Decoding Digital Life

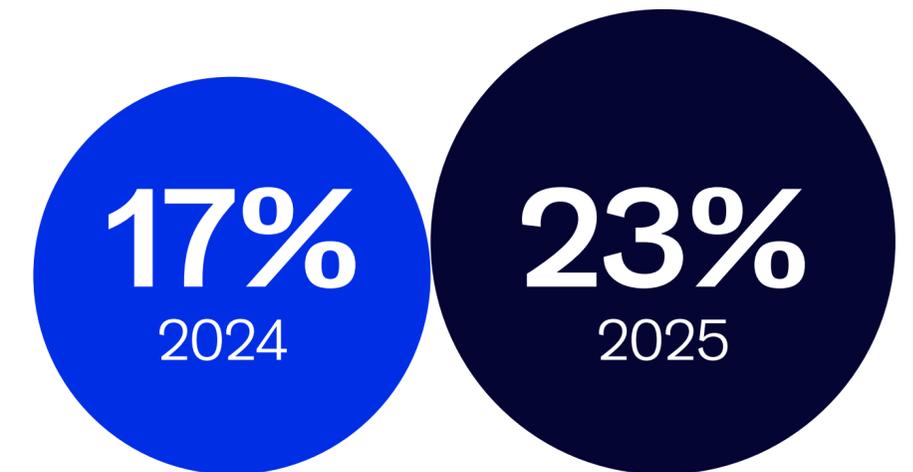## 4 LOTTERY TRENDS FOR 2026

Introduction

In 2026 and beyond, lottery players are operating in a world where digital systems are seamlessly overlaid onto physical life. AI, automation, and connected technologies are no longer confined to screens; they are embedded into daily routines, decision-making, and moments of play. Solutions that are purely analog or digital are no longer sufficient. The future of the lottery is indistinguishably blended.

As consumers grow more comfortable with AI-driven tools, they are increasingly outsourcing anything that feels tedious, repetitive, or too cognitively demanding. In a reality defined by information overload, one-quarter (23%) of weekly global lottery players ask generative AI for general information, such as the news or weather (not specific to lottery play), increasing 6 percentage points since 2024 (Foresight Factory, April 2025). At the same time, 54% of global weekly lottery players – compared to only 41% of non-players – would pay more for a response from a human expert, rather than AI (Foresight Factory, April 2025). Lottery players are deploying sometimes contradictory strategies to adapt to a rapidly changing digital landscape, and, as a result, what they expect from lottery and the lottery retail experience is poised for seismic shifts.

Within this rapidly evolving landscape, four defining trends are shaping how lottery players think, behave, and engage.

The use of AI for information is growing among weekly lottery players

% of weekly lottery players who have used generative AI to ask for general information, such as news or weather
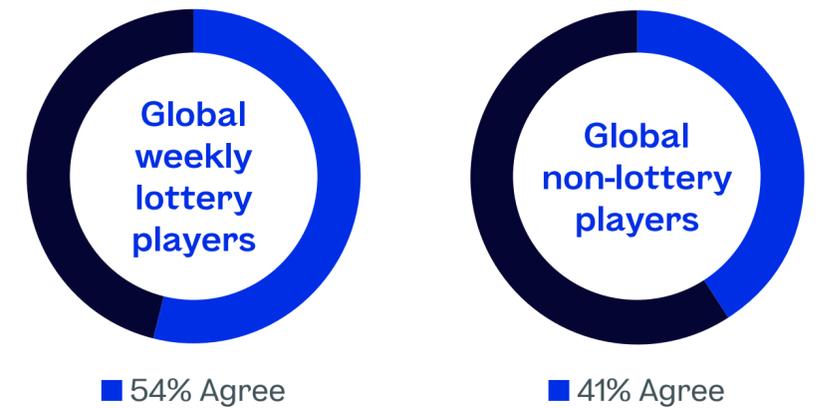
17% 2024

23% 2025

Source: Foresight Factory, April 2025

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Lottery players look for creative methods to keep up and optimize their own performance; they are drawn to brands that can help give them **Time to Optimize**. One way that brands can help is by presenting products, services, and information before consumers realize they want it. AI and digital retail capabilities allow brands to set an **Anticipation Default** to stay ahead of the consumer. But technological innovations can't take the place of person-to-person interactions. Lottery players are still seeking experiences that make them feel **Unplugged & Present** in the physical moment. Additionally, they want brands to infuse sentiment into activations, recognizing consumers as individuals and providing **Personalized Storytelling**.

