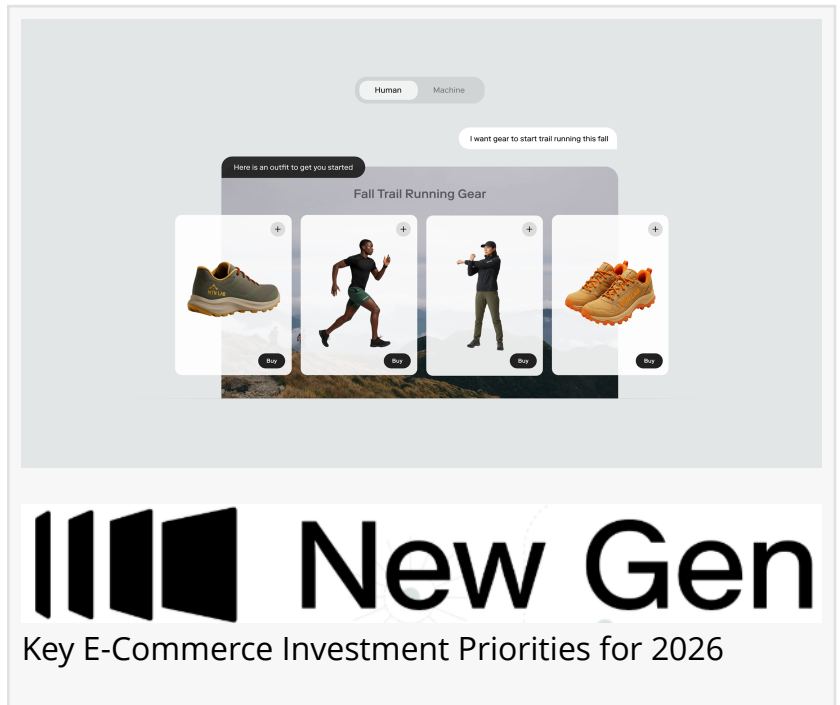


New Generation Releases 2026 Retail AI Budget Guide and AI-Readiness Benchmarks

New findings from Kepler Agent Score highlight where top retailers are falling behind and where to invest as AI becomes the default shopping interface.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, December 11, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- [New Generation](#), a technology company building e-commerce infrastructure for the AI internet, today released new guidance on the highest-ROI AI investments retailers should prioritize in 2026. The recommendations are informed by emerging insights from New Generation's [Kepler Agent Score](#), the industry's first benchmark that evaluates how well retail sites perform in AI-led shopping environments.



As retailers finalize 2026 budgets, New Generation warns that most brands are still investing in low-impact add-on AI and UX experiments – over-relying on paid ads to buy visibility, investing in cosmetic website redesigns or surface-level “AI chat” features, and using personalization software built only for human browsing. These incremental improvements won’t deliver the results needed for AI-led discovery, while neglecting the foundational infrastructure required for AI to understand, compare, and recommend their products. Early retail adopters of conversational and agent-driven shopping are already seeing measurable conversion gains, while slower brands risk losing visibility as AI becomes the gatekeeper for the digital marketplace.

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Adam Behrens, CEO and co-founder

“2026 is the year AI becomes the primary shopping interface,” said Jonathan Arena, CPO co-founder of New

Generation. “Retailers still investing in improving their legacy stack (things like unintelligent ‘for you’ carousels) are budgeting for a world that no longer exists. The brands that structure their websites for AI now will define the next decade of retail, and everyone else will be playing catch-up from the sidelines. Kepler gives retailers a plug-and-play, customizable way of understanding how AI reads their products and fixing those gaps without a full rebuild.”

Key E-Commerce Investment Priorities for 2026

Based on performance data from the 2025 holiday season and thousands of Agent Score evaluations across major brands, New Generation has identified five high-ROI investment areas retailers should prioritize in 2026 – areas that go far beyond small UX improvements and are required to support the significant lift needed for AI-driven, agentic traffic:

1. Invest in natural language search that both human customers and AI agents can leverage.
2. Prioritize AI-readable catalog infrastructure instead of cosmetic redesigns built for legacy browsing.
3. Adopt AI-first navigation that reduces friction and supports conversion for agent-driven visitors.
4. Reallocate spend away from legacy personalization tools like pixel targeting or A/B testing to foundational infrastructure improvements that influence how AI recommends products.
5. Prepare for rising AI-driven traffic as shoppers increasingly rely on AI to search, compare, and transact.

Across major e-commerce categories like beauty, luxury fashion, and consumer electronics, the retailers gaining the most traction with AI-driven traffic are those who have refactored their catalogs to align with natural language queries and conversations. Making every SKU instantly interpretable by AI systems powering natural language search, generative storefronts, and agentic shopping tools.

“Retail has never faced a shift this fundamental in such a short period of time. If you wait for someone else's success story, you'll be responding to a trend your competitors are already capitalizing on,” said Adam Behrens, CEO and co-founder of New Generation. “This creates a real opportunity for brands willing to act now. Early movers are doubling conversion on conversational experiences while everyone else is planning their next website campaign or tacking on chatbots that [consumers dislike](#) and are ineffective at solving for the big opportunity next year.”

In early 2026, New Generation is releasing updated Agent Score benchmarks across key retail verticals, quantifying which brands are most prepared for AI-driven commerce and where competitive gaps are widening. As the industry shifts from human browsing to AI-guided interaction, brand visibility will increasingly be determined by the quality and structure of underlying product data, not front-end aesthetics.

For more information, visit www.new-gen.ai. Find out your company's Kepler Agent Score at

www.trykepler.ai/evaluate-your-site.

About New Generation:

New Generation builds commerce infrastructure that powers conversational shopping experiences across AI chat, generative websites, and agentic shopping flows. Kepler, New Generation's flagship solution, gives retailers the tools to see how AI interprets their websites and makes their products easier to find through AI-powered search. New Generation transforms static brand product catalogs into structured, AI-readable data, allowing brands to deploy dynamic storefronts with natural language search that are tailored for both human customers and AI shopping agents.

Madeleine Bumstead

New Generation

newgen@ampublicrelations.com

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