

ACSI® Search and Social Media Study 2024

July 23, 2024



American Customer Satisfaction Index



Search Engine Push into AI and Continued Evolution of Social Media Platforms Support Higher Satisfaction for Users

Artificial intelligence is rapidly changing the way people search online for information and engage with social media, the pros and cons of which are yet to fully play out. As users are now getting their first impressions of AI-enhanced online experiences, ACSI results generally point to progress. Search and information sites overall hold steady at the higher satisfaction level achieved in 2023, while social media shows modest improvement in both user satisfaction and across several aspects of the customer experience.

For individual sites tracked by the ACSI, innovation in these spaces has had more of a mixed effect. The increasing deployment of AI-enabled search benefits multiple brands in the industry, but the user satisfaction gap between leader Google and the industry's laggards has changed little.

SEARCH ENGINES AND INFORMATION

80 ◀▶ 0%

SOCIAL MEDIA

74 ▲ +1%

On the social media side, while the majority of sites continue to grow their user bases, not all are achieving satisfaction growth. Overall, social media remains anchored at the lower end of the Index despite three years of satisfaction improvement. While some brands make gains this year, others appear to stumble with updates to their core offerings that fail to impress users. And the industry continues to face headwinds from users around the privacy and advertising experiences on their platforms. ACSI results underscore the ongoing challenge social media brands face in balancing user experience with the demands of content providers and the need to monetize their platforms to drive business success.

The ACSI results are based on surveys conducted over a 12-month period ending in June 2024. ACSI scores are reported on a 0 to 100 scale.

Key Takeaways

SEARCH ENGINES AND INFORMATION

- Search engine and information sites overall have stabilized at the higher ACSI score of 80 posted in 2023 after several years of scores in the mid-to-upper 70s.
- Market behemoth Google (81) continues to enjoy the top spot in the industry as all measured search brands see scores hold steady or improve, with no drops in user satisfaction.
- The study findings point to the impact and continuing potential of new AI-enabled search functionality to drive further improvements in the customer experience.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Social media posts its third straight year of satisfaction improvement in 2024, rising 1% to 74 from 73 in 2023.
- TikTok emerges for the first time as the industry leader among the major sites, squeezing past YouTube for the high score of 78.
- Meta enjoys a particularly strong year of improvements, with both Facebook and Instagram showing 3-point gains in user satisfaction.
- ACSI data show continuing challenges for the industry in the areas of privacy and advertising.

Study Findings

Customer satisfaction is a driving force that impacts the financial outlook of individual firms and the health of the U.S. economy at large. New results from the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) include customer satisfaction benchmarks for search engine and information websites and social media platforms. The ACSI also captures consumer opinions about critical elements of the customer experience, tailored individually to each measured industry.

SEARCH ENGINES AND INFORMATION

Search engine and information sites overall remain at the higher satisfaction level of 80 earned in 2023 after several years of ACSI scores in the mid-to-upper 70s. All the individual search brands tracked by the ACSI show satisfaction score increases or maintain their prior performance. Industrywide, the customer experience improves across nearly all benchmarks in the study.

Dominant market player Google maintains its leadership position in the industry with an ACSI score of 81, up 1% year over year. Bing (77) and Yahoo! (76) both notch 3% gains in satisfaction in 2024, rising to their highest ACSI scores in over a decade, but continue to trail Google and DuckDuckGo by notable margins.

ACSI findings hint at the potential of new AI-enabled search functionality to drive further improvements in the customer experience. Both Bing and Yahoo! launched significant and heavily touted overhauls to their platforms in 2023, leveraging new AI-enhanced search capability along with other changes to the user experience. ACSI data suggest that these efforts are beginning to bear fruit in driving higher levels of satisfaction. Bing has also begun to see its market share improve by small but notable margins in the same time period, by one estimate rising from 6.35% in the first quarter of 2023 to 7.87% in Q1 2024.

