



# *2024 United States* **Consumer Trends Index**

The latest consumer insights  
into marketing channels,  
messaging engagement, brand  
loyalty, data privacy & more

IN CONJUNCTION WITH ECONSULTANCY



Table of Contents

03

Methodology

04

Introduction

06

At a Glance: *Key Themes & Stats*

08

Addressing the Economy

12

Marketing Channels

12

Email Remains #1

14

Social Media Ads & Posts

14

SMS

16

Mobile

18

Leverage Tech Consolidation  
to Your Benefit

19

Messaging Frustrations  
and Engagement

19

Frustrations

21

Engagement by Message Type

23

Brand Loyalty

23

The Value of Loyalty

25

Consumers' Favorite Brands

28

Loyalty Drivers

30

The Art of the Win-Back

34

Big L Loyalty

37

Privacy, Zero-Party Data  
and the Value Exchange

38

Brand Interactions: Creepy vs. Cool

40

Consumer Behavior  
Regarding Data Privacy

43

The Value Exchange

45

Customer Surveys

48

Navigating Social  
Media Pessimism

48

Why the Pessimism Exists

49

Consumer Response

49

Why It Matters

52

Industry Statistics

55

Wrap Up

# Methodology

The Consumer Trends Index is an annual research study designed to impart brands with consumer data and insights critical to developing effective relationship marketing strategies.

For the 2024 United States iteration, Marigold, in conjunction with Econsultancy, **surveyed a total of 1,012 U.S. consumers.**

**FIELD DATES:**

September 2023 – November 2023

**Millennials** *Generation Y*

**42.9%**

AGES 27-42  
434 RESPONDENTS

**Gen X** *Generation X*

**19.5%**

AGES 43-58  
197 RESPONDENTS

**Gen Z** *Generation Z*

**15.2%**

AGES 18-26  
154 RESPONDENTS

**Boomers** *Baby Boomers*

**22.4%**

AGES 59-77  
227 RESPONDENTS



WE HAVE A VISION AT MARIGOLD:

# Find your people, get to know them *and make them superfans.*

On face value, it's a simple phrase. But looking deeper, it's a series of steps that perfectly define relationship marketing.

Your journey as a brand simply isn't complete without a strategy to forge genuine connections with customers. This idea isn't exactly a secret these days, but it's easy to lose track of *why* efforts like relationship-building and loyalty cultivation are so important. That's the beauty of the Consumer Trends Index. We ask the questions that matter and bring insights into the fold that you can use to guide your strategy for the coming year. The value of brand loyalty, for example, is considerable. Despite a turbulent economy, a staggering 78% of U.S. consumers will pay more to shop with the brands they're loyal to – a larger figure than the already impressive 63% observed among consumers globally.

Much of this year's consumer data suggests a positive turn from previous years. In what should be welcome news to brands, U.S. consumers – especially Millennials – are growing more optimistic about the economic outlook. And while consumers are still weighing their purchase decisions carefully, it's abundantly clear that price is not the end-all-be-all. Sizable numbers of consumers rank factors like product/service quality, convenience and customer service above price.

A theme that continues for 2024 is the balancing act brands must play with personalization and data privacy. Consumers want personalized experiences and feel frustrated when brands fail to deliver them. The favorite brands of consumers don't make this error – **nine in ten consumers cite that their favorite brand treats them like an individual**. But the way this personalization is delivered matters. Circumventing consumers via indirect tracking tools, or even worse, providing personalized ads to consumers you've never interacted with, is an easy way to make them feel creeped out. The transparency of your data practices is paramount when **80% of consumers cite data privacy policies to be an important or critically important factor in maintaining their loyalty**.

Elsewhere, the story of crumbling cookies finally meets its climax in 2024, with Google's third-party cookie phaseout slated for completion by the end of the year. Notably, Google Chrome is the most popular browser used among U.S. consumers.

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This dagger in the heart of cookies will undoubtedly change the landscape of retargeted advertisements, with brands forced to lean into contextual ads – welcome news for the majority of consumers who are creeped out by third-party cookies.

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And on the topic of advertising, say hello to the 2024 election cycle – an influence that will drive already soaring advertising costs even higher.

Fortunately for brands, there are ripe opportunities in 2024 to double down on proven communication channels like email (which is outperforming other marketing channels in consumer purchase frequency) and the value exchange (which consumers are willing participants in).

There's a lot to unpack for 2024.

*Now, let's dive in.*

# At a Glance: Key Themes & Stats



51%  
*of consumers*

have made a purchase from an email in the last year, compared to **50% for social media advertisements, 49% for social media posts, 30% for SMS/MMS messages, and 21% for banner advertisements.**

Economic optimism is growing, fueled largely by Millennials, and consumers are looking for more than just the lowest price.



50%  
*of consumers*

**are optimistic** about the economic outlook – highest for Millennials at 65% and lowest for Baby Boomers at 31%.

Sizable numbers of consumers cite **product/service quality (65%), convenience (58%) and excellent customer service (53%)** as factors *more* important than price when it comes to making a purchase decision.

## Brand loyalty is immensely valuable.

Brands need to satisfy consumer desires in several key areas to maintain it.



78%  
*of consumers*

**will pay more** to shop with the brands they're loyal to – a rise from 72% a year ago.

**80% or more** of consumers cite the following as either important or critically important to maintaining their loyalty: customer service/support, data privacy policies, product/service quality, options and availability.

## The consumer desire for personalization is clear.

91%

of consumers say their favorite brand **treats them like an individual.**

84%

of consumers cite they are **likely to engage with a personalized offer** tailored to their interests.

81%  
*of consumers*

**think personalized birthday offers are “cool,”** while 77% think the same about product recommendations based on past purchases.

## Brand purpose resonates best with younger consumers.

77% *of Gen Z* & 81% *of Millennials*

cite they are likely to engage with messages about brand purpose-related activities, compared to 62% of Gen X and 53% of Baby Boomers.

In a similar fashion, **67% of Gen Z and 73% of Millennials** find brand purpose to be important or critically important to maintaining brand loyalty. This figure falls to 55% for Gen X and 46% for Baby Boomers.

# At a Glance: Key Themes & Stats

The demand for loyalty programs continues to grow.



50%  
*of consumers*

**are more likely to engage in a loyalty program** this year compared to last, while only 9% are less likely to engage.

Point/reward systems and discounts rank atop consumers’ desired loyalty program components, but nearly a third of Gen Z and Millennials want the loyalty program to offer a sense of brand community, like the ability to connect with others who like the brand.

Fortunately, the value exchange is alive and well.



When it comes to sharing their data in exchange for something, a majority of consumers find value in loyalty points/rewards (91%),

discounts/coupons (90%), early/exclusive access to offers (88%), a chance to win something (84%), unlocking content (69%) and brand community (67%).

The push for greater data privacy is making zero-party data even more important.



59%  
*of consumers*

**find ads based on indirect tracking tools**, like third-party cookies, to be a “creepy” marketing tactic.

In fall 2024, Google Chrome will become the next major browser to disable third-party cookies.

Consumer pessimism surrounding social media is hard to ignore.



58%  
*of consumers*

**don’t trust the advertising** they see on social media.



56%  
*of consumers*

are engaging with social media less for the sake of their mental health.

# Addressing *the* Economy

Economic turbulence is undoubtedly impacting consumer behavior. This year compared to last, **more than half of consumers are doing more research before making purchases**, with similar numbers waiting longer for sales and relying more often on loyalty program benefits.

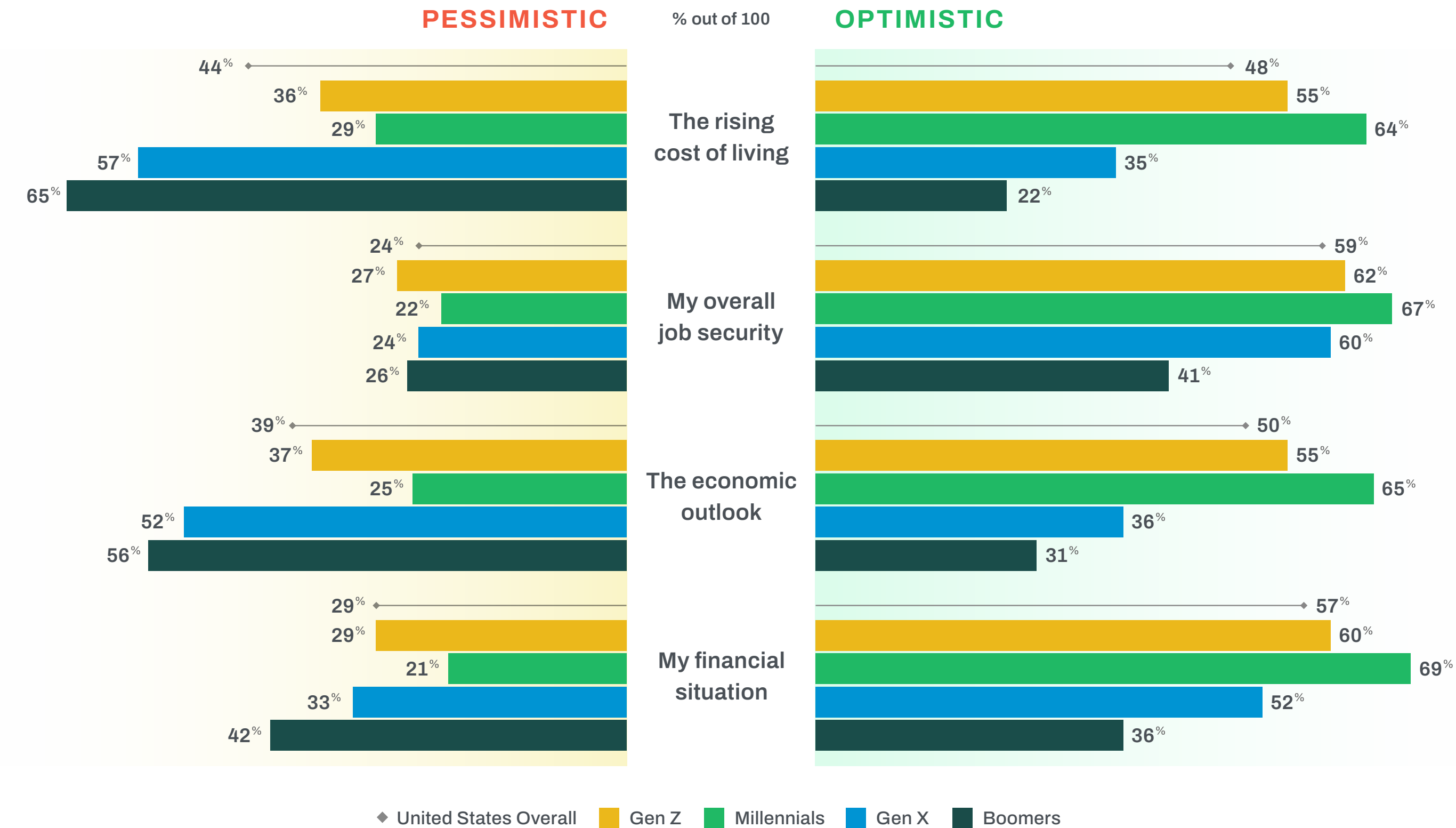
Nonetheless, consumer optimism regarding the economy is beginning to rise. Half of consumers indicate they are optimistic about the economic outlook – a lift from 42% a year ago. This optimism is largely being driven by younger generations – **55% of Gen Z and a whopping 65% of Millennials are reporting optimism with respect to the economic outlook**, falling to **36% for Gen X and 31% for Baby Boomers**.

