

2024 Insights From User Interaction Data:

How AI Assistants Are Redefining Product Customization

What style do you imagine for your dream range?

Well my kitchen is pretty modern.

In that case, I'd recommend our Le Contemporain style.

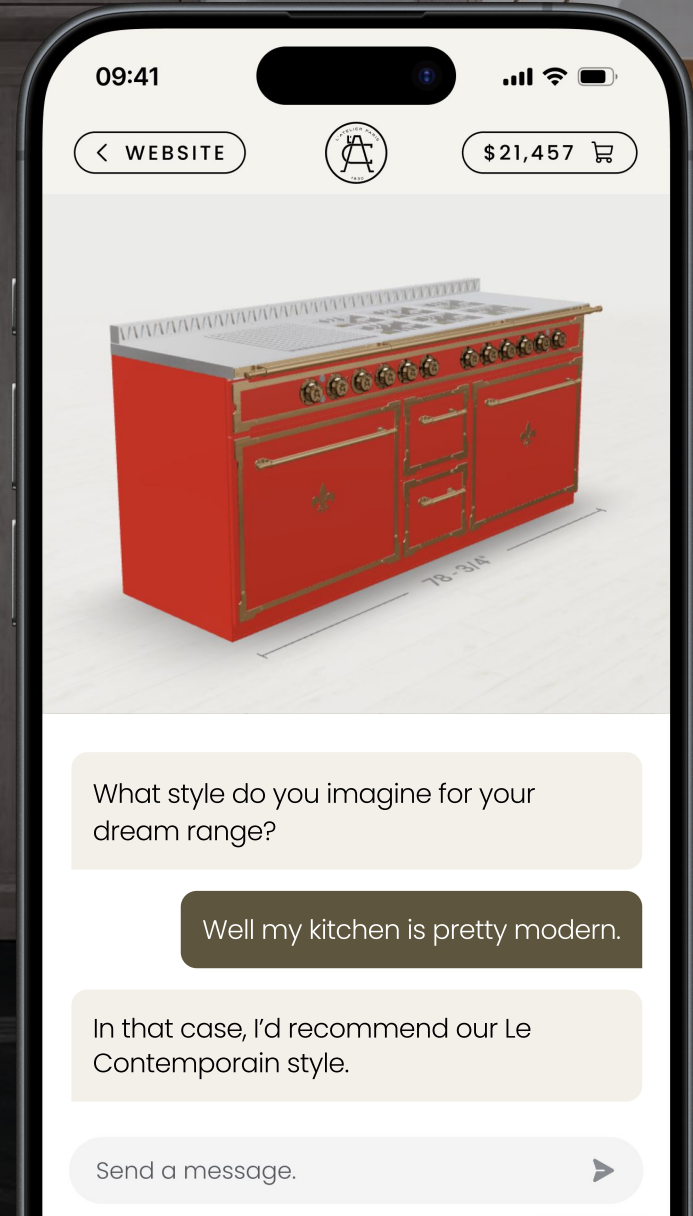


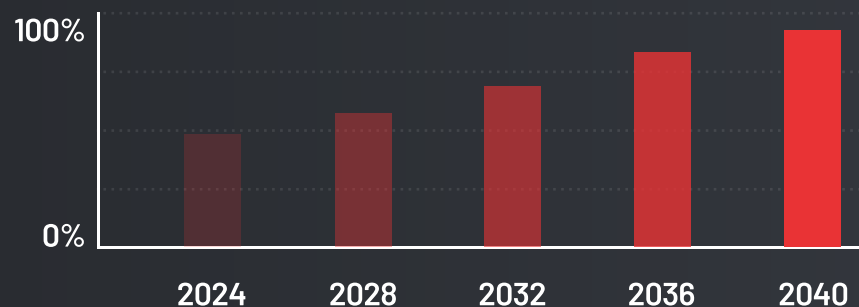
Table of Content

Introduction	03
Objectives of the Study	04
What Is Conversational UI	05
Methodology	06
A Word From Our UX Researcher	07
Key Findings on the Usage and Adoption of AI Assistants in Conversational Configurators	08
Conclusion: Conversational UI Significantly Enhances Product Configurators	14

Introduction

According to Nasdaq, by 2040, 95% of purchases are expected to occur on e-commerce platforms. As more people shop digitally, businesses need to create smooth, engaging, and personalized online experiences. This means using advanced technology and easy-to-use interfaces. With the latest advancements in AI and large language models (LLMs), AI assistants are set to be key in meeting the growing needs of online shoppers for hyper-personalization.

AI assistants are not to be confused with chatbots. Chatbots, which spread across e-commerce stores a decade ago mainly for customer support, quickly showed their limitations. These rule-based bots provide only pre-programmed, repetitive, and predictable answers that frustrate users. AI assistants, based on large language models (LLMs), however, can answer with a deep understanding of natural language, comprehend nuanced contexts, and actively ask for clarifications to provide personalized help.



95% of purchases are expected to occur on e-commerce platforms by 2040.