Frequent lottery players would pay more for human advice rather than AI

% agreeing "I would pay more for advice if it was guaranteed to be from a human expert, rather than AI"

Global weekly lottery players

Global non-lottery players

■ 54% Agree

■ 41% Agree

Source: Foresight Factory, April 2025

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Meeting lottery players at the right place and time, with the right balance of AI tech and human touch, will require a flexible and forward-looking approach. Brightstar Lottery has worked closely with Foresight Factory, leveraging its proprietary trend data to examine the values and behaviors of weekly lottery players to contextualize and strategize how best to appeal to this digital-leaning cohort. To bring to life this emerging future, we not only identified a set of trends that will shape the future but also created three unique scenarios that could emerge.

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TREND 1:

Time to Optimize

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Time to Optimize

Despite entering a new calendar year, the problems presented by geopolitical turmoil, ecological upheaval, AI disruption, and more, persist. In the face of what often feels like a perma-crisis, consumers are no longer waiting for stability to return. Lottery players are managing uncertainty by taking control of what they can and staying curious about how they can optimize their daily life. As consumers look to live longer and healthier lives, they will be deploying creative solutions to stay ahead – whether that's in appearance, finances, fitness, and other personal improvements to optimize their own well-being. As players are deploying creative solutions to make areas of life more streamlined, it allows them additional time to enjoy entertainment and the fun that comes with new ways to play the lottery.

Lottery players are looking to regularly upskill their knowledge and expertise – 85% of global weekly lottery players say they feel the need to learn more, up from 79% in 2022 (Foresight Factory, April 2025). Learning-centric offerings – from immersive retail environments that provide a space for trying something new to interactive games that offer not just a fun chance at winning but information about a favorite topic – will appeal to these curious-minded consumers.

85%

of global weekly lottery players say they feel the need to learn more, up from 79% in 2022

Source: Foresight Factory, April 2025
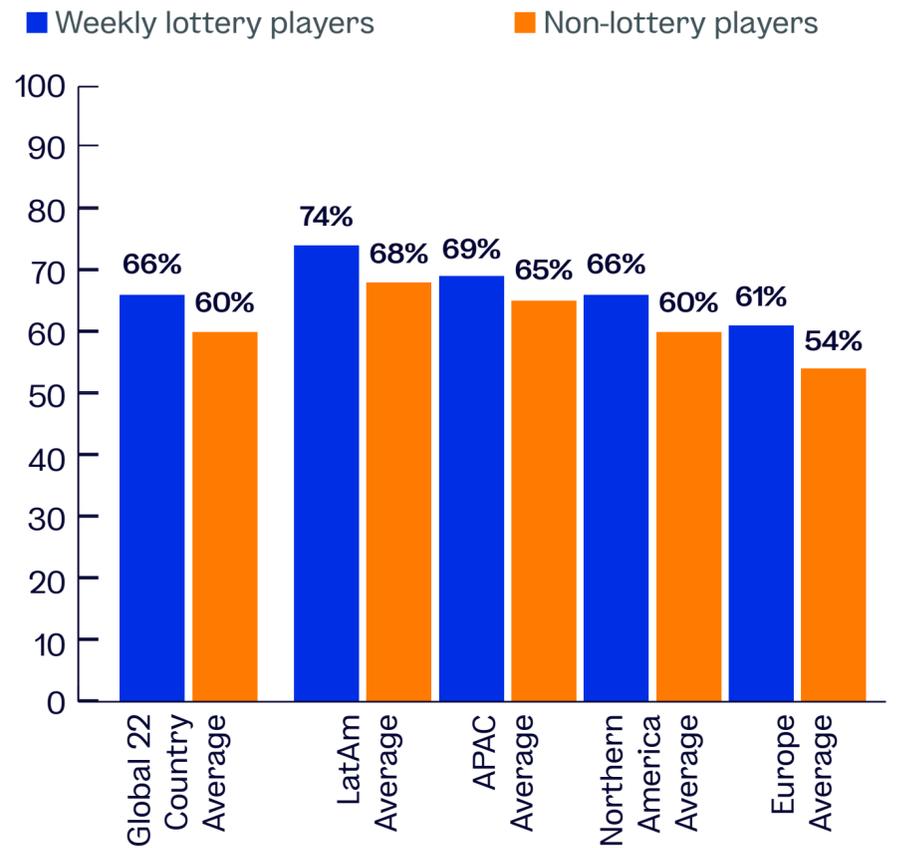
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Brands and retailers don't need to create an extensive catalog of coursework to tap into consumers' always learning mindset, they can lean into their own expertise. For lotteries, providing an avenue for education alongside entertainment can look like; interactive ticket selection, hands-on displays that correspond to game themes, and post-purchase engagement that builds anticipation in play to boost enjoyment of the full lottery experience. Lottery players particularly want such brand knowledge: globally 66% of weekly lottery players agree "I like it when companies give me ideas of how best to use their products," 6 percentage points higher than non-lottery players (Foresight Factory, April 2025). This peaks in Latin America, with 74% of weekly players agreeing.