What's notable is that, even among the more economically pessimistic generations, there are a slew of factors consumers still deem to be more important than price when making purchases. Overall, more than half of consumers cite **product or service quality (65%), convenience (58%) and excellent customer service (53%) as more important than price**, with a considerable number **(45%) placing a brand's reputation over price** as well. These figures are even higher for the economically pessimistic Baby Boomers – in fact, more so than any other generation, they place product/service quality (77%), convenience (66%), excellent customer service (56%) and brand reputation (54%) above price.

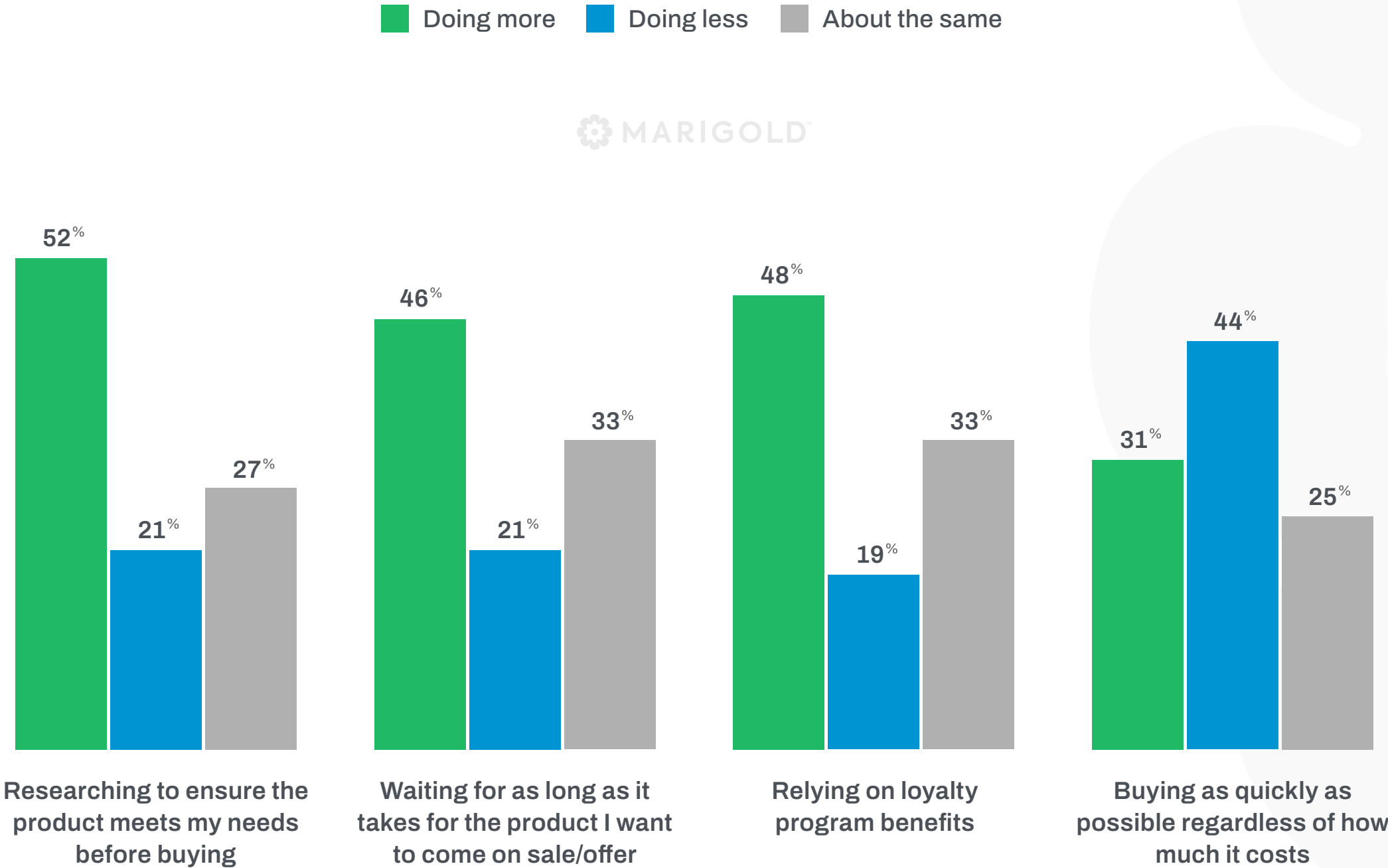
Yes, price is important. But it isn't the end-all-be-all for adaptable brands.



# How would you *describe your feelings* regarding the following?



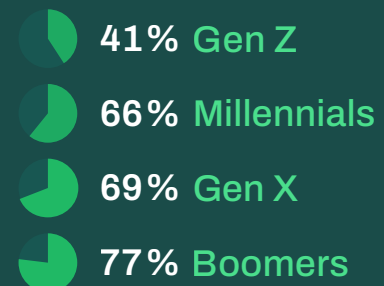
*Compared to last year,* when buying a new product from my favorite brand I'm...



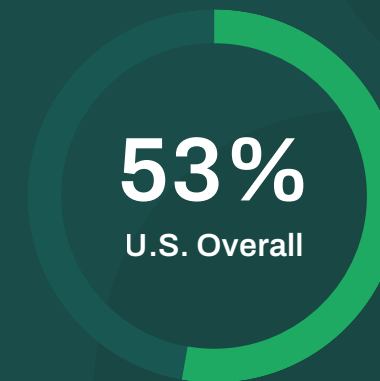
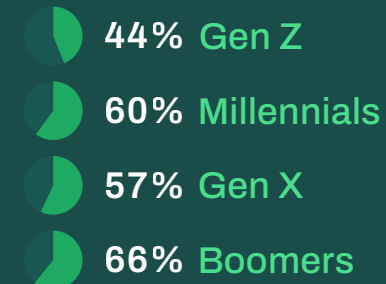
## Which of the following are more important than price *when making a purchase decision?*



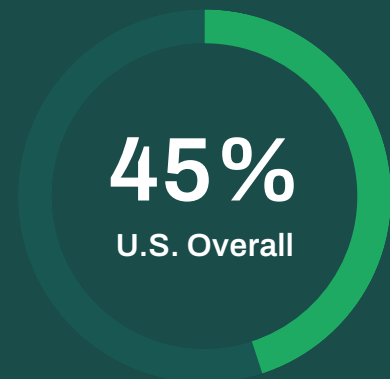
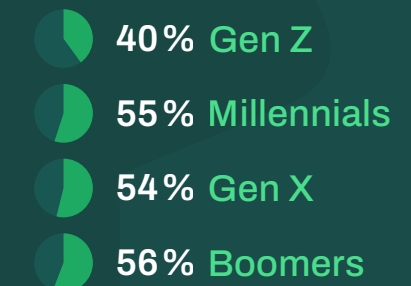
### The quality of the brand's products or services



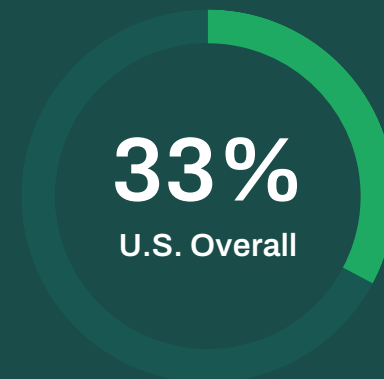
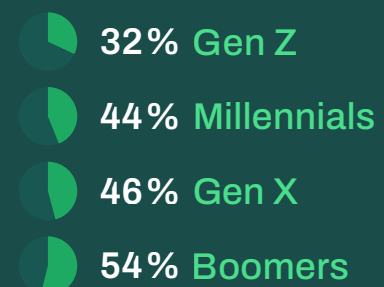
### Convenience e.g., availability, purchase, or delivery options