Objectives of the Study

When selling customizable products online—be it custom furniture, bespoke jewelry, or custom railings—displaying your product features and options in 3D is essential. In fact, more than 8 in 10 shoppers prefer to interact with 3D when given the choice. However, a 3D configurator alone doesn't meet the growing demand for hyper-personalization and interactive experiences. Many users find configuring a product with a 3D tool daunting without proper guidance, especially when the product is more complex, like designing a wooden desk down to the millimeter. In fact, 71% of consumers expect personalized interactions, and 76% become frustrated when companies fail to deliver them.

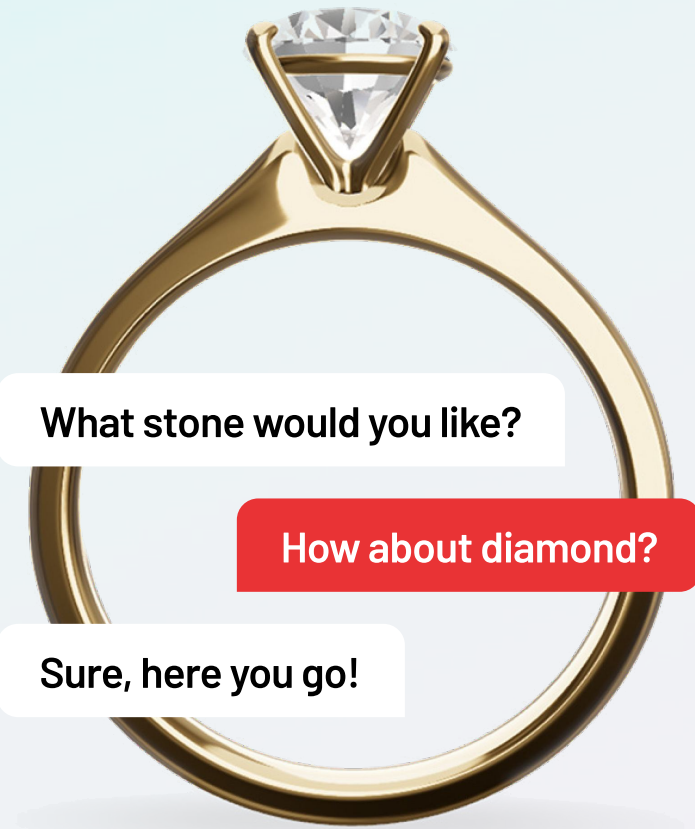
By having an AI design assistant at the core of the customization experience, Conversational Configurators can address this issue. After developing the world's first and only Conversational Configurator, we aimed, with this study, to assess its adoption and impact. We analyzed real user data to understand if Conversational UI technology and AI design assistants truly enhance the customization experience.



What Is Conversational UI?

Conversational UI, or Conversational User Interface, is the technology behind our AI assistants. It allows users to interact with AI using natural language, similar to how they would talk to another person. Instead of clicking buttons or typing commands, users can simply speak or type in everyday language to get things done.

When applied to Conversational Configurators, this technology makes customizing products much easier and more intuitive. For example, if you're configuring a custom ring, instead of selecting each component manually, you can just tell the AI "I want a gold ring with a sapphire stone," and the AI will guide you through the options. If you're not sure what stone to choose, the AI can recommend options based on your unique tastes and preferences. This makes the whole process faster, more convenient, and more user-friendly.



Traditional



Yellow Gold



Diamond

Methodology

To gather real user data, we conducted various usability tests and user interviews over six months on a Conversational Configurator we deployed for L'Atelier Paris. This Conversational Configurator allows users to design high-end kitchens in real-time with the help of an AI design assistant.

Sophie, the AI design assistant for L'Atelier Paris, helps users design their kitchen range by asking discovery questions, providing expert advice and information about the product, configurator, and company, and applying changes in real-time. The AI design assistant understands natural language, so users don't have to use specific phrasing. There is also a voice-enabled option, allowing users to talk to the AI instead of typing.

Participants met the following criteria:

- US Residents from New York, Miami, Los Angeles, and Dallas (showroom locations)
- Ages 40-54
- Household income of \$80,000+

We analyzed the results and conducted debrief sessions between the interviewer and the observer to gain deeper insights into user interactions and experiences.



A Word From Our UX Researcher

“For the last half a year, we’ve been engaged in continuous product discovery work, examining the usage and adoption of AI assistants in Conversational Configurators, as well as the general concept of Conversational UI.