Frequent lottery players want inspiration and information from brands

% agreeing "I like it when companies give me ideas of how best to use their products"

- ■ Weekly lottery players
- ■ Non-lottery players

Region	Weekly lottery players	Non-lottery players
Global 22 Country Average	66%	60%
LatAm Average	74%	68%
APAC Average	69%	65%
Northern America Average	66%	60%
Europe Average	61%	54%

Source: Foresight Factory, April 2025

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This concept came to life at pop-up Intel Experience stores in NYC, London, Munich, Paris, and Seoul during the 2025 holiday shopping season. In partnership with technology brands including Dell, Google, HP, Samsung, and more, shoppers could discover and test-drive new innovations. Visitors could attend expert-led sessions to learn about and try new AI-powered devices for themselves, seeing how such tools can be integrated into their lives for work and play. For instance, experts demoed an upcoming beta feature in Adobe Premiere Pro allowing video clips to be searchable by visual features (such as "dog on beach" or "night scene with neon lights"), showing how this reduces the manual process of tagging and sorting clips, giving users more time to be creative. The pop-ups also promoted retail, with brands offering exclusive deals in-store.

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Possible Future Scenario #1:

Imagine a world where lottery players are optimizing all aspects of life to not just fit static routines, but accommodate changeability throughout the day. New purchasing moments are unlocked: notifications are sent when AI detects players have downtime or are engaging with a particular fandom where the lottery has a themed game. Digital delivery enables immediate delivery, yet the experience feels tailored and personalized to individual needs. AI implemented into responsible gaming tools will also complement this scenario by recognizing circumstances in which players should take a break or limit spending, to encourage responsible play early and within each individual's limits.

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TREND 2:

Anticipation Default

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Anticipation Default

As AI becomes more embedded into everyday life, anticipation becomes the baseline expectation. Consumers will increasingly expect brands to understand their habits, recognize patterns, and make offers proactively, before needs are explicitly stated. Convenience is no longer reactive; it is predictive. As more decisions are offloaded to AI, brands who anticipate when and where to meet customers open the door to more instances to engage them.