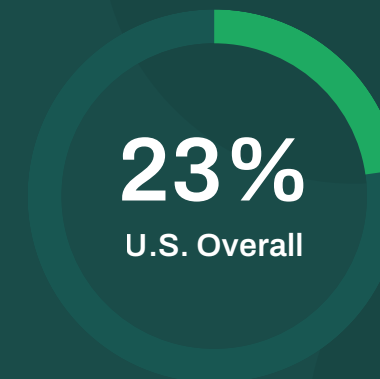
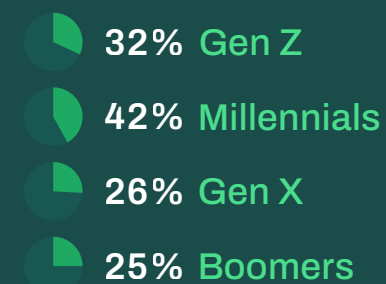
### Excellent customer service and support



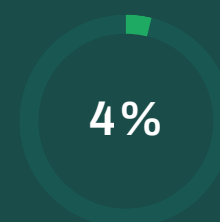
### The brand's reputation



### The brand's ethical values, including its stance on social/environmental issues



### A consistent digital experience



### None of the above





# Marketing Channels

## Email Remains #1

Years go by, new social platforms enter the market, and yet it is email that continues its reign as the most popular channel for driving consumer purchases. In the last year, more consumers **have made a purchase from an email (51%) than from a social media advertisement (50%) or post (49%), SMS/MMS message (30%), or a banner ad (21%).**



To those out of the loop, email's sustained performance may come as a surprise.

But if you really take a step back and think about it, email inboxes are *everywhere*. Email has become a prerequisite for interacting with the digital world – good luck creating an account, subscribing to a newsletter, or opting for paperless billing without email. Unlike social platforms where consumers can “detox” or “unplug” for a while, checking email is an actual day-to-day necessity for many. Its accessibility and widespread consumer reliance make email an obvious choice for the savvy marketer to bring visibility to their messages – but, of course, consumers can and will unsubscribe if these messages miss the mark.

Fortunately, advancements in technology have elevated email's ability to deliver hyper-relevant, masterfully segmented messages that resonate with consumers on an individual level. The desire for personalized messaging – a critical component of relationship marketing – is a recurring theme surrounding modern consumers. They seek timeliness, relevance and an individualized touch – email continues to be the optimal channel for marketers to deliver on these fronts.



## Social Media Ads & Posts

While other marketing channels continue to trail email when it comes to purchases made, younger consumers – especially Millennials – are undoubtedly embracing social media to find new brands, products and offerings.

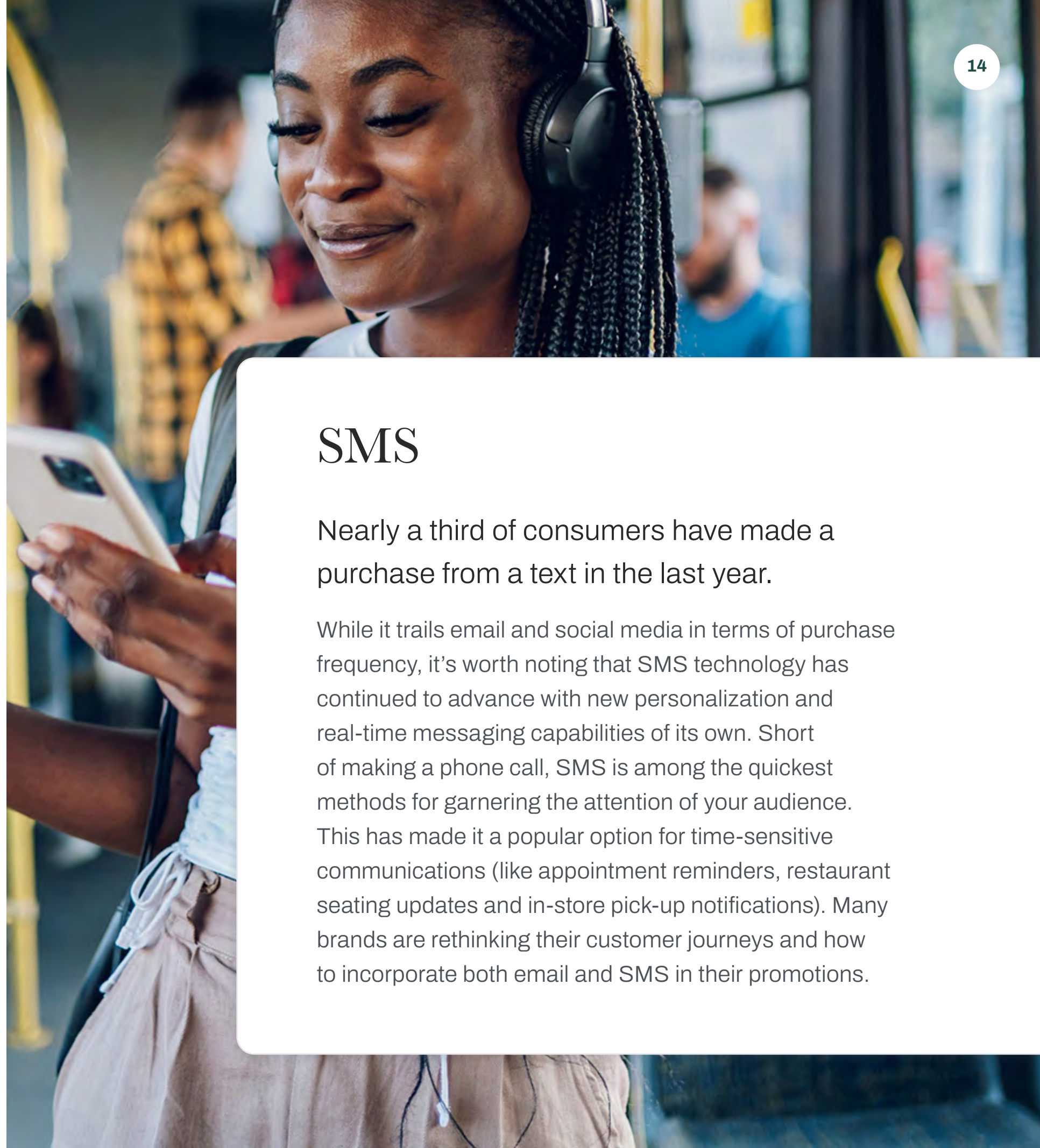
Social media platforms have capitalized with expanded monetization efforts, demonstrated in recent history with the weaving in of new e-commerce opportunities like integrated shops on TikTok, Instagram and Snapchat.

Interestingly, social media ads and posts have an extremely similar level of purchase frequency among U.S. consumers (50% for ads vs. 49% for posts). This is a distinction from global consumers, where a larger advantage for social ads is present (48% for ads vs. 43% for posts). Ultimately, this is positive news for brands who want to lean into organic social growth amid soaring advertising costs.

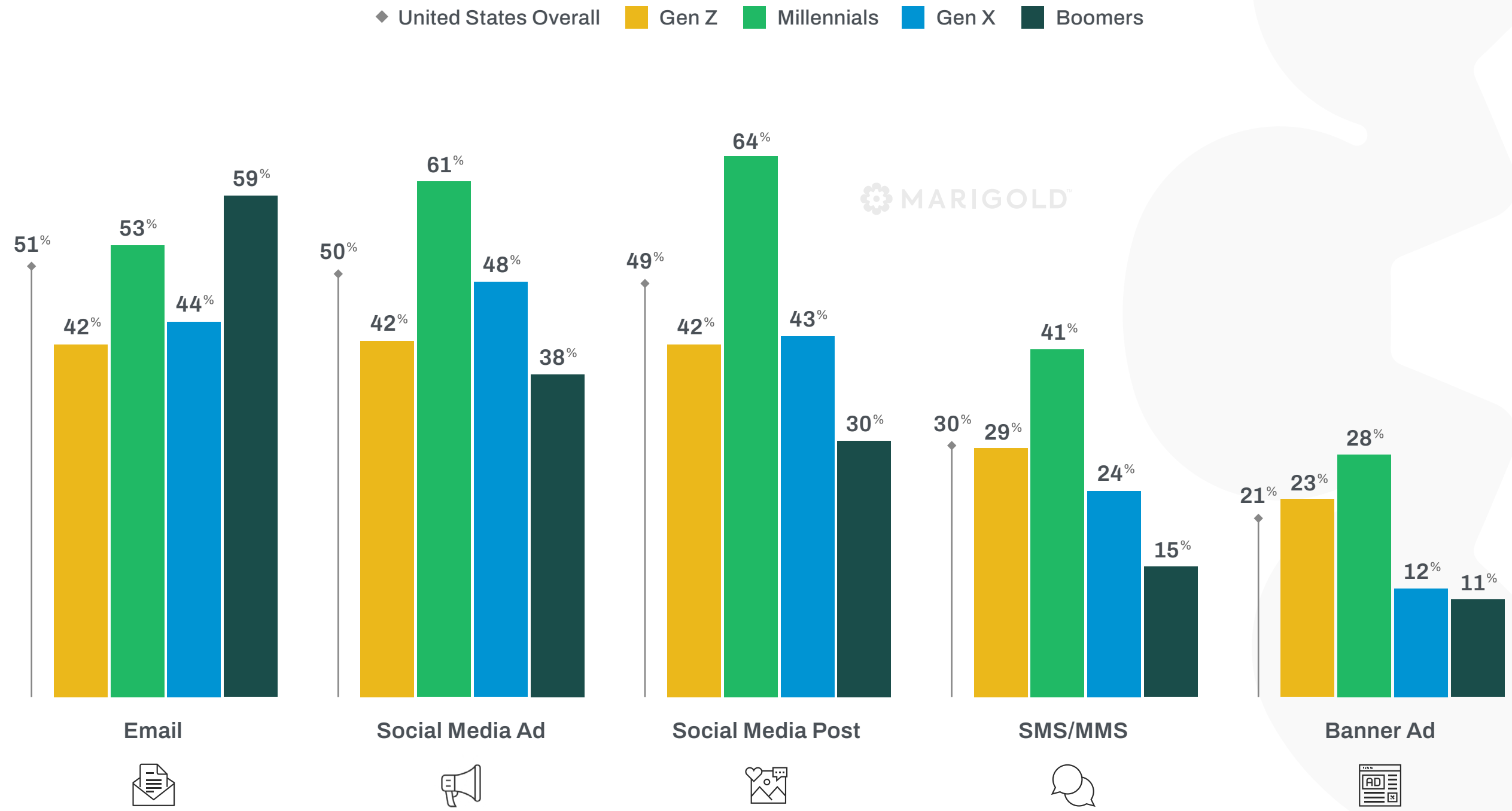
## SMS

Nearly a third of consumers have made a purchase from a text in the last year.