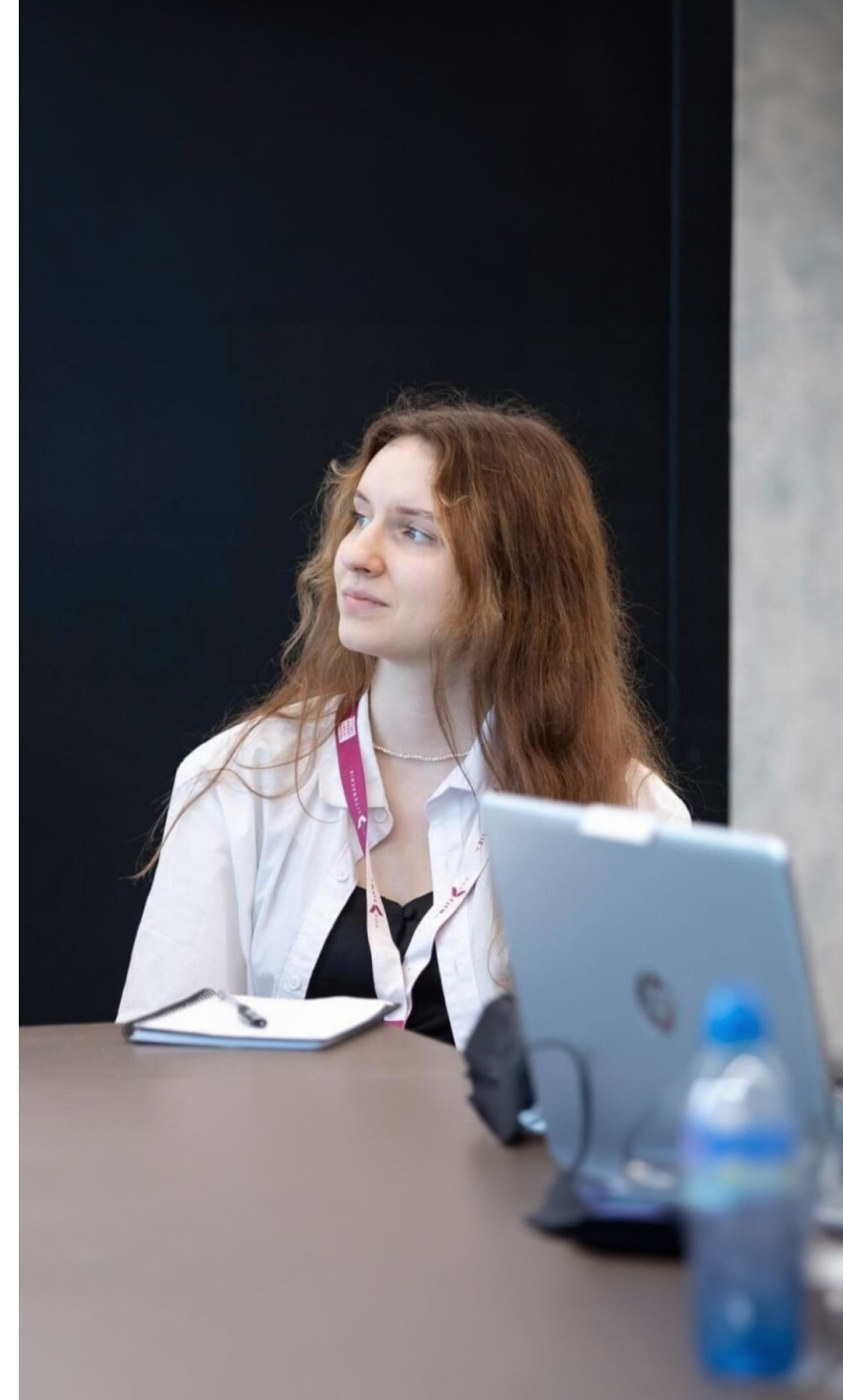
To achieve this, we created a research plan, recruited users from our client’s target audience, created interview and testing guides, and held alignment and feedback sessions internally. The number of participants varied from 4 to 150, depending on the needs of each test.


We’ve worked with images of UI, Figma and Protopie prototypes, and deployment instances, conducting different types of studies: A/B tests, interviews, and usability sessions. Most of them were unmoderated, but we did three moderated ones as well. We had at least one designer on the call so we could debrief the sessions together before going through an in-depth analysis of the results.

Our research topics included AI product discovery and onboarding, creative generation of products, guided product tours, hybrid UI (classic + conversational), mobile adoption of our AI solution, voice UI, and even ChatGPT performance checks. It was crucial that the technology had the capability to be of real help to the users, working well in a specific product customization context.”

Natalia Kostrzewa

UX Researcher, Salsita



A modern kitchen with dark wood cabinetry and a white island. The kitchen features a long island with a white countertop and a black pot on the stove. The walls are covered in dark wood paneling. The floor is made of light-colored wood. The lighting is warm and focused on the island.