Anticipation frequently manifests through auto-replenishment, preemptive offers, and personalized prompts that arrive before consumers realize they want them. Frequent lottery players are likely to be intrigued by this; 18% of global weekly players have used generative AI to research products to buy, compared to just 12% of non-players globally, and this surpasses 1 in 5 weekly players in Asia Pacific and Latin America (Foresight Factory, April 2025). In the future, AI will not just research products consumers are already thinking about, but also make product suggestions, adding not only convenience to shopping but also surprise and delight. To stand out, lotteries need to shake up players' routines, even as their touchpoints to do so become more limited.
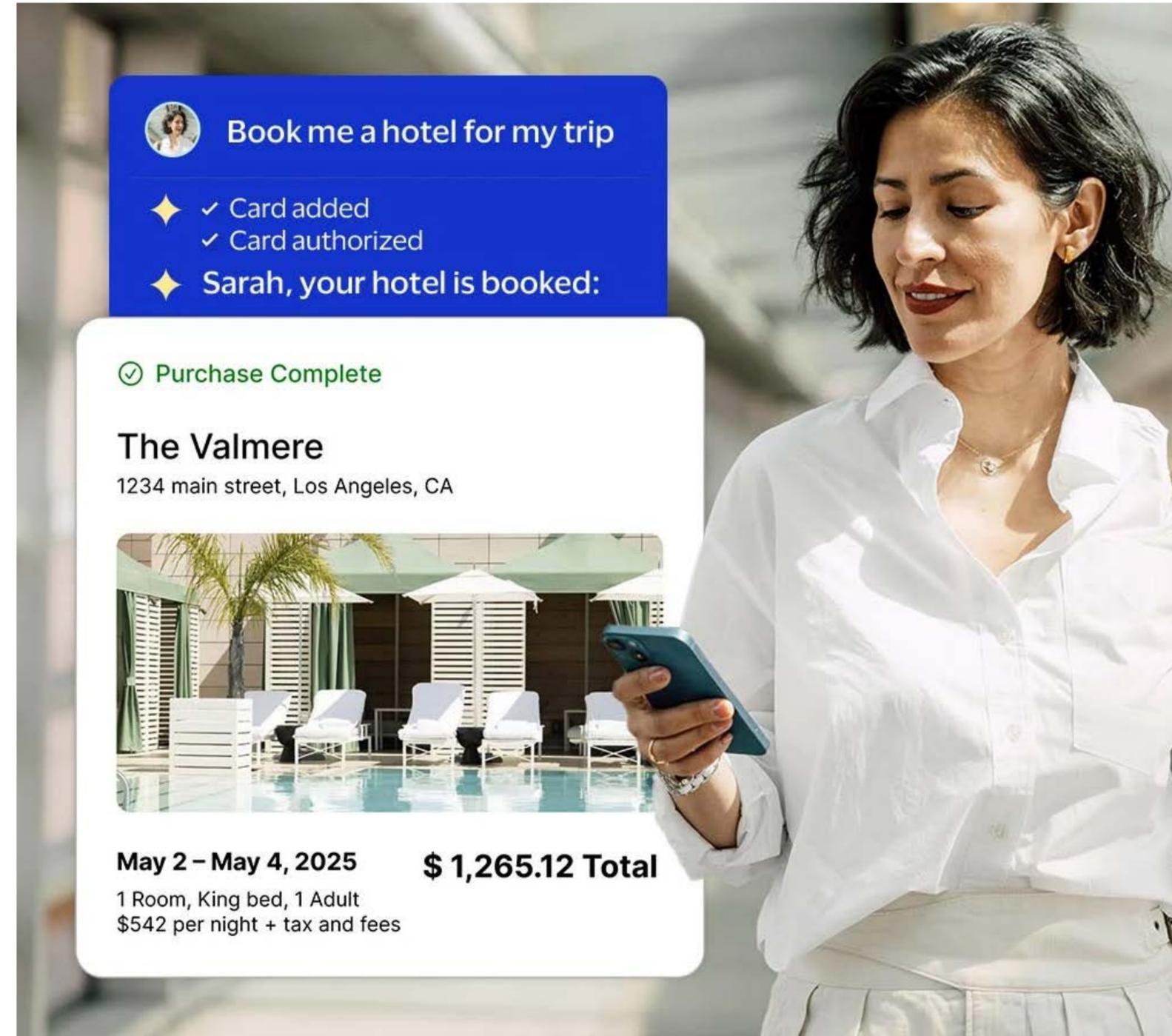
> "In the future, AI will not just research products consumers are already thinking about, but also make product suggestions"

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Visa is acting the part of personal shopper via its Intelligent Commerce platform, which enables AI agents to act on behalf of users to discover, evaluate, and purchase products and services. Cardholders chat with an agent on what they're looking for, be it a sweater or a hotel room, and the AI analyzes spend history to make recommendations. Users can set a budget and other preferences and approve the agent to make a purchase for them. Intelligent Commerce also anticipates upcoming needs by, for instance, alerting consumers when they're likely to be running low on a previous purchase, or when tickets to an event they're interested in are available.

Book me a hotel for my trip

✦ ✓ Card added
   ✓ Card authorized
✦ Sarah, your hotel is booked:

⊘ Purchase Complete

The Valmere
1234 main street, Los Angeles, CA

May 2 – May 4, 2025 $ 1,265.12 Total
1 Room, King bed, 1 Adult
$542 per night + tax and fees

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Possible Future Scenario #2:

Imagine a world where lotteries bring educational value to players through personalized multi-phase experiences. In 2026, we expect more consumers to adopt the use of AI assistants to help manage their time and efficiency with tasks. Consider a player wearing a pair of AI-enabled glasses and asking for assistance locating a retailer that carries their preferred lottery games, reminding them of the draw results, checking their tickets, and more. The convenience of everyday reminders such as letting consumers know if there is milk in the refrigerator or that the car is running low on fuel can be integrated with preferred entertainment options that are personalized for every player. Geolocation data can offer suggested purchases when they're near retail locations they've visited and provide insights into how the lottery has contributed to causes that benefit that community. A comprehensive profile, backed by AI tools, can provide informational insights to maximize players' potential and supply a societal connection.