While it trails email and social media in terms of purchase frequency, it's worth noting that SMS technology has continued to advance with new personalization and real-time messaging capabilities of its own. Short of making a phone call, SMS is among the quickest methods for garnering the attention of your audience. This has made it a popular option for time-sensitive communications (like appointment reminders, restaurant seating updates and in-store pick-up notifications). Many brands are rethinking their customer journeys and how to incorporate both email and SMS in their promotions.



# Have you made a purchase from any of the following *in the last 12 months?*





## Mobile

It's 2024. The need for mobile optimization is a given at this point, which can be easier said than done depending on the capabilities of your organization. Just in case you still need convincing, here's the rundown.

Remember those 51% of consumers who've made a purchase from an email in the last year? **Make it an email viewed via mobile and that number only falls to 38%.** For perspective, of all people who've bought something from an email, roughly three-quarters have bought from an email they viewed in a mobile format. All the more reason to view every email as it will be seen on a mobile device before scheduling the send.

Right now, you're probably within reach from your own mobile device – and potentially reading this report from a tablet or phone. Since our mobile devices are on us everywhere we go, mobile unsurprisingly plays a significant role in on-the-fly in-store research as well. **Just shy of half (48%) of consumers have used their phone in-store to research or otherwise help with purchase decisions.** What relevance does this have for brands exactly? Well, pull out your phone, pretend as if you're a customer, and visit a random product page on your website. Most website technology today is pretty good about mobile optimization for basic formatting, but navigation sequences and copy are a little trickier. How easy is the website to navigate with no mouse? And is the copy suitable for mobile (i.e. no walls of text, no TLDRs necessary)?

# Which of the following have you done *in the last 12 months?*



Received or sent money from my mobile phone

- 35% Gen Z
- 57% Millennials
- 63% Gen X
- 44% Boomers



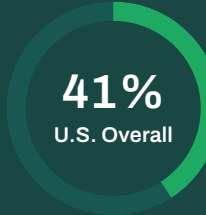
Bought a product or service through a mobile app

- 34% Gen Z
- 54% Millennials
- 56% Gen X
- 52% Boomers



Used my mobile phone in-store to research or help me decide to make a purchase

- 41% Gen Z
- 51% Millennials
- 54% Gen X
- 43% Boomers



Bought digital content via my mobile phone

- 35% Gen Z
- 52% Millennials
- 37% Gen X
- 25% Boomers



Browsed for products in-store but purchased elsewhere

- 32% Gen Z
- 44% Millennials
- 37% Gen X
- 40% Boomers



Bought a product or service because of an email I viewed on my mobile phone

- 32% Gen Z
- 48% Millennials
- 35% Gen X
- 26% Boomers



Visited and made a purchase in-store as a result of an email or SMS promotion received

- 35% Gen Z
- 41% Millennials
- 31% Gen X
- 34% Boomers

## Leverage Tech Consolidation to Your Benefit

With tightening budgets, tech consolidation initiatives have become a new normal as many marketers are tasked to maximize their efficiency.

Over the past several years, advancements in marketing technology and corresponding brand efforts to ensure no stone is left unturned have caused brands to amass a variety of technologies from a variety of vendors, spanning SMS, email, push notifications, loyalty programs and beyond. Unintentionally, this has contributed to bloated infrastructure. And while marketing teams have stitched together technologies and “made things work,” a constricted economic environment has been the catalyst needed to reduce the bloat. Brands are now pressed to determine what is necessary, what isn’t, and how the need to hit a multitude of channels can still be satisfied with tech consolidations. While the prospect of changing marketing technologies and processes can be daunting, there is value that arises out of consolidation, beyond budgetary relief.

A key advantage of tech consolidation is the ability to create more consistent experiences. As ideal as it would be for a consumer to see a promotion on a given channel, and follow immediately with a purchase, the buying journey isn’t always so straightforward. Consumers will see a message or promotion, they’ll ideate, they’ll browse, they’ll research, they’ll interact with your brand, and eventually make a purchase decision. These actions often take place across platforms and devices, which begs the question:

How confident are you in your brand’s ability to provide consistent cross-channel messaging?

Using distinct platforms for distinct marketing channels elevates the risk of disjointed and inconsistent experiences. When you centralize and consolidate your messaging with a **cross-channel platform**, it becomes easier to provide a logical flow of communication, as does the ability to manage and integrate data – no reconciling different customer IDs from different vendors to piecemeal together the right messaging cadences.

If your brand hasn’t already addressed tech consolidations, expect to see them soon. As the saying goes, play with the cards you’re dealt – in this case, use consolidation as an opportunity to satisfy the longstanding consumer desire for consistent user experiences.

# Messaging Frustrations & Engagement

## Frustrations

Messaging is the vessel by which brands connect and cultivate genuine relationships with customers.

It's no secret optimized messaging is the core of any intelligent marketing strategy. And yet, messaging frustrations – namely a lack of personalization – persist among consumers. **Nearly half (48%) have been frustrated by irrelevant content or offers in just the past six months**, with the same number citing they've been **frustrated by messages that failed to reflect their wants and needs**.

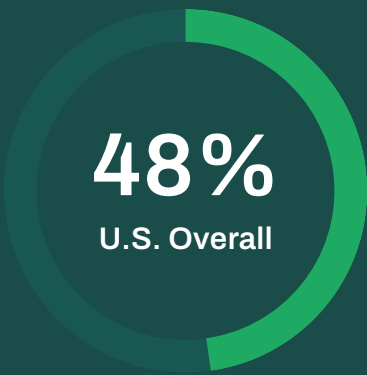
While these metrics are concerning from a high-level perspective, they also present an easy-win opportunity for brands if they make personalization a priority. It comes back to the idea of marketers shifting away from cast-and-blast promotions and putting an honest effort into understanding consumers on a personal level. For your prospects, it can be as simple as updating your landing pages beyond standard form fields and collecting data on preferences and interests. For your current customers, it can be as simple as sending out surveys or polls that give them an opportunity to express their evolving needs. Then, it just comes down to leveraging the data effectively – a challenge that has become easier with **advanced marketing technology** that can help you identify segments, expand campaigns and deliver triggered personalized messages.

# Have you experienced any of the following frustrations from brands *in the last six months?*



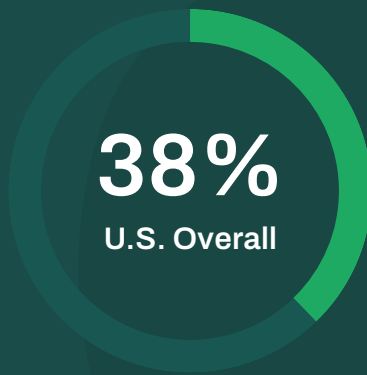
## Irrelevant content or offers

- 30% Gen Z
- 45% Millennials
- 51% Gen X
- 67% Boomers



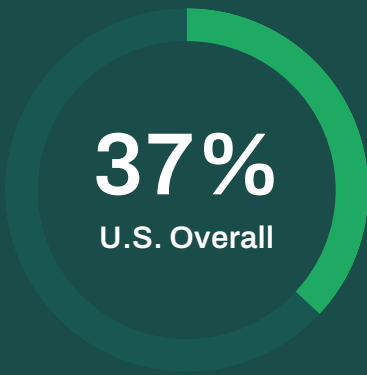
## Messages that didn't reflect my wants and needs

- 45% Gen Z
- 53% Millennials
- 46% Gen X
- 39% Boomers



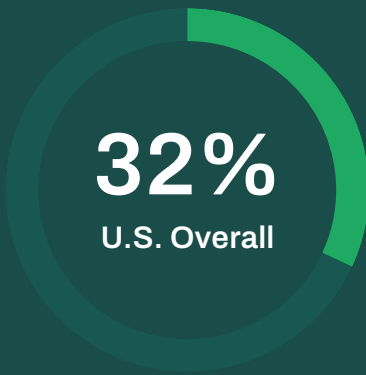
## Messages that didn't recognize my shopping or loyalty card history

- 43% Gen Z
- 40% Millennials
- 28% Gen X
- 36% Boomers



## Messaging based on information about me that I hadn't shared directly with the brand

- 31% Gen Z
- 40% Millennials
- 33% Gen X
- 36% Boomers



## Email sent at a time when I wasn't likely to see it

- 29% Gen Z
- 36% Millennials
- 31% Gen X
- 25% Boomers

## Engagement *by* Message Type

There's no shortage of campaign possibilities when it comes to resonating with consumers.