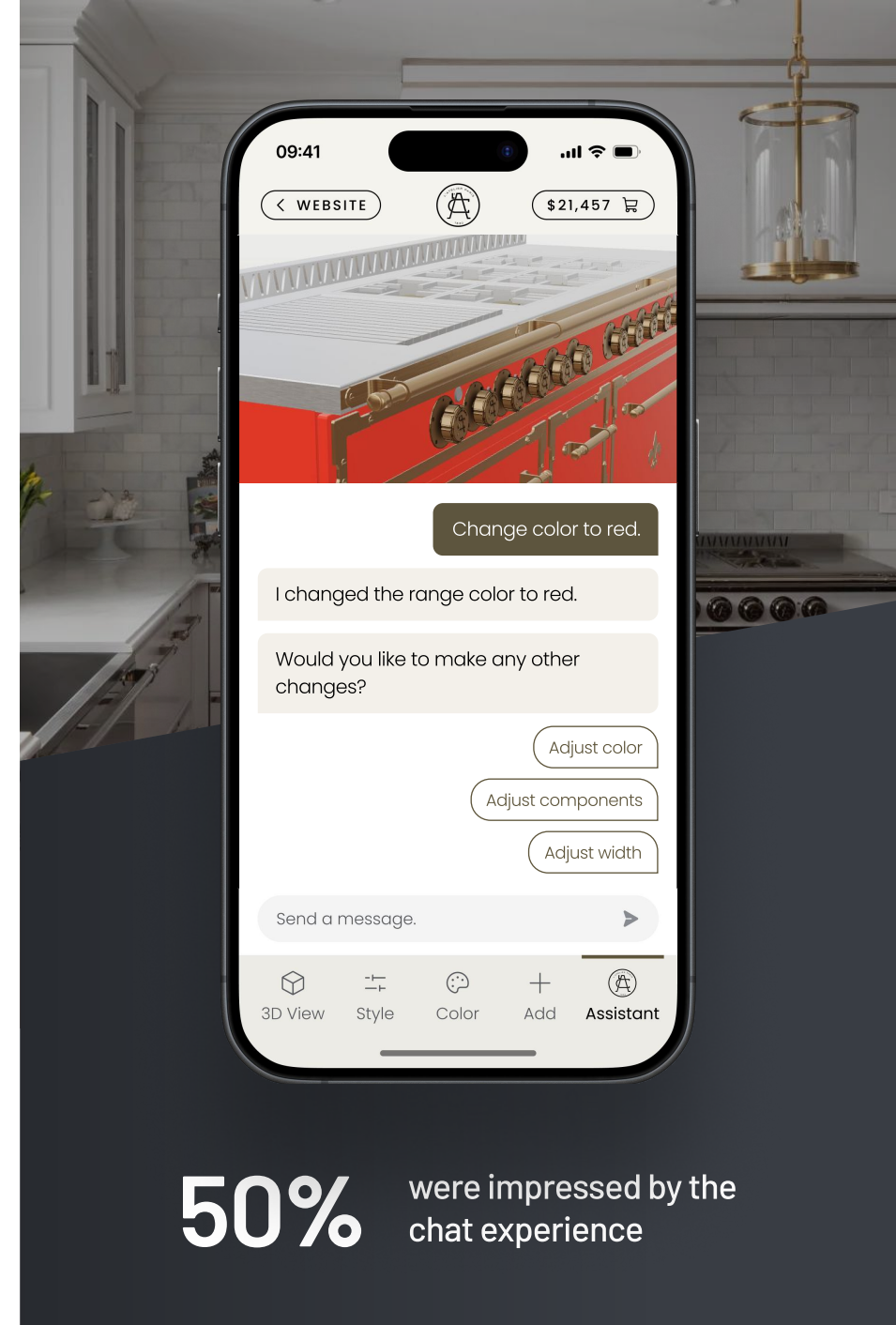
Key Findings on the Usage and Adoption of AI Assistants in Conversational Configurators

Key Finding 1

The AI Design Assistant Makes a Great Impression on Users

50% of the users were impressed with the AI's interactive capabilities, especially its ability to implement 3D changes in real-time.

When users ask the AI design assistant to modify or add a feature, it applies the changes in real-time, eliminating the need for users to make adjustments themselves. Additionally, in-chat widgets and conversational helpers enable users to modify the product within the chat interface without typing



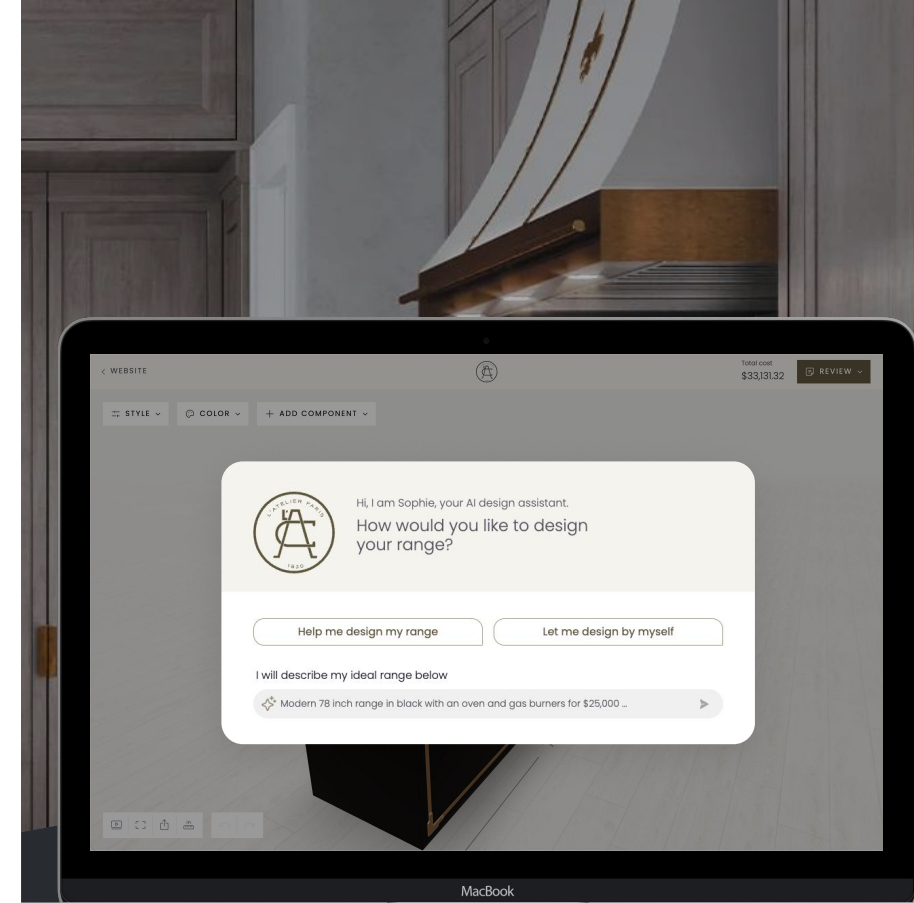
50% were impressed by the chat experience