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TREND 3:

Unplugged & Present

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Unplugged & Present

While technology and AI might be shaping the future way consumers live and interact with the world, not everything will be digital. In fact, the push toward digital is creating greater demand for analog, and consumers are moderating their use of tech. As a result, people are looking for ways to bring themselves into the physical moment. Nearly 7 in 10 (69%) global weekly lottery players responded, "I find activities that involve using my hands soothing", more than the just 62% of non-players who agree. This pattern is true across regions globally.

The physical aspects of retail and lottery experiences are incredibly valuable to lean into, as physical product experiences that center texture, touch, and tactility will cut through. Differentiated design and materials of specialty instant tickets have been researched and deployed by many lotteries looking to attract consumers to a unique tactile experience. Continuing to explore new ways to create such experiences for players will be especially important for consumers looking for more physical reconnection in their day-to-day life. This desire for non-digital touchpoints could also be an interaction with a store clerk to recommend a particular type of ticket or new game. Across regions, regular lottery players prioritize such human insight – only 1 in 5 of global weekly lottery players like stores that have little to no human interaction (Foresight Factory, April 2024).

Activities that pull the frequent lottery player into the physical moment are attractive

% agreeing "I find activities that involve using my hands soothing"

Global weekly lottery players

Global non-lottery players

■ 69% Agree

■ 62% Agree

Source: Foresight Factory, April 2025

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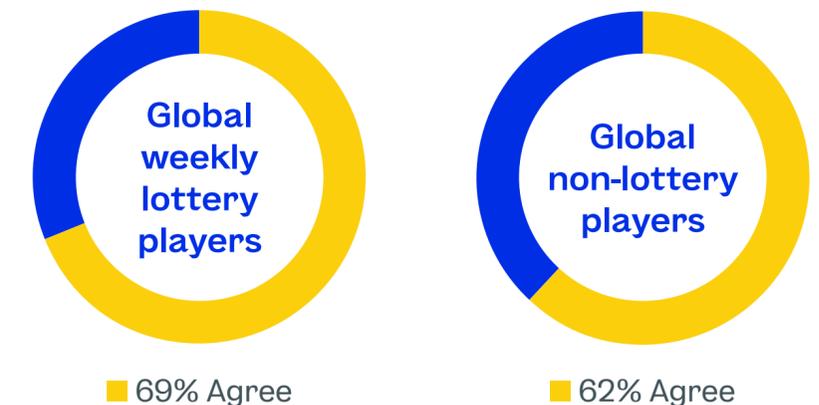
At a time when some shoppers turned to AI for gift inspiration during the 2025 holiday season, UK chain Superdrug doubled down on giving human suggestions. Its Shop Live service – which offers free real-time calls with in-store experts to answer questions and give product recommendations – transformed into the "Sleigh Line" with even more beauty and gifting experts available to help customers find the perfect present. The brand found that users were more satisfied with their gift choices when using the human service.

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TREND 4:

Personalized Storytelling
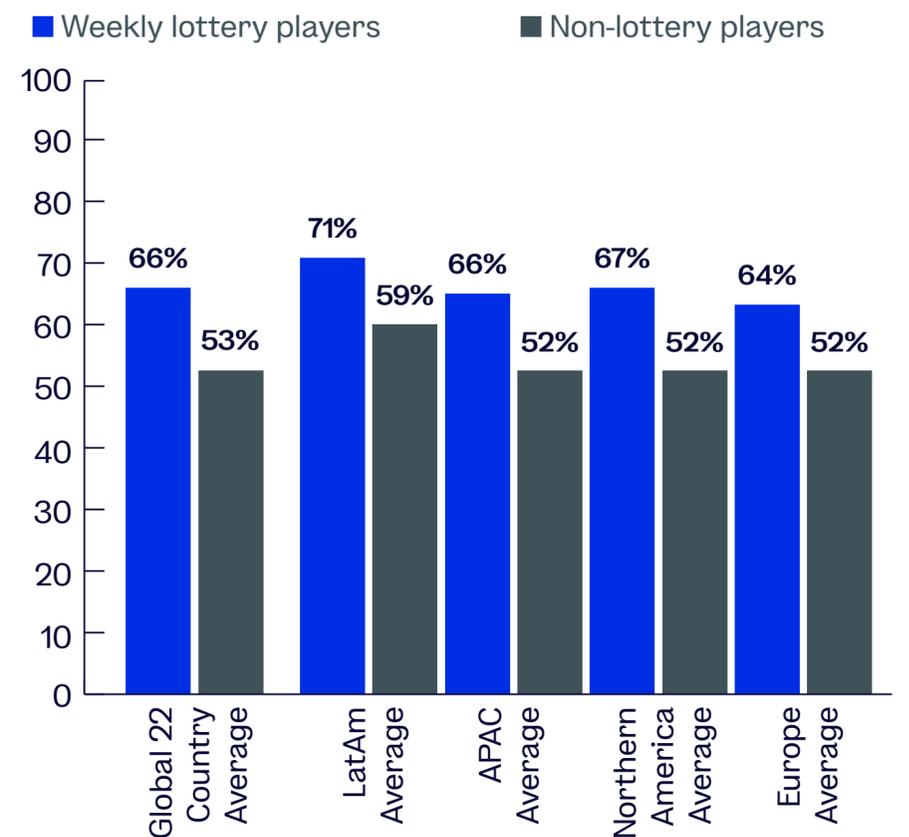
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Personalized Storytelling