Nevertheless, it appears that Google has kept pace as it has rolled out its own AI-enhanced search capabilities, gaining a point and keeping the top spot in ACSI. By contrast, privacy-focused DuckDuckGo so far does not seem to have enjoyed a similar boost in satisfaction from the introduction of its own “DuckAssist” AI feature last year, with its ACSI score holding steady at 79.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX: SEARCH ENGINES AND INFORMATION

0-100 Scale

COMPANY	2023 ACSI	2024 ACSI	% CHANGE
Search Engines and Information	80	80	0%
Google	80	81	1%
DuckDuckGo	79	79	0%
All Others	76	77	1%
Bing (Microsoft)	75	77	3%
Yahoo!	74	76	3%

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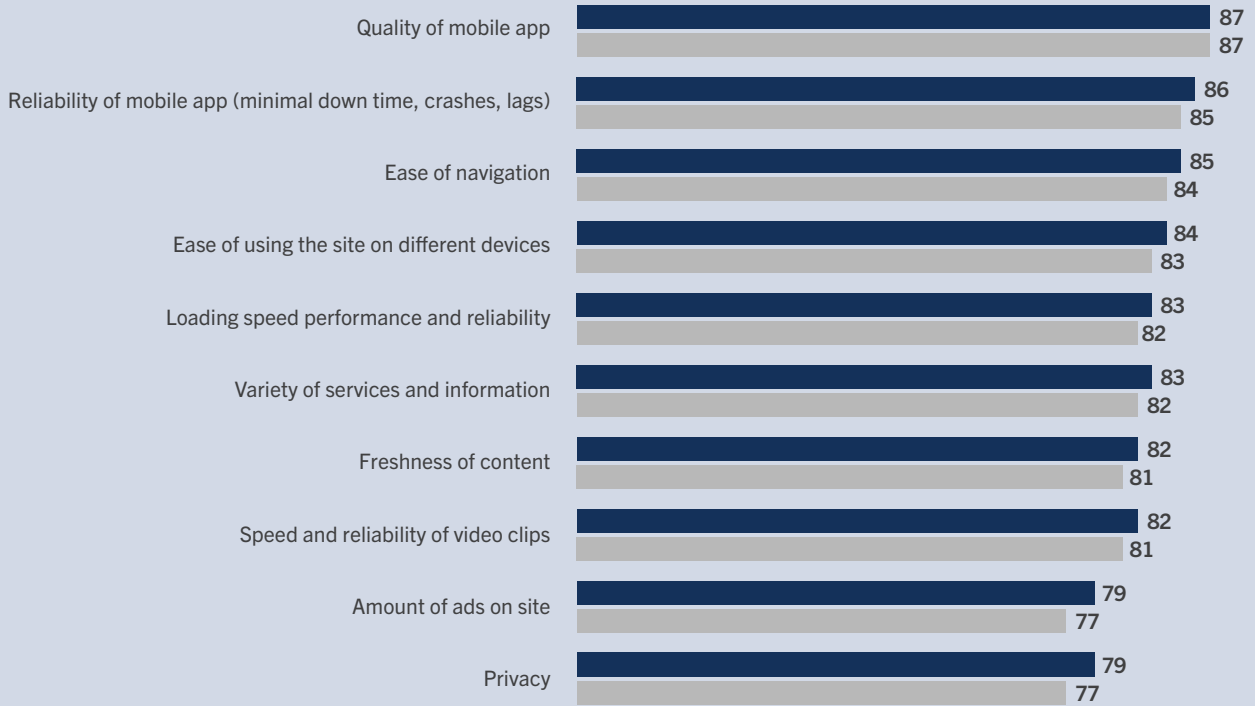
AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX:

SEARCH ENGINES AND INFORMATION

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale

2024 2023



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SOCIAL MEDIA

The social media industry posts its third consecutive year of user satisfaction improvement, rising 1% to an ACSI score of 74. Six of the nine major brands tracked show rising or steady satisfaction over the past year, with only YouTube, Pinterest, and Snapchat posting ACSI declines. Smaller brands not reported individually in the study also show significant improvement as a group in 2024, rising 7% year over year to 79.

Among the major sites, TikTok moves into the ACSI lead for the first time, squeezing past YouTube with a 1% gain to the high score of 78. TikTok has posted consistent year-over-year satisfaction improvements since it was added to the Index in 2021, increasing 6 points in those four years for a net gain of 8%. Its strong ratings underscore the potential risks for politicians seeking to ban the app in the United States, as satisfaction with the platform has risen sharply alongside its continuing increase in monthly active users.