Key Finding 2

Users Prefer a Smooth Initial Interaction with the AI

75% of users initially preferred exploring the interface independently before using the chat feature. This suggests that while users appreciate guidance from an expert, they prefer to first browse the configurator options on their own. They want to assess what help they need rather than being forced into immediate interaction with the AI assistant through an aggressive popup.

In the case of the Conversational Configurator we developed for l'Atelier Paris, users are left with three choices: get help designing their kitchen range from the start, start designing by themselves, or start by describing their dream kitchen and let the AI inspire them. This flexibility ensures that users can choose the approach that best fits their comfort level and needs, enhancing their overall experience.



75%

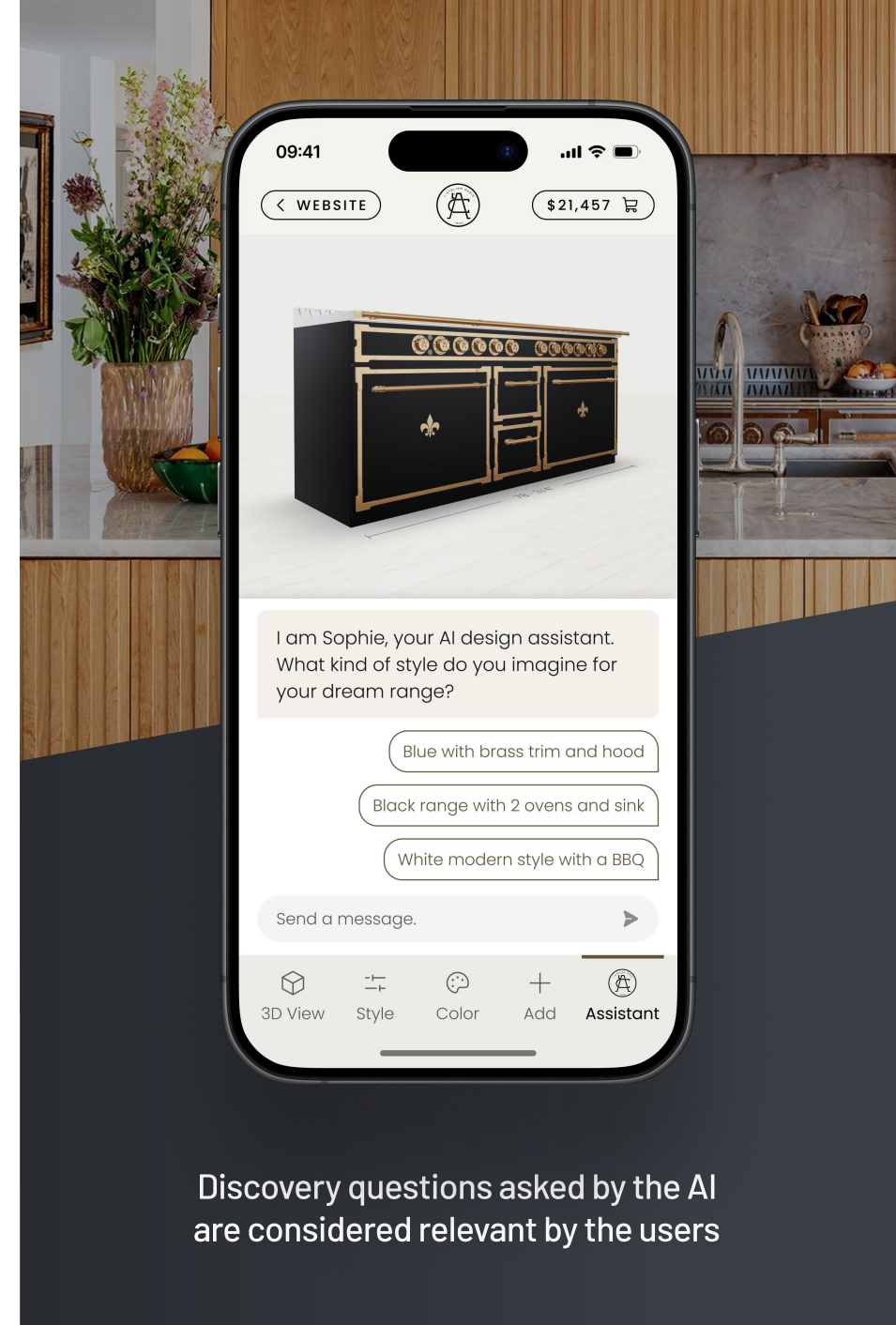
prefer exploring independently
before using the chat feature

