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agree that it is making their businesses more successful. They are working more efficiently, saving money, improving customer experiences, and growing quicker.

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*By Dave Charest.*

Small businesses (SMBs) are a busy bunch. On any given day, they might be fulfilling orders, engaging with customers in-person, managing staff, doing their books — plus dozens of other tasks. Most would relish an opportunity to gain back an extra hour, or save some extra money.

Luckily, those goals (and others) are attainable thanks to **artificial intelligence (AI) and marketing automation**. These technologies can help small businesses work more

efficiently, drive more sales, and improve the ways they are marketing themselves –

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AI that you should know.

1. **Challenge Accepted:** 60% of SMBs say their biggest challenge is attracting new customers, while 39% say it's marketing to their target audience.
2. **Peaked Interest:** 74% are interested in using AI or automation in their business, and 55% reported that their interest in using these technologies grew in the first half of 2023.
3. **Off to the Races:** 26% are already using AI or automation, and the top use cases are social media (52%), generative content creation (44%) and email marketing (41%).
4. **Proven Success:** 91% of the small businesses polled say AI has helped make their businesses more successful.
5. **Reaping the Benefits:** 60% of small businesses that currently use AI or automation in their marketing say they have saved time and are working more efficiently.
6. **First step, Social Media:** SMBs say the easiest places to start leveraging AI technology are social media, content creation, and analytics.
7. **Financial Gains:** 28% of SMBs expect AI and/or automation to save them at least \$5,000 in the next year.
8. **Increasing Efficiency:** 33% of small businesses estimate they have saved more than 40 minutes per week on marketing by using AI or automation.
9. **Top Concern:** 44% of small businesses noted data security as their top hesitation about using AI.
0. **Value Recognition:** The more SMBs use AI, the more they value it. 70% of SMBs would be willing to pay more to access AI and automation.

So, what do all these stats mean? I'm glad you asked.

AI is here to stay. The small businesses who are currently using tools powered by AI overwhelmingly agree that it is making their businesses more successful. They are

working more efficiently, saving money, improving customer experiences, and

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*Dave Chirba is the Director of Small Business Success for [Constant Contact](#), a digital marketing and automation platform that has helped millions of small businesses and nonprofits become better marketers.*

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