Consumers are most likely to engage with messages containing discounts and coupon codes, loyalty program promotions, sale/holiday promotions and personalized offers – *all* are message types ripe for personalization. Robust customer journey mapping plays a key role here – different stages in the customer journey require different offers to really be enticing. Rather than universal promotions, isolate the various journey stages among your customers, and create compelling offer sequences. It may take a bit more work upfront, but it can help alleviate frustrations with irrelevant content and offers experienced by over half of consumers.

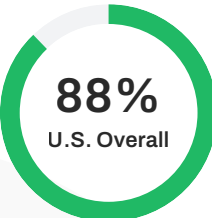
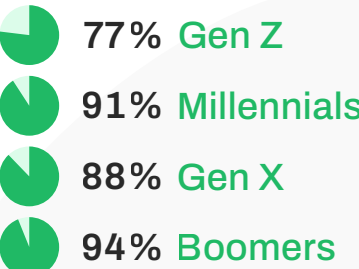
Outside of offers and promotions, product announcements have proven to grab consumer attention, with **more than eight in ten** citing a likelihood to engage.

Engagement levels begin to fall off with newsletters and brand purpose-related activities. Both still have their place, but it is critical for brands to think about their audiences and segments when launching or re-imagining their newsletter strategy. Brand purpose-related activities in particular are highly situational – just among age groups, there are clear differences between younger and older consumers. **77% and 81% of Gen Zers and Millennials respectively are likely to interact with brand purpose-related activities**, sliding to **62%** for Gen Xers and falling to **53%** for Baby Boomers. The relative Boomer apathy towards brand purpose (and other social-themed brand activities) is a recurring theme in our 2024 data, where they consistently poll the lowest among all age groups.

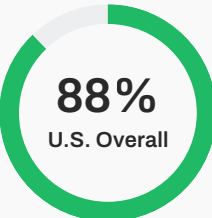
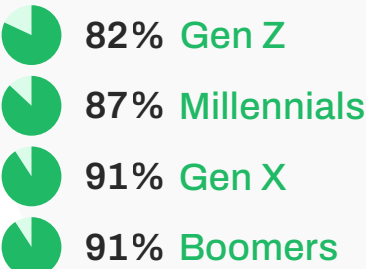
# How likely are you to engage *with each* *of the following brand messages?*



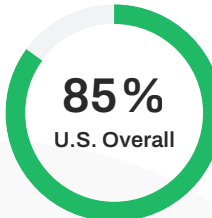
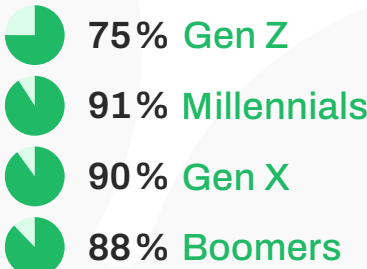
## Discounts and coupon codes



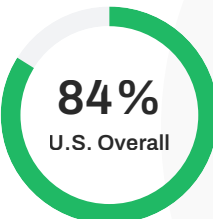
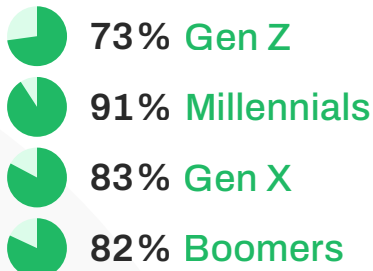
## Loyalty program promotions



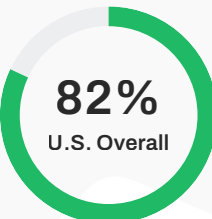
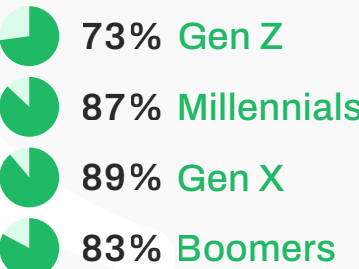
## Sale promotions or holiday promotions



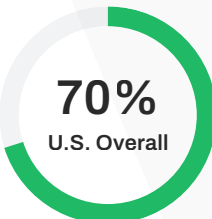
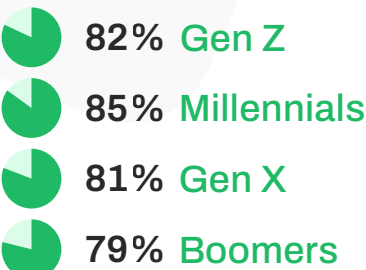
## Exclusive VIP offers



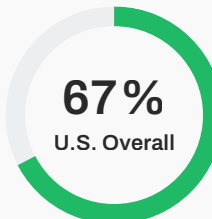
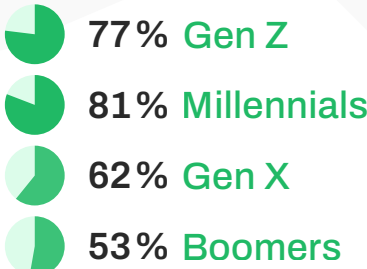
## Personalized emails that surprise you with offers tailored to your interests



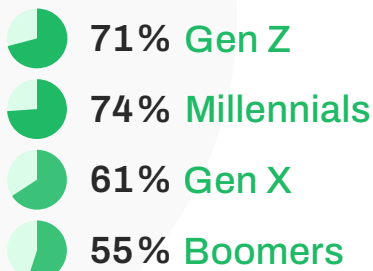
## Product announcements



## Brand purpose-related activities e.g., social activism, environmental initiatives, etc.



## Newsletters



# Brand *Loyalty*



## The Value of Loyalty

Loyalty remains incredibly valuable for brands in 2024. **More than three-quarters (78%) of consumers will pay more to shop with the brands they're loyal to** – a rise from 72% a year ago.

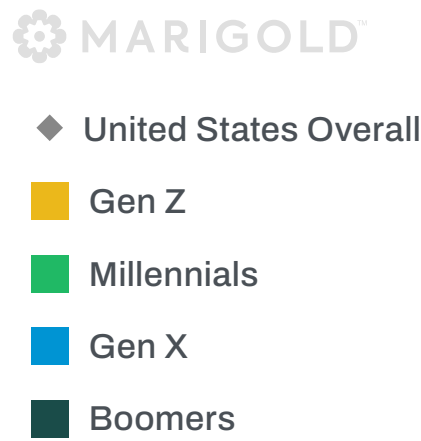
The brands able to secure this loyalty are poised to benefit in a variety of ways – loyalty opens the door for increased revenue opportunities among customers while reducing the pressure of acquiring new ones.

Brands unable to secure loyalty, meanwhile, are at risk. Even when a brand has a suitable product or service that commands more than just one-off purchases, loyalty isn't a given. A considerable **70% of consumers say there are examples where they frequently buy from the same brand, but don't actually feel loyal**. This delicate purchasing behavior reinforces the critical importance of a dedicated loyalty strategy.



# Are the following statements true or false?

% answering "true"



I'm loyal to some brands, and I'll pay more to shop with them



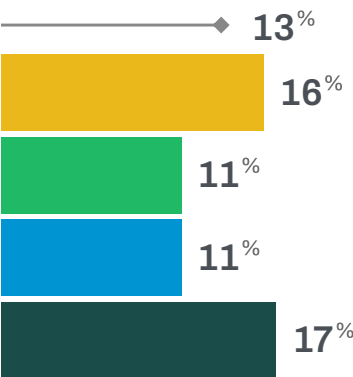
I'm loyal to some brands, but I'll buy from competitors if it's cheaper or more convenient



There are examples where I frequently buy from the same brand, but I don't feel loyal to that brand



I'm not loyal to any particular brands



## Consumers' Favorite Brands

When crafting loyalty strategies, what better place to start than by looking to the brands who've earned the “favored” status among their constituents?

As it turns out, favored brands are getting quite a bit right. They are delivering consistent experiences across channels, practicing personalization and relationship-building, rewarding customers for their loyalty, and respecting data privacy. When combined, these brand efforts are a great representation of relationship marketing in practice – a commitment to cultivating genuine connections, carried out by consistent, personalized messaging that makes customers feel like VIPs. It's a lot to account for. But when the end result is loyal customers who will pay more to shop with you, it's worth the effort.