Key Finding 3

Most Users Trust The Expertise Of The AI

Users feel comfortable telling their requirements to the AI design assistant and trust its expertise, even though it's not a human sales representative. This high level of trust in AI reflects a growing trend, as data shows that 76% of customers are open to AI assistants responding to their questions. This confidence also stems from the AI's ability to remain friendly and polite, never getting angry or losing patience.

Our AI design assistants are loaded with detailed product, configurator, company, purchasing and transportation information. This makes them highly knowledgeable about using the configurator and identifying the right product features for users' unique needs and preferences. Plus, the AI's ability to understand natural language is a big trust booster. Users can speak naturally, without worrying about specific terms, making the experience feel like chatting with a real human expert.



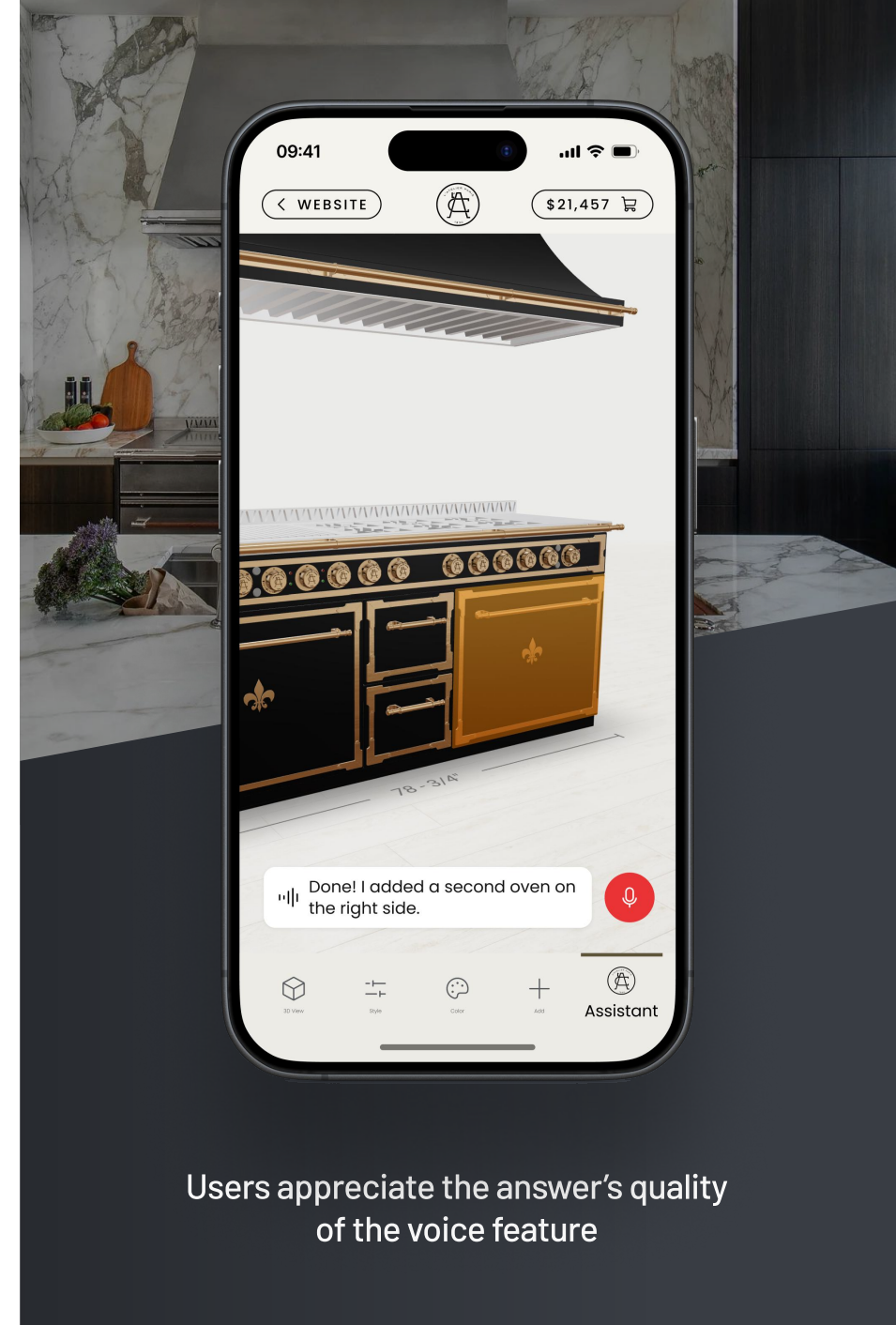
Discovery questions asked by the AI are considered relevant by the users

Key Finding 4

Voice Feature Is a Great Fit for New User Habits

Our preliminary research showed that users are impressed with the voice feature when they try it. They have low expectations for it, but end up being surprised with the answer's quality. This indicates a growing acceptance and preference for voice interactions among users.