In an AI-saturated world, human originality and storytelling are at a premium. Consumers have become quickly fed up with generic content and poorly executed AI content. To counteract this feeling of detachment, they are looking to brands for storytelling that feels crafted for one, not broadcast to many. Shoppers will look to brands that lean into their values and connect on a genuine human level. A new opportunity is emerging for brands to retell their history and connect to consumers' personal values through the causes they support. Globally, 58% of consumers say they have a desire to buy from brands and companies that reflect their personal values, and this increases to 66% of weekly lottery players. This over-index among regular players is notable across regions.

Lotteries that show up with warmth, clear purpose, and visible contributions to communities don't just earn attention, they build trust and long-term loyalty. This has long looked like monetary commitment to a particular cause, raising funds as well as good will for the community.

## Frequent players seek value reflection in the brands they buy

% expressing need "To buy from brands and companies that reflect my personal values"

■ Weekly lottery players   ■ Non-lottery players

Region	Weekly lottery players	Non-lottery players
Global 22 Country Average	66%	53%
LatAm Average	71%	59%
APAC Average	66%	52%
Northern America Average	67%	52%
Europe Average	64%	52%

Source: Foresight Factory, April 2025

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Moving beyond this default, lotteries can be seen as considerate and personable through the fostering of emotional bonds. For instance, confectionary brand Mars transitioned the branding of its Twix candy bars from a focus on right Twix vs. left Twix to "Two Is More Than One" – the brand did not explicitly take a political stance, but the campaign leaned into the concept of togetherness rather than polarization. Appealing to sentiment can also happen by recognizing personal aspects of consumers. Deliveroo and French pet lifestyle brand French Bandit achieved this through a campaign that gifted customers free dog toys that matched the human meals they ordered. When ordering certain items via the Deliveroo app, customers received a coordinating French Bandit pet toy, tapping into their identity as pet owners and providing a surprising personal touch. Travelodge made it easier for parents of young children to keep the holiday spirit alive by offering bookable rooms for wrapping gifts. The UK-based hotel chain equipped the rooms with wrapping paper, tape, scissors, and tags as well as refreshments and mince pies to provide a stress-free environment for parents to prepare presents without fear of their kids peeking in. While no money was donated to a political cause by Twix, no animal charities benefited from Deliveroo, and no gifts were donated by Travelodge through these campaigns, the brands recognized the desire of consumers to be seen and supported.