Meta enjoys a particularly strong year with Facebook rising 5% and Instagram up 4% in user satisfaction. While these gains still leave Facebook (69) near the bottom of the industry, they put Instagram (76) within striking distance of its principal competitor TikTok. Instagram now shows only a 2-point deficit relative to the industry leader alongside its similarly sized monthly active U.S. user base. The platform appears well-poised to build on these gains and to benefit from any headwinds TikTok may face in the coming year in the latter's showdown with U.S. authorities over its ownership structure.

After two years of satisfaction increases, X (formerly Twitter) shows no further improvement in user satisfaction this year, holding steady at 69. This leaves X tied with Facebook for the industry's second-lowest score. These brands may find some solace in Snapchat (68) replacing them at the bottom of the industry for the first time since it entered the Index in 2019. The results for both Snapchat and Pinterest (the other brand posting a notable score decline this year) are consistent with some users' frustrations with the apps following recent changes, such as Snapchat's fall 2023 update to its Bitmoji generator and Pinterest's rollout of new features at the start of 2024. These changes may have been more favorably received by content creators than users.

AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX:

SOCIAL MEDIA

0-100 Scale

COMPANY	2023 ACSI	2024 ACSI	% CHANGE
Social Media	73	74	1%
All Others	74	79	7%
TikTok	77	78	1%
YouTube (Google)	78	77	-1%
Instagram (Meta)	73	76	4%
LinkedIn (Microsoft)	75	76	1%
Pinterest	77	74	-4%
Reddit	69	70	1%
Facebook (Meta)	66	69	5%
X	69	69	0%
Snapchat	70	68	-3%

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The modest year-over-year rise in user satisfaction for the social media industry as a whole reflects similar improvement in several of the customer experience benchmarks tracked in the study. Respondents give moderately higher marks industrywide to most aspects of their experiences including site navigation and loading speed, content freshness and relevance, photo and video uploading and playback speed, and mobile apps.

However, ACSI data show continuing challenges for the industry in the areas of privacy and advertising. Ratings of privacy for the industry overall remain relatively low but steady at 73, reflecting a mix of results among the measured brands that include several score declines. Respondents rate their encounters with advertising on social media platforms as the worst part of the customer experience. New ACSI benchmarks about the trustworthiness and personal relevance of advertising content have emerged as particular user concerns. Overall, advertising experiences are a key differentiator in ACSI data between higher- and lower-satisfaction social media brands.