As more people shop from their phones, they seek the most convenient ways to get immediate help. Typing on a phone can be impractical, so being able to talk to the AI as if speaking to an expert in a store greatly enhances the user experience, especially on mobile devices. This voice feature makes interactions smoother and more efficient, aligning perfectly with new user habits.



Users appreciate the answer's quality of the voice feature

Key Finding 5

AI Design Assistants Get a High NPS Score

75% of users rated their experience with our AI assistants 9 or 10 out of 10. The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a widely used metric for measuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. It's calculated based on responses to a single question: "How likely is it that you would recommend our company, product, or service to a friend or colleague?" Respondents provide a rating on a scale from 0 to 10, where higher scores indicate higher satisfaction and likelihood to recommend.

This high NPS shows that our AI design assistant is having a significant positive impact. Users who rate their experience a 9 or 10 are promoters, eager to actively recommend the product. By combining expert knowledge, rich chat options, real-time changes, and natural conversation, the AI assistant greatly enhances the user experience. It serves as a powerful complement to a 3D configurator, making customization smoother and more interactive.

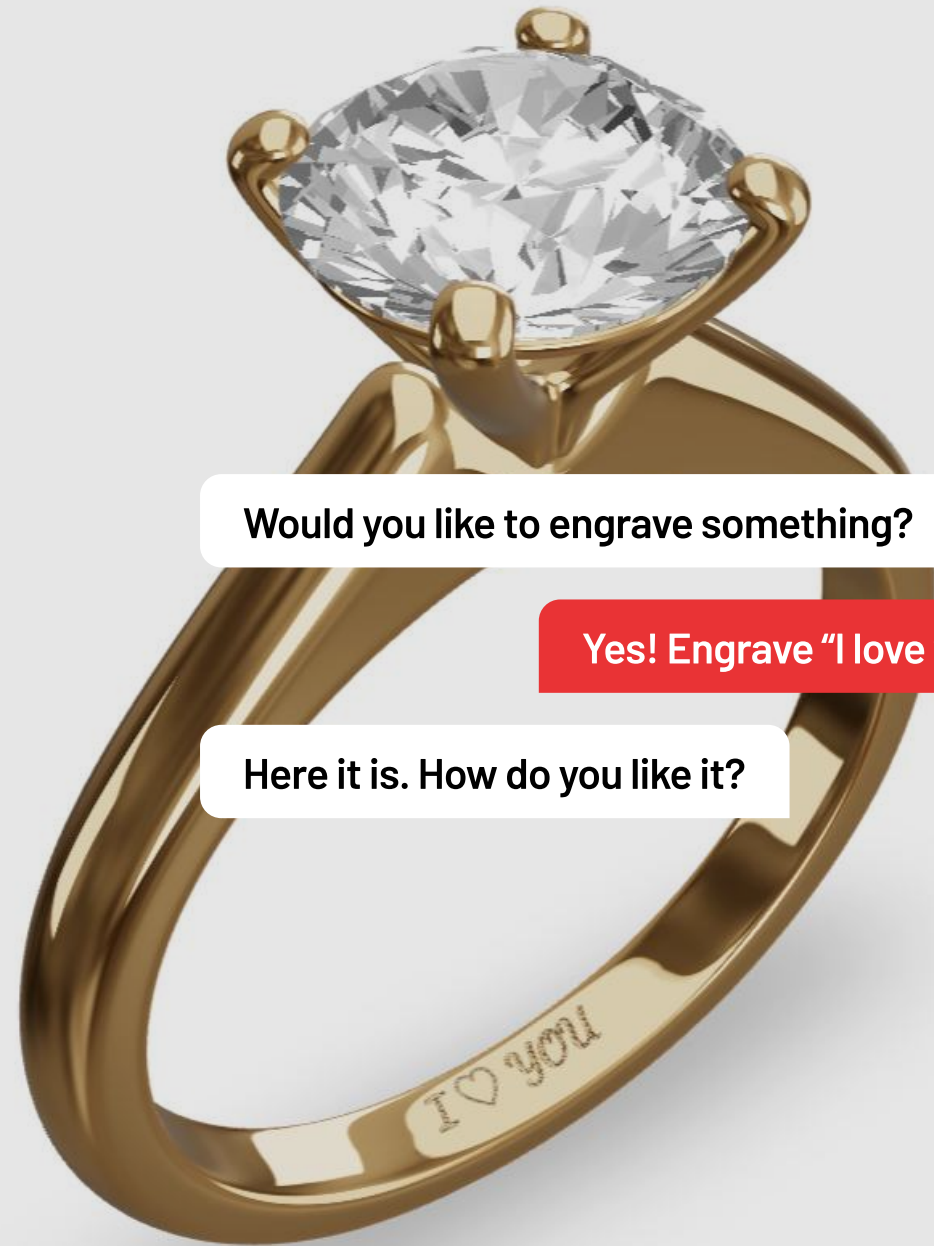


75%

of surveyed users rated their experience with our AI assistant 9 or 10.

