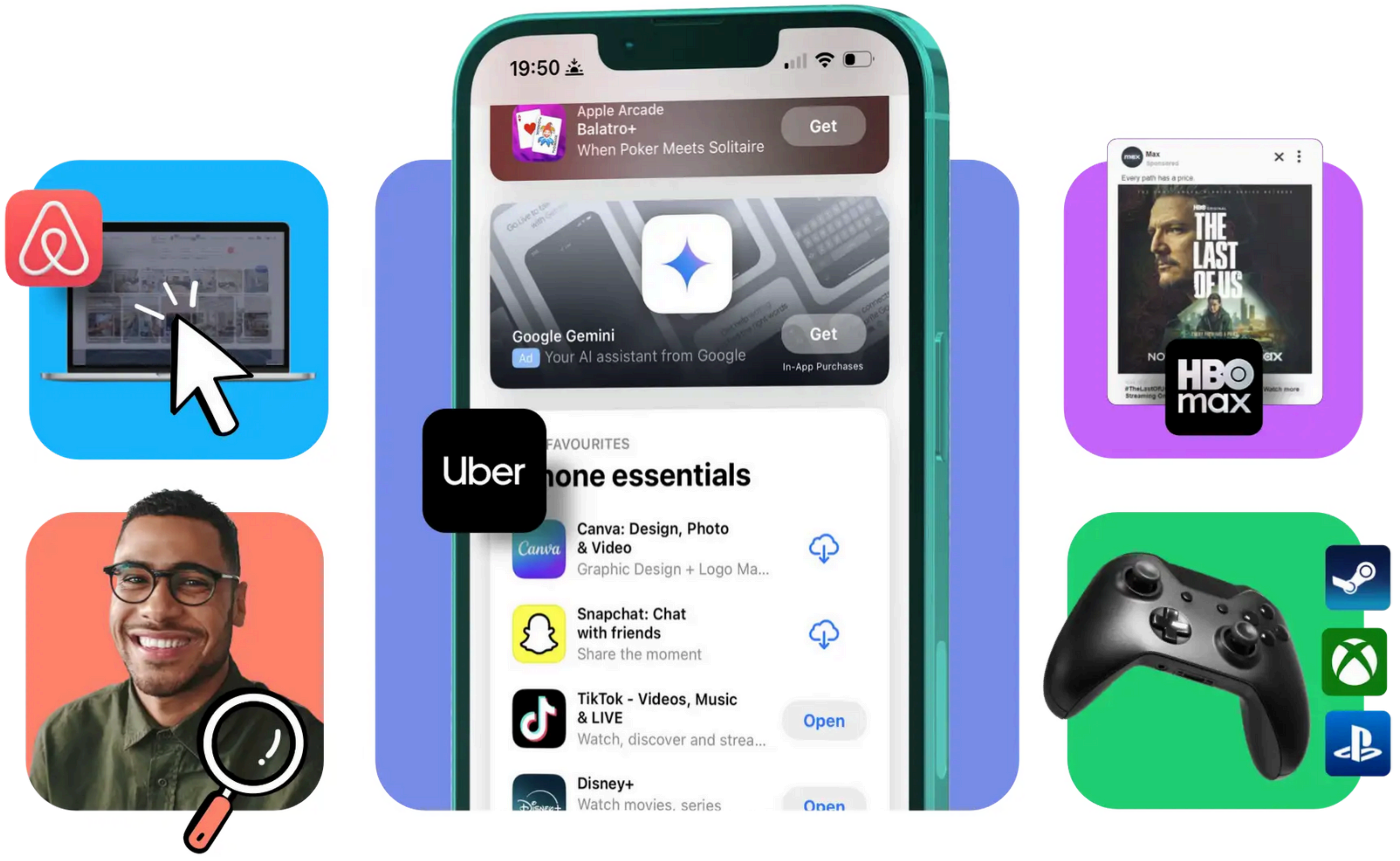

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