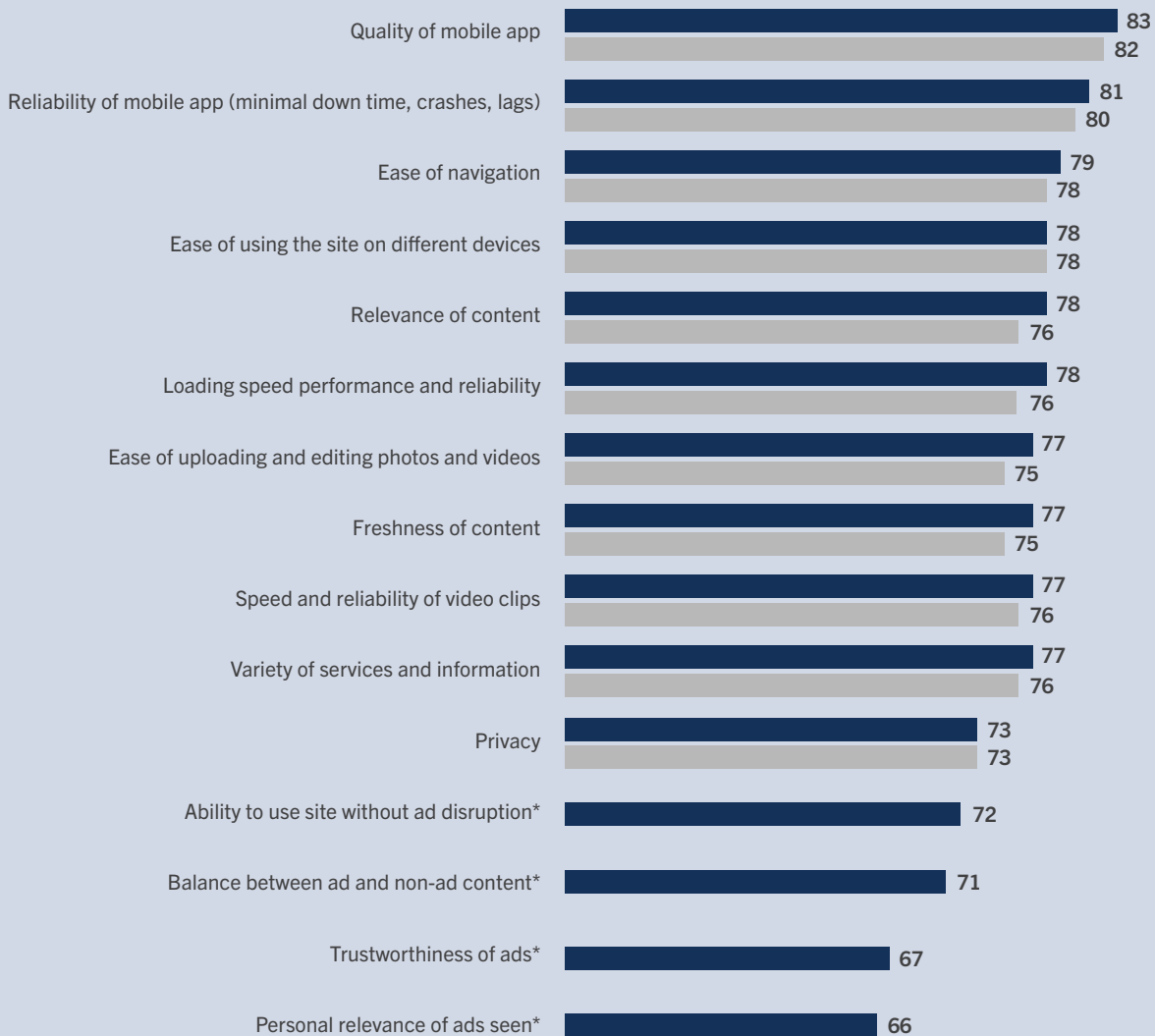
AMERICAN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION INDEX:

SOCIAL MEDIA

Customer Experience Benchmarks Year-Over-Year Industry Trends

0-100 Scale

■ 2024 ■ 2023



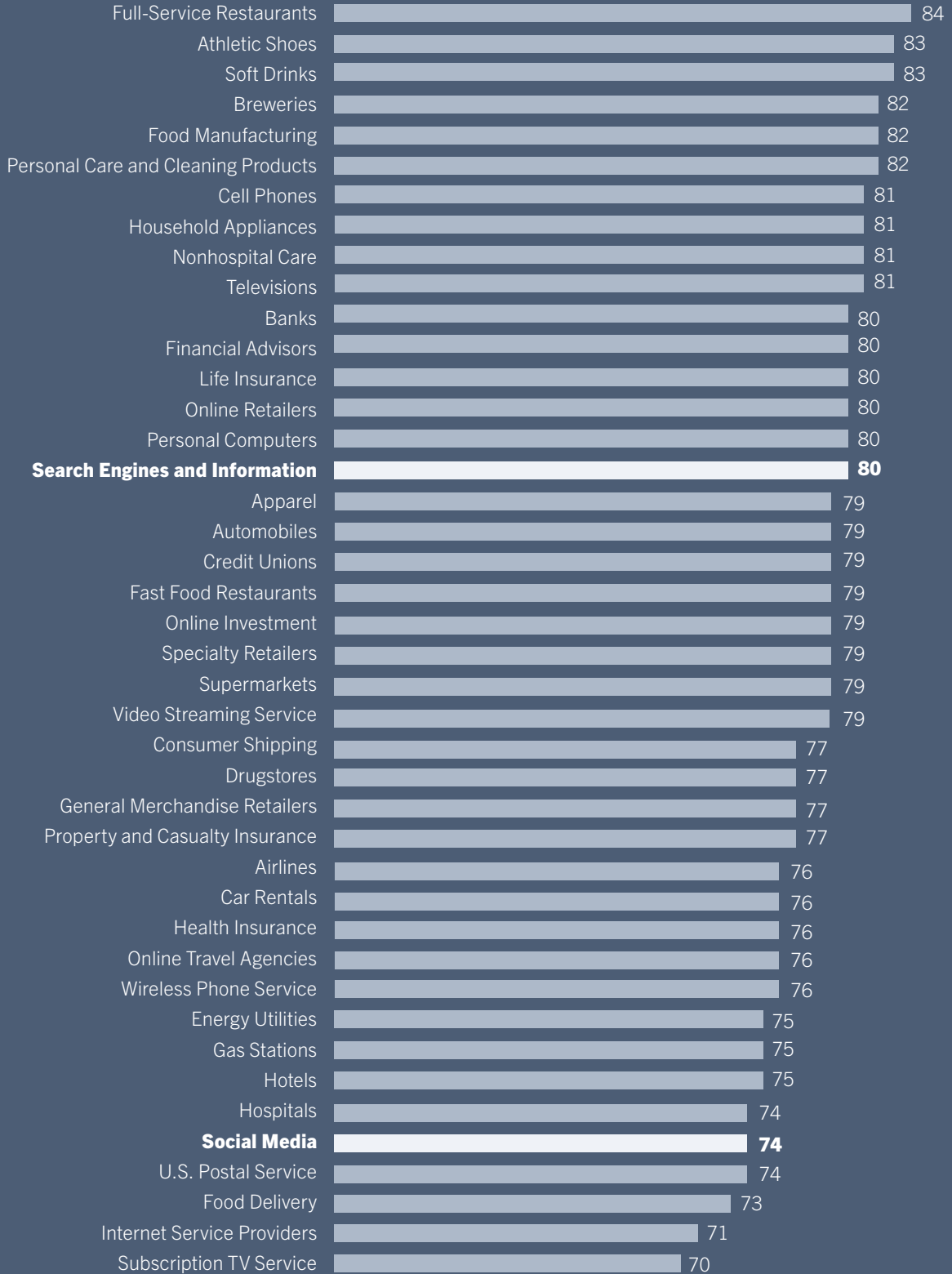
* Not measured in 2023.

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Customer Satisfaction Benchmarks by Industry

0-100 Scale



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Methodology

The *ACSI Search and Social Media Study 2024* is based on 8,940 completed surveys. Customers were chosen at random and contacted via email between July 2023 and June 2024. Customers are asked to evaluate their recent experiences with the largest search/information and social media websites in terms of visitor traffic, plus an aggregate category consisting of “all other”—and thus smaller—websites in those categories.

ACSI survey data are used as inputs to the Index’s cause-and-effect econometric model, which estimates customer satisfaction as the result of the survey-measured inputs of customer expectations, perceptions of quality, and perceptions of value. The ACSI model, in turn, links customer satisfaction with the survey-measured outcomes of customer complaints and customer loyalty. ACSI clients receive confidential industry-competitive and best-in-class data on all modeled variables and customer experience benchmarks.

About ACSI

The American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI®) is a national economic indicator of customer evaluations of the quality of products and services available to household consumers in the United States. The ACSI uses data from roughly 200,000 responses annually as inputs to an econometric model for analyzing customer satisfaction with approximately 400 companies in about 40 industries and 10 economic sectors, including various services of federal and local government agencies. ACSI results are released throughout the year, with all measures reported on a scale of 0 to 100.

ACSI data have proven to be strongly related to several essential indicators of micro and macroeconomic performance. For example, firms with higher levels of customer satisfaction tend to have higher earnings and stock returns relative to competitors. Stock portfolios based on companies that show strong performance in ACSI deliver excess returns in up markets as well as down markets. At the macro level, customer satisfaction has been shown to be predictive of both consumer spending and GDP growth.

Contact Information

For more information regarding this study; the search/information and social media industries; and how the ACSI can help your company harness the power of customer satisfaction to improve your bottom line, visit www.theacsi.org or contact

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