Conclusion:

Conversational UI Significantly Enhances Product Configurators



Why Should You Care About Conversational UI

“Over the past few decades, we have seen a number of paradigm shifts in how people use software: graphical user interfaces, the World Wide Web, and touchscreens, to name a few. The latest advances in AI, epitomized by ChatGPT and other so-called ‘large language models,’ promise to have a similar impact.”

Matthew Gertner

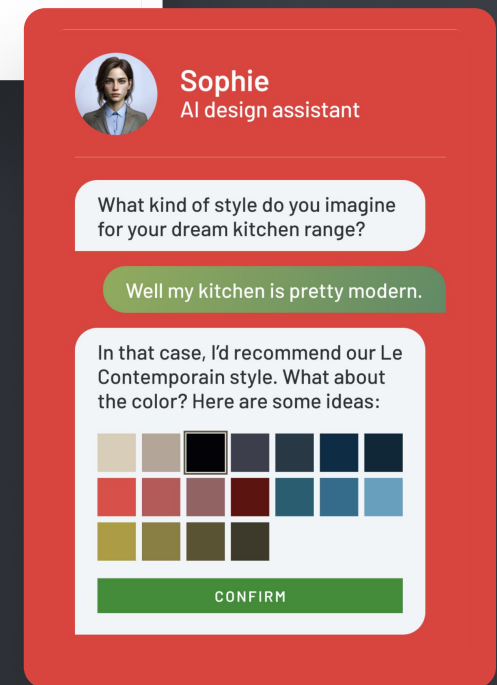
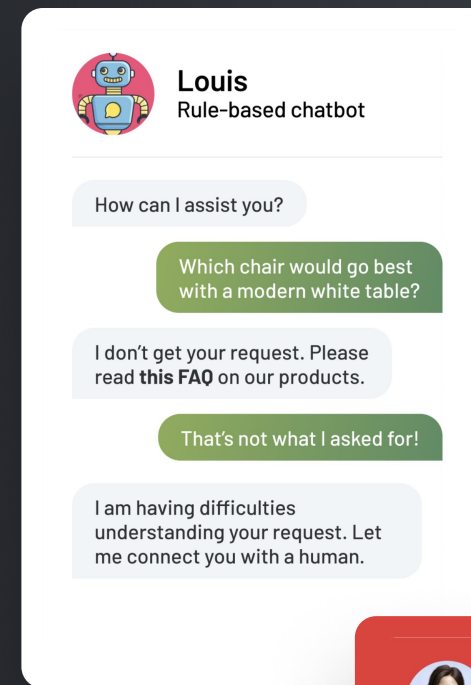
Founder and CEO, Salsita



AI Assistants Are Not Just Another Chatbot

We are still in the early stages of AI assistants, so users still need to learn about their capabilities, which go far beyond traditional chatbots. Rule-based chatbots, the earliest form of this technology, became popular in the early 2000s, mainly for handling customer support requests. However, they quickly became frustrating for users and showed their limitations because they mostly responded with canned messages like “I don’t understand your request” or “Let me connect you with a human.

AI assistants simulate human-like conversations using advanced technology like Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Large Language Models (LLMs). NLP helps them understand context, nuances, and intent in human language. LLMs, trained on vast amounts of text data, generate coherent responses. This enables AI assistants to handle a wide range of queries and tasks, offering more flexible and accurate responses than rule-based chatbots. Additionally, they can execute requests in real-time and serve as a single source of truth, which is not the case for traditional chatbots.



What Is Salsita Conversational Configurator

Salsita has developed the world's first Conversational Configurator, combining advanced 3D Configurators with Conversational UI to create a compelling user experience. Whether you are selling custom furniture, tailor-made jewelry, or custom railings, adopting this technology at an early stage will position you as a pioneer and set your brand apart:

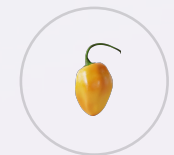
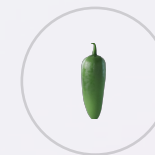
- **Enhanced Customer Interaction:** Mimicking in-store personalized service, Conversational Configurators guide customers through the customization process, providing real-time assistance and tailored product recommendations.
- **Increased Engagement:** The interactive nature of Conversational Configurators keeps customers engaged and increases conversion rates.
- **Competitive Edge:** Early adoption of Conversational Configurators sets retail companies apart, attracting tech-savvy customers and enhancing brand differentiation.



How hot do you like chili?

I want something mildly hot.

Here! Have a Cayenne pepper.



About Salsita

Salsita assists e-commerce brands in empowering their customers to discover, design, and experience their dream products, conversationally. We create state-of-the-art Conversational Configurators with advanced AR and AI features. With Conversational UI at the heart of the experience, shoppers can configure even intricate products, while receiving expert guidance and real-time recommendations from an AI design assistant with extensive product knowledge.

salsita.ai