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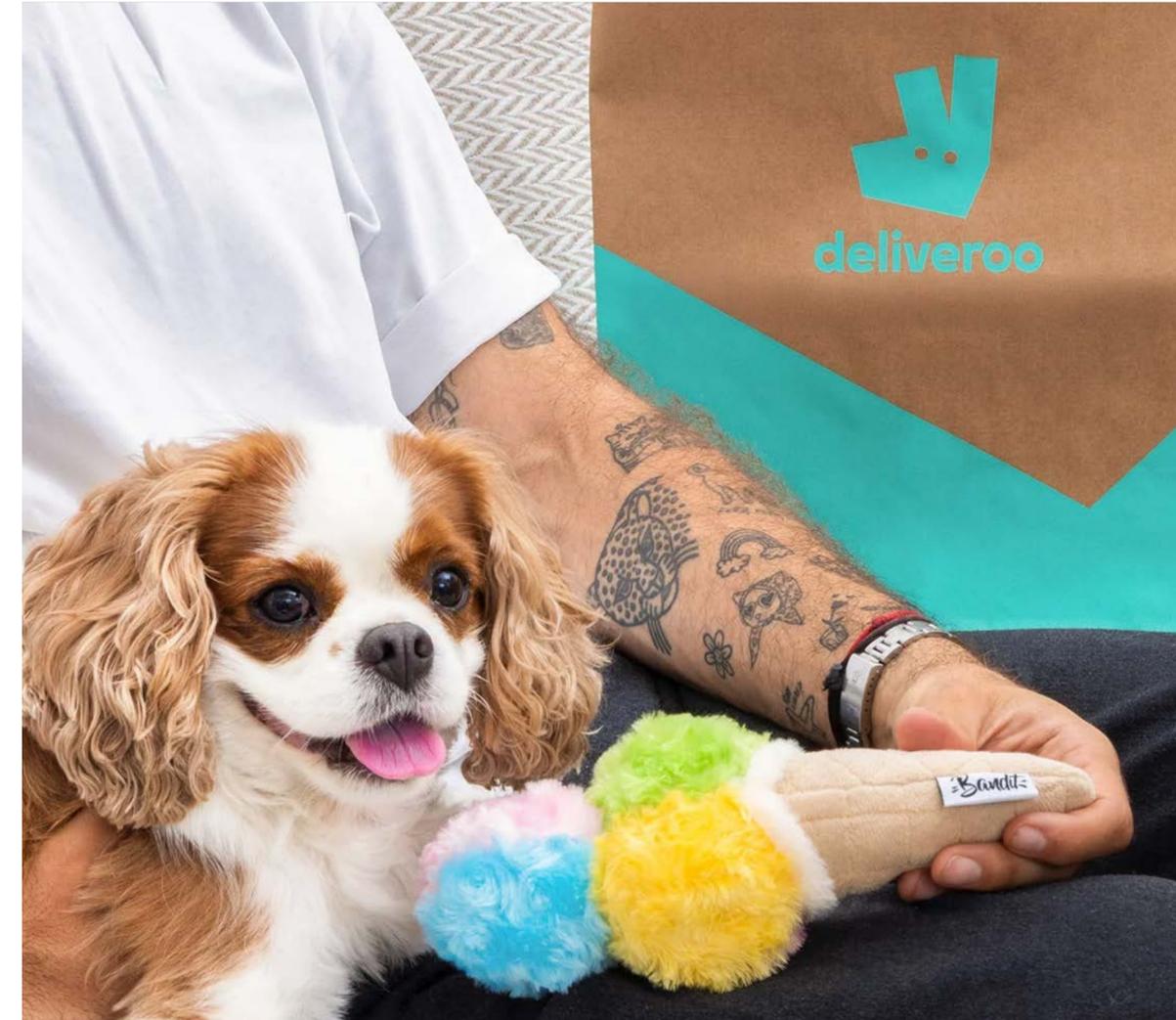
Possible Future Scenario #3:

Imagine a world where players turn to AI tools for lottery suggestions, and human experts can step in seamlessly to assist with more complex scenarios. In-app chatbots and on-screen displays in retail environments can immediately connect players with information about winning odds on games, helping them gauge the right play for the day – bringing in personal information such as their geographic location, play history, and even chosen hobbies to identify what game would bring them the most satisfaction in the moment. If players have further questions, easily accessible hotlines with lottery staff can fill any gaps and provide a human touch. Lotteries can continue to build brand trust and differentiate themselves from commercial operators by using these tools in new and engaging ways, to reinforce the benefits to society and the good causes that lotteries serve around the world.