## My favorite brand...

Provides a consistent experience, regardless of where I interact with it

95%

Uses my data in a way that makes me feel comfortable

92%

Rewards me for my loyalty

91%

Treats me like an individual

91%

Strives to develop a relationship

89%

Makes me feel special, like a VIP

88%

Surprises me with rewards I don't expect

84%

Influences my life beyond the products and services that it provides

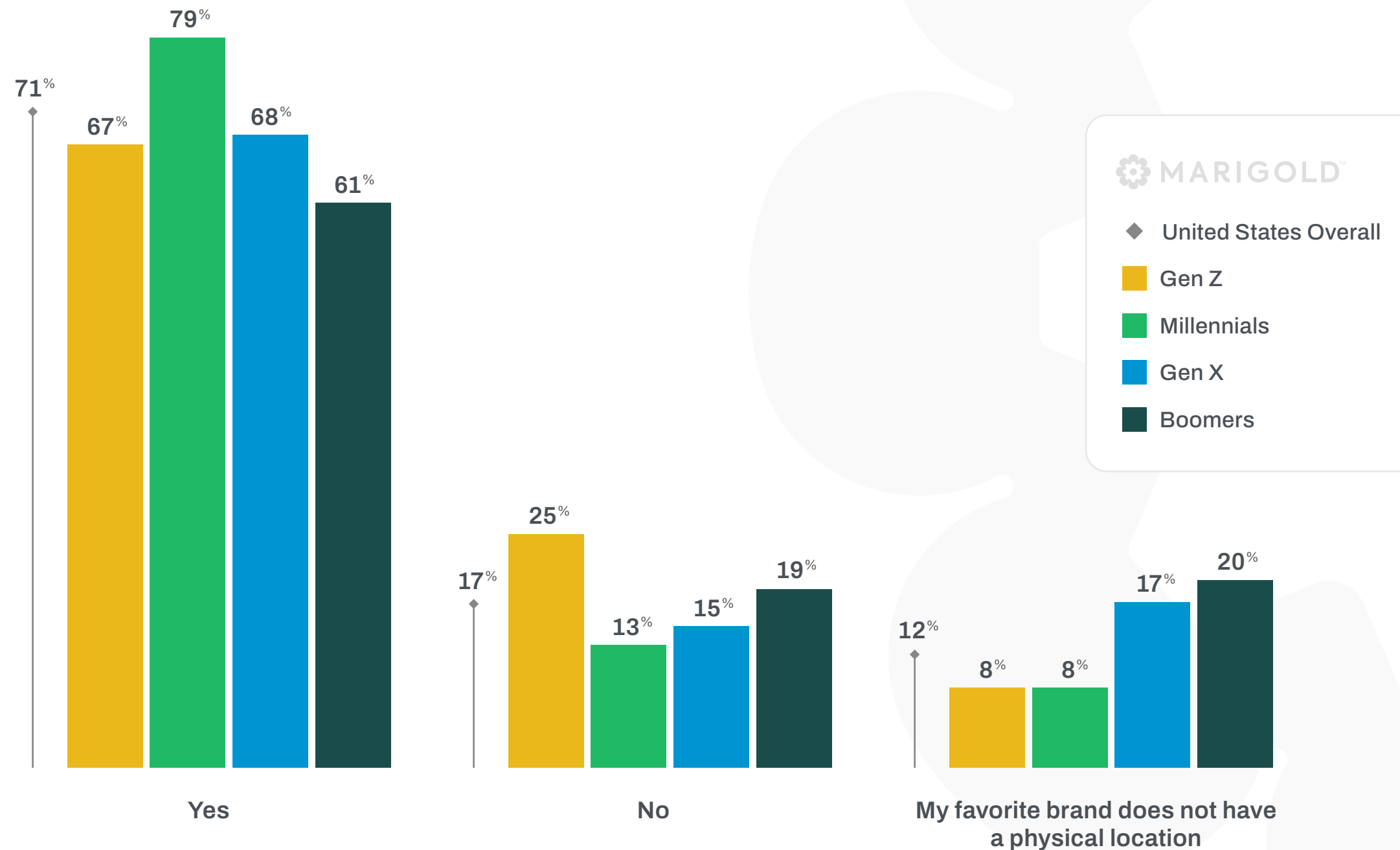
81%

% answering "agree"

In another testament to the value of a loyal customer base, **71%** of consumers cite that if their favorite brand's nearest location closed, they would go out of their way to continue shopping with them **even if it meant a longer trip**.

**Only 17%** wouldn't continue shopping with the previously favored brand – rising to a more substantial 25% of Gen Z consumers. Interestingly, **12% of consumers cite their favorite brand doesn't have a physical location at all** – a reminder that some brands can thrive in a fully remote environment.

If your favorite brand's nearest location closed, would you still go out of your way to shop with them *even if it meant a longer trip?*



# Loyalty Drivers

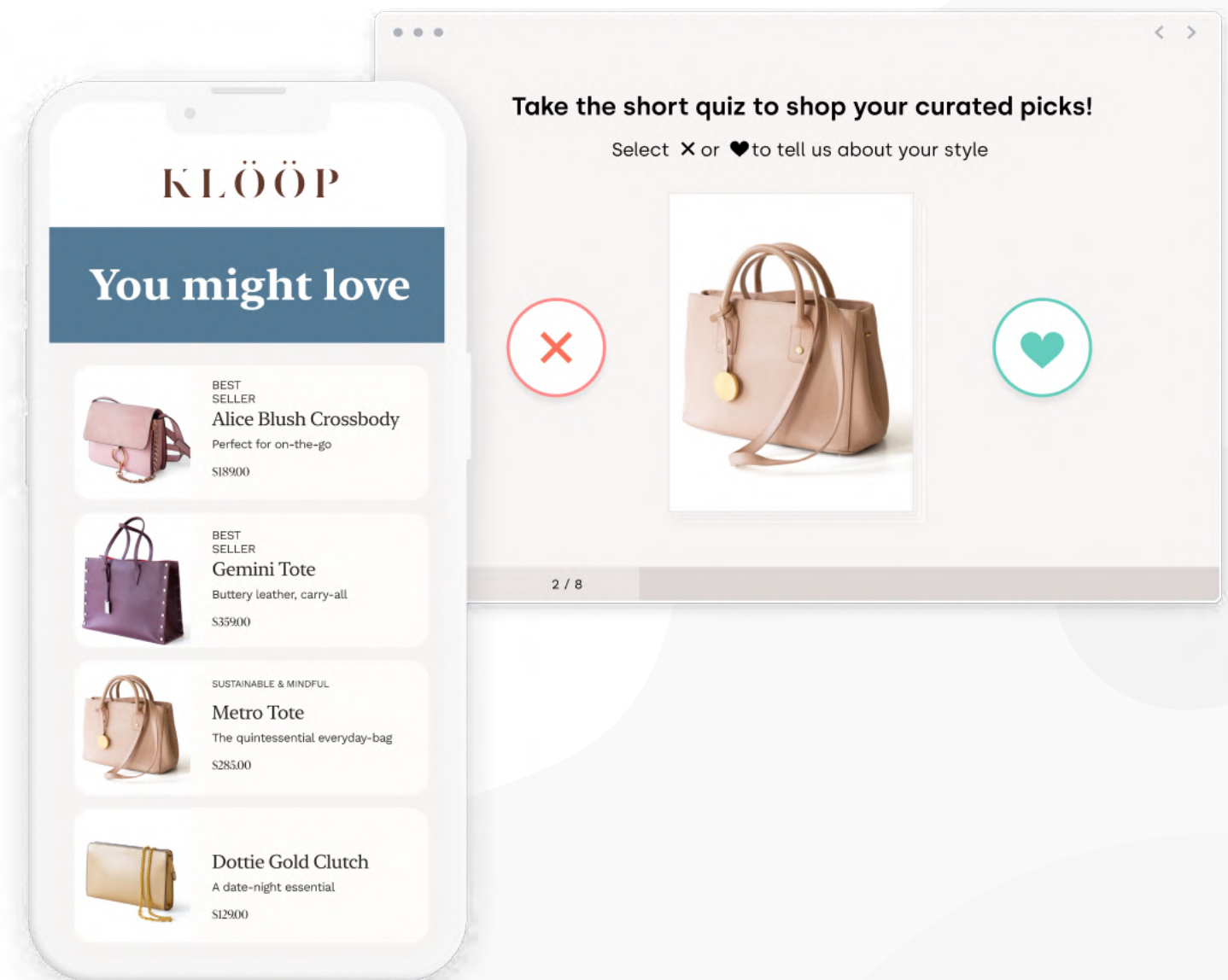
We know loyalty is valuable and we know consumers' favorite brands are satisfying many of the areas key to relationship marketing. But what are some specifics your brand can do that will really keep your customers loyal?

**SPOILER ALERT:** a Big L Loyalty program, while great, *isn't a necessity* for driving loyalty.

Simply optimizing your messaging to ensure your audience receives up-to-date, personalized information can check many of the boxes pivotal to customer loyalty. Think triggered messages for product availability, personalized offers and promotions based on previous activity, and transparent explanations for how data is being used – all easy messaging implementations that can dramatically improve customer perception of your brand.

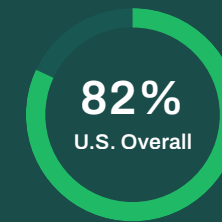
More broadly, there are several other factors that you can probably guess are important. When differentiating your brand from competitors, speak to these characteristics of your brand: the quality of your products or services, what sets your customer support and service apart, and the variety of products/services your brand offers.

At Marigold, Big L loyalty programs are those that require investment into a dedicated loyalty solution. Big L Loyalty programs include tech and services like currency management, earning systems, dynamic loyalty tiers, and a dedicated team – which often sits outside of marketing – to manage the program.

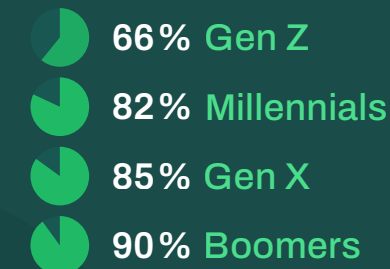


# *How important are the following in* keeping you loyal to your favorite brand?

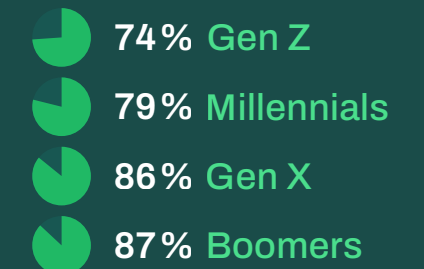
% answering “important” or “critically important”



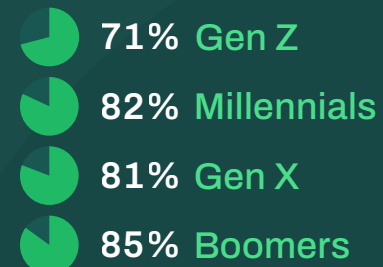
## Customer service/support



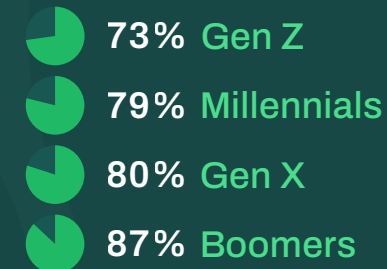
## Range of options/product choice



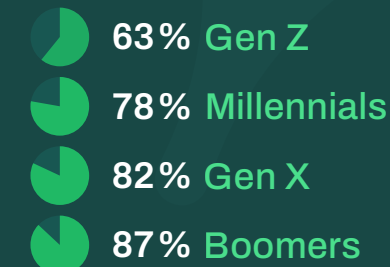
## Availability online/in-store



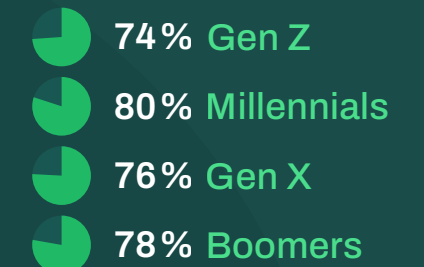
## Data privacy policies



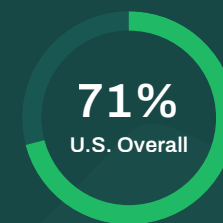
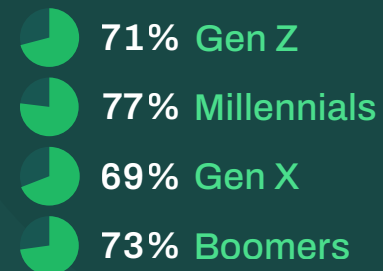
## Quality of product or services



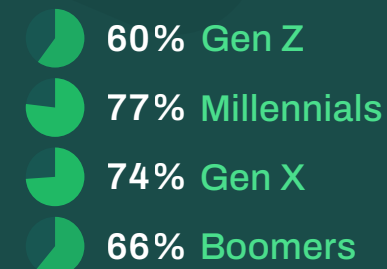
## Offers and promotions



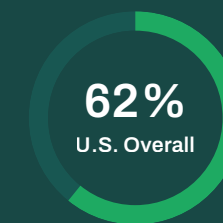
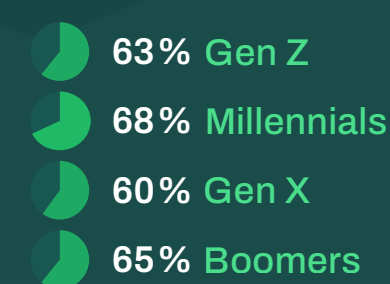
## Loyalty programs



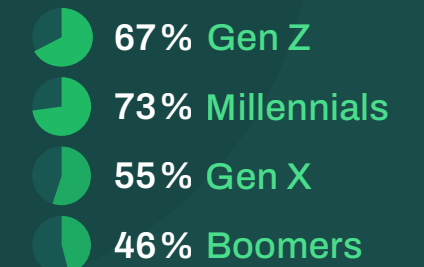
## Mobile app/website e.g., functionality, user-friendliness



## They work hard to build a relationship with me



## Brand purpose e.g., broader social aims





## The Art of the Win-Back

While it may come as a concern for marketers that **more than one in three consumers have burned their loyalty to at least one brand in the last year**, the good news is that the overwhelming majority of these consumers cite they can be won back.

The impact of inflation resurfaces here, where more attractive discounts or coupon codes rise above the other strategies when it comes to most effectively winning back customers. But the effectiveness of financial incentives when pocketbooks tighten isn't exactly a secret – finding the right way to increase the visibility of your offers is critical. As consumer inboxes become filled to the brim with 15% off this and 20% off that, the responsibility falls upon the shoulders of marketers to craft offers that really resonate with their audiences.

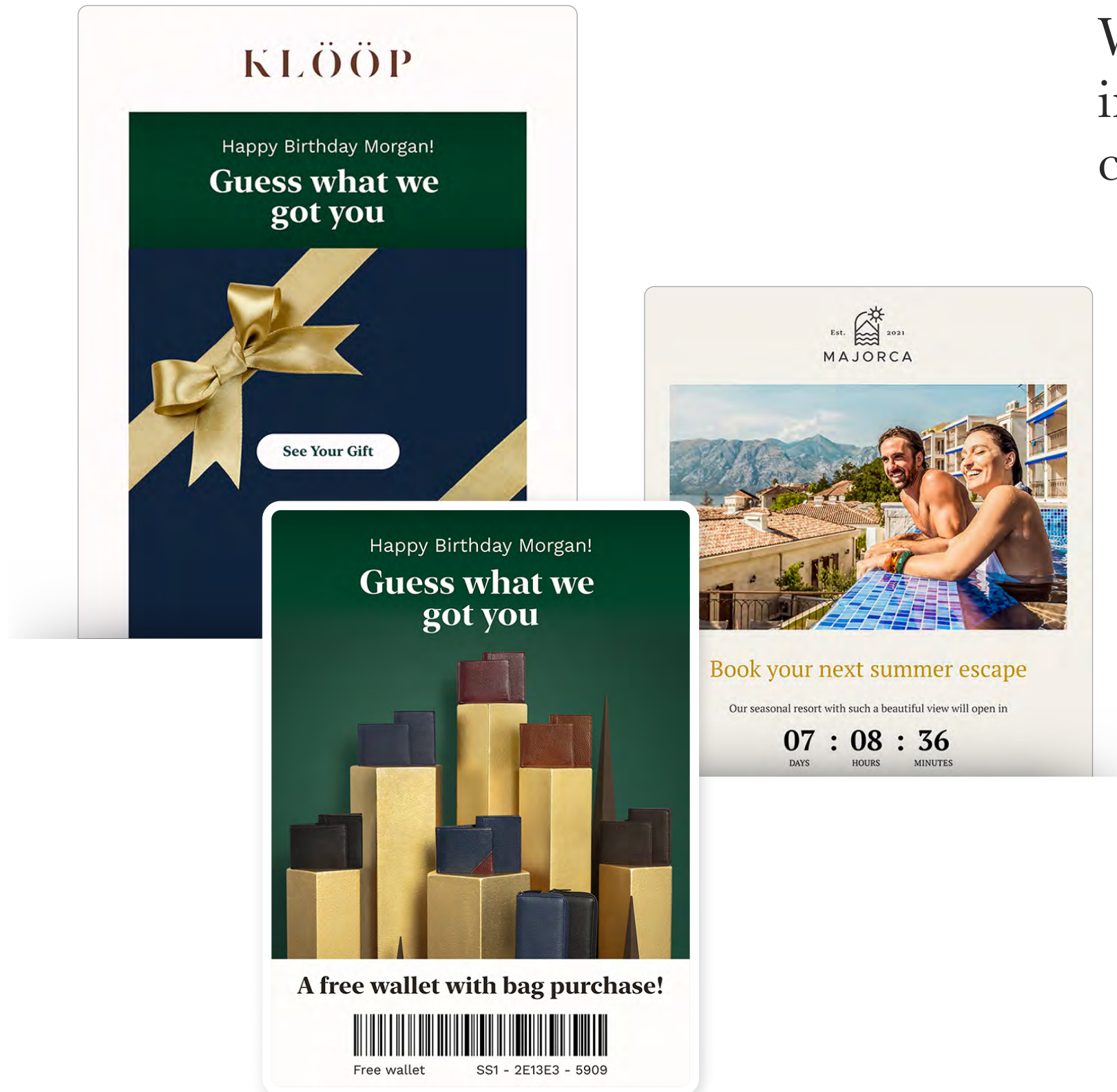
This is where real-time personalization and dynamic content prove to be immensely valuable. Accounting for customer data, behavior and characteristics in real-time, and leveraging these data points to provide hyper-relevant, timely offers can help elicit customer attention.



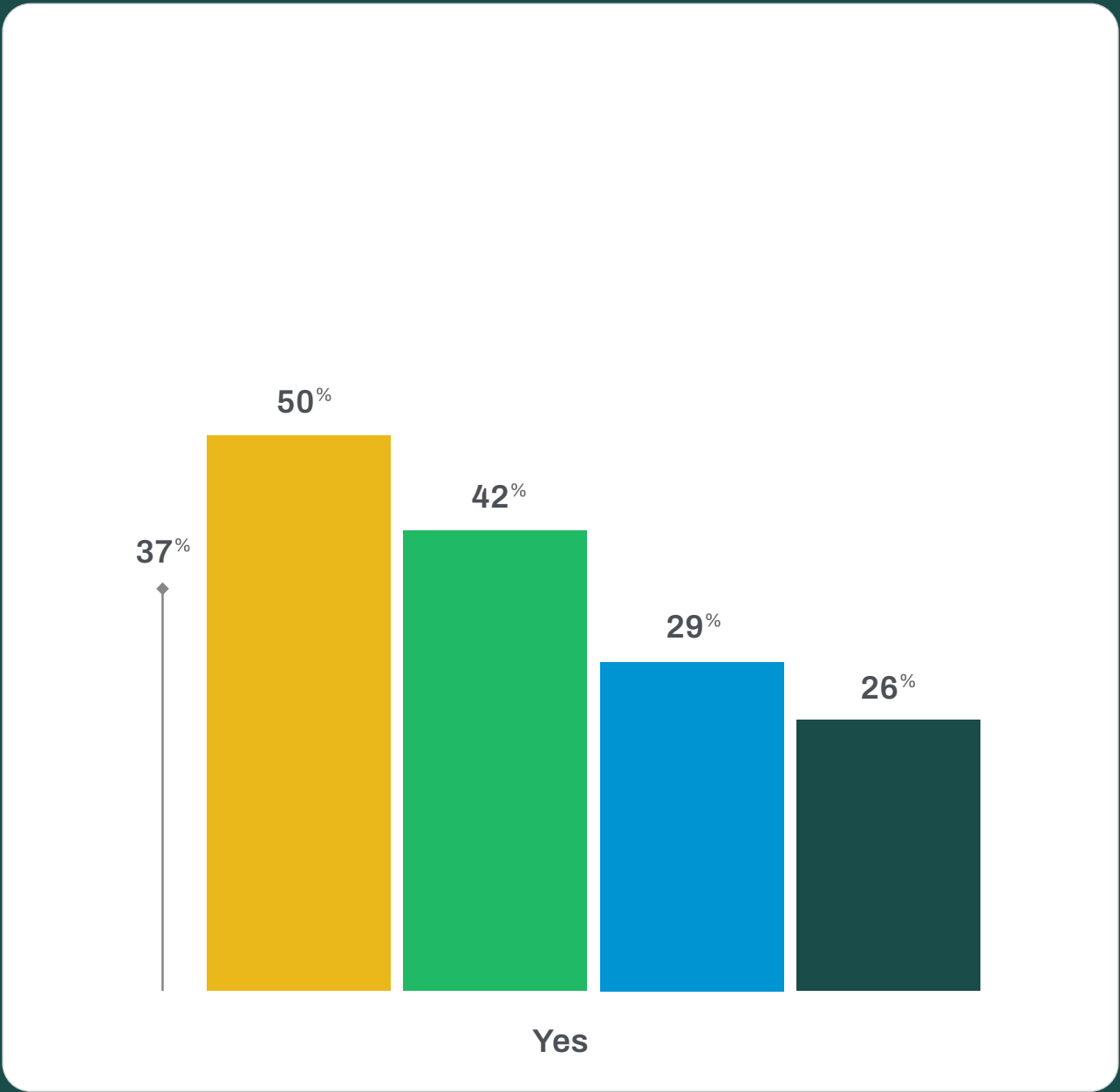
When weaving discounts or coupons into your win-back messaging strategy, consider using the following:

- **Triggered offers** based on time (i.e. three months since the customer has made a purchase) or interactions (i.e. immediately after they've viewed a particular product or service on your website).
- **Interactive elements** like click-to-reveal and scratch-off offers to increase engagement and help to gamify experiences.
- **Live countdown timers** accompanying the offer to drive a sense of urgency.

Looking for win-back strategies other than monetary-centric offerings? Fortunately, **more than a third of consumers cite they could be won back with better customer service**, a broadened range of products/services and enhanced quality of products/services. If you're unsure of which area to target in your win-back messaging, consider asking your less engaged customers to share their thoughts in a survey – it's a great way to demonstrate that you value their perspective and a key step in pinpointing your precise attrition contributors.

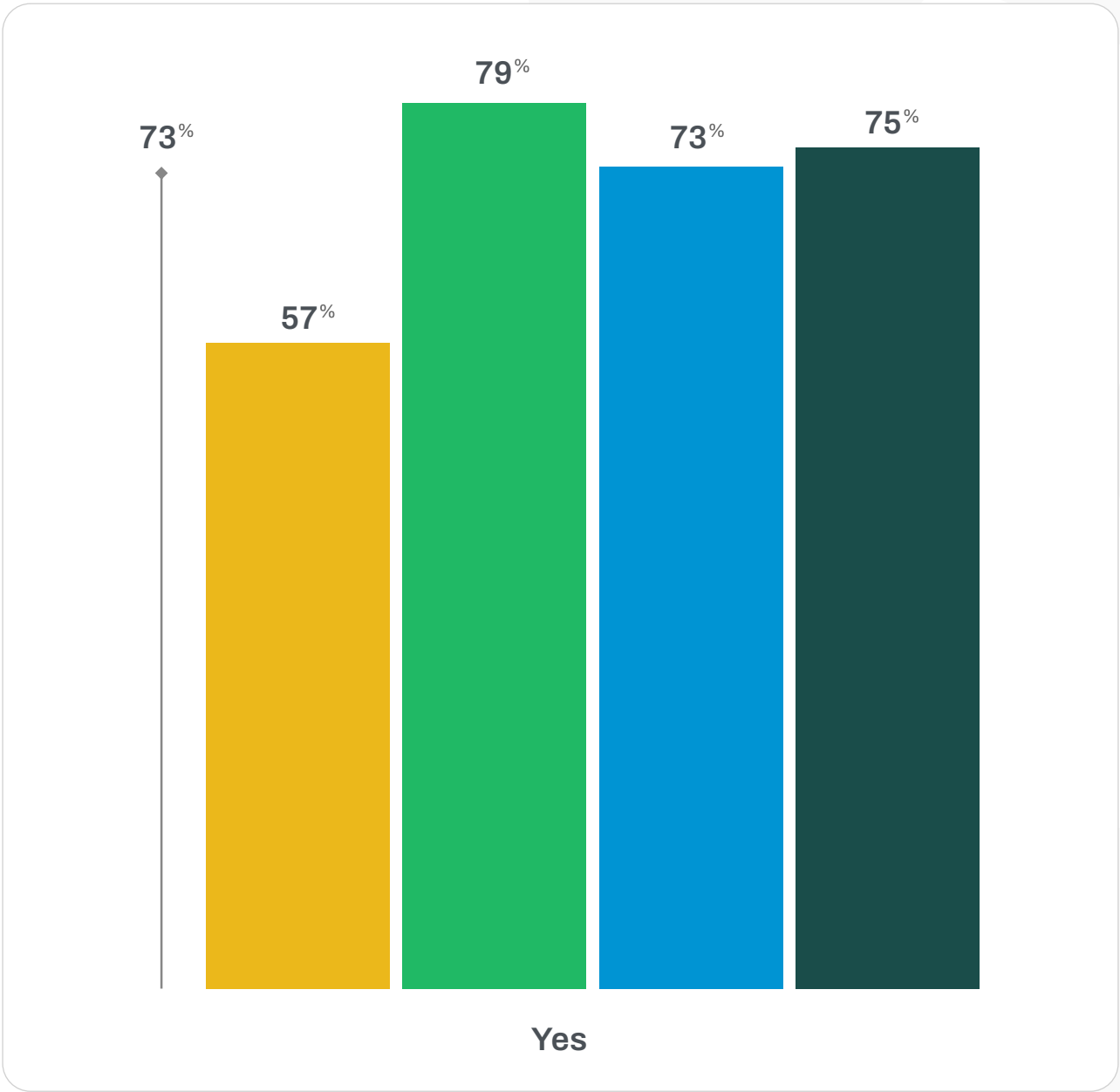


Have you switched away from or become less loyal to any brand you previously liked to buy from in the past year?



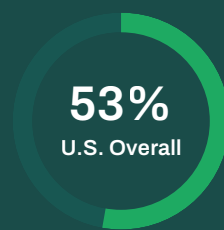
◆ United States Overall    ■ Gen Z    ■ Millennials    ■ Gen X    ■ Boomers

Given that you've shifted loyalty or stopped buying from a preferred brand, do you believe the brand could take actions to win you back or make you brand loyal?

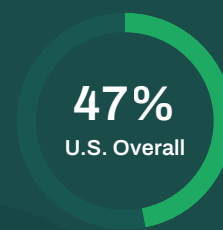
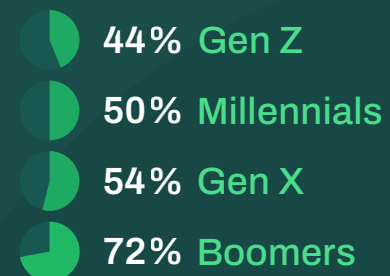


◆ United States Overall    ■ Gen Z    ■ Millennials    ■ Gen X    ■ Boomers

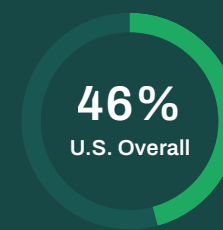
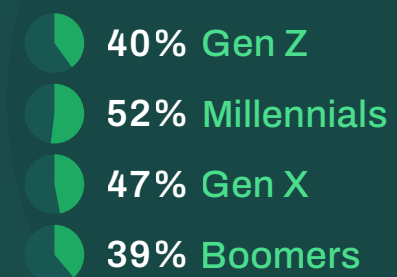
# If you believe a brand could win you back or make you more loyal, *which actions could help?*



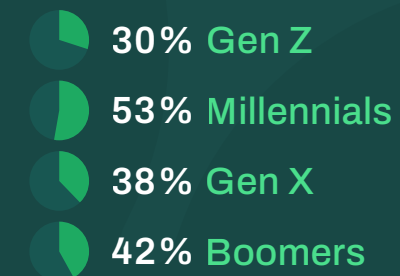
## Provide more attractive discounts or coupon codes



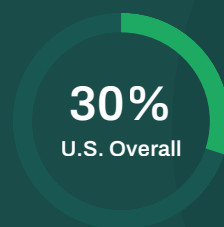
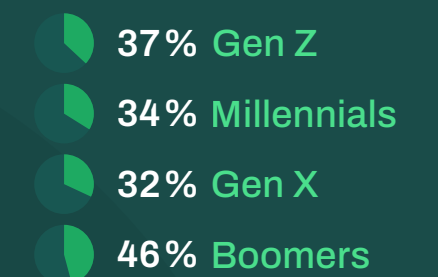
## Better customer service



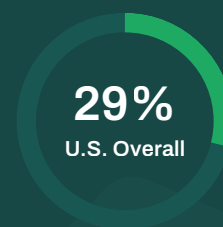
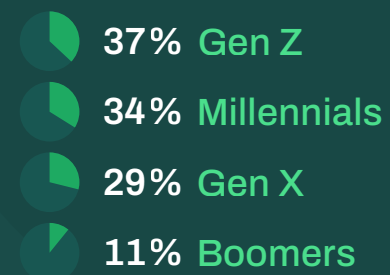
## Enhance the quality of products or services



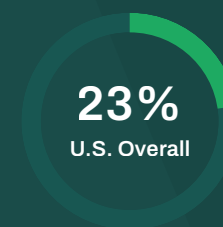