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Looking Ahead for Lotteries

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To build a successful brand strategy in 2026 and beyond, balancing AI innovations with human connection will be key for lotteries to navigate players' evolving expectations of optimization and personalization. Lotteries will need to blend digital and analog solutions to meet players in this new era of technological transformation.
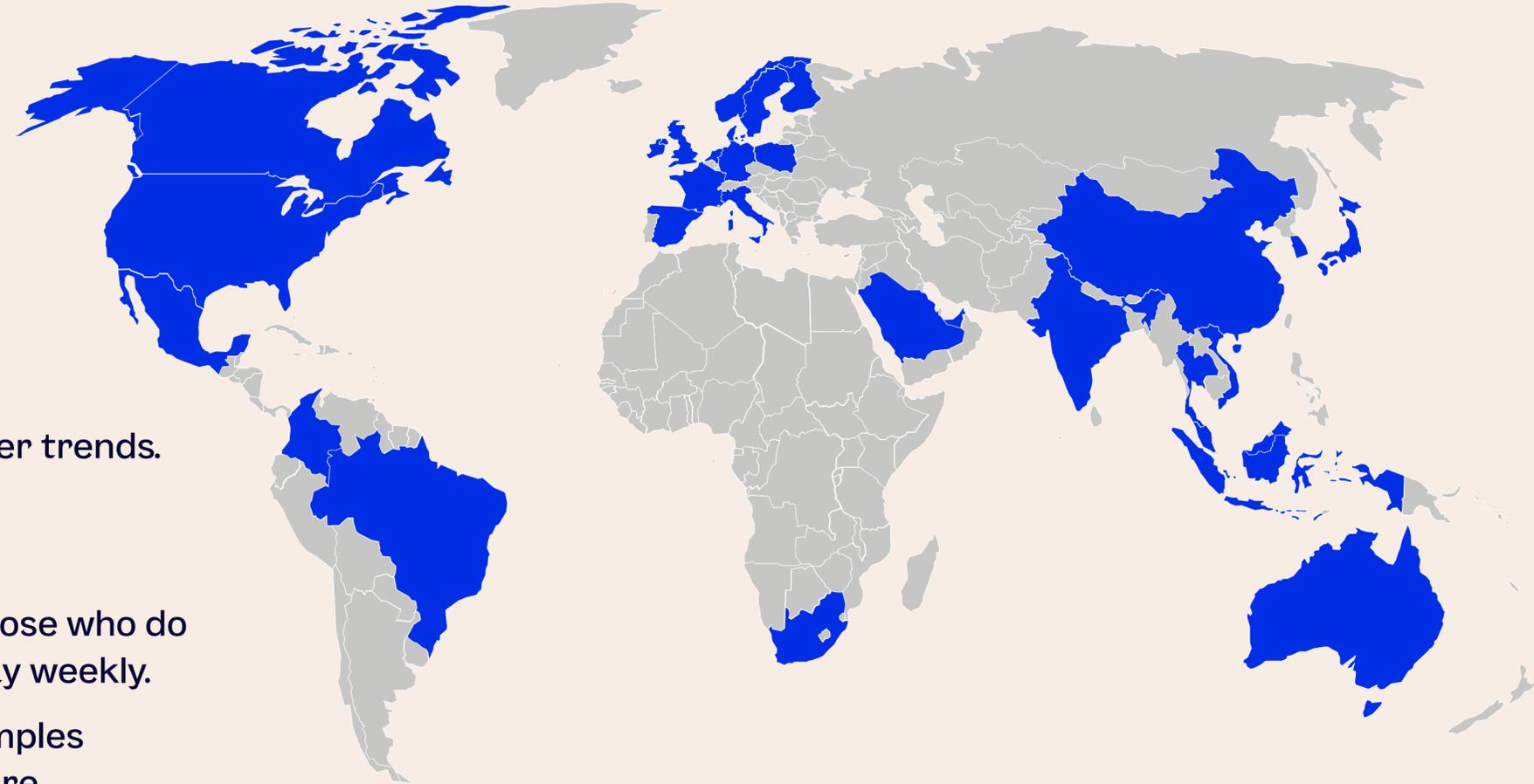
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Foresight Factory Methodology

Data overview:

→ Global data since 2010

→ Surveying in 27 countries, ages 18+

→ Multiple research waves per year:
  - 27 market main wave
  - 9 market mini wave
  - Re-contact surveys in USA & GB

→ Uniquely designed to help you validate and explore 70+ consumer trends.

→ Capturing detailed demographics and behavioral markers to allow you to analyze trends by target audience groups.

Consumers are sorted into three groups regarding lottery play: those who do not play the lottery, those who occasionally play and those who play weekly.

We use an online methodology using panel-based recruitment. Samples are provided by CINT, Kantar and their trusted partners. Surveys are designed to be interactive and accessible by respondents via mobile, desktop, and tablet devices. Interlocking quotas are set on age and gender, and on region. Data is weighted to be nationally representative on age, gender and region for the offline population per market.

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Thank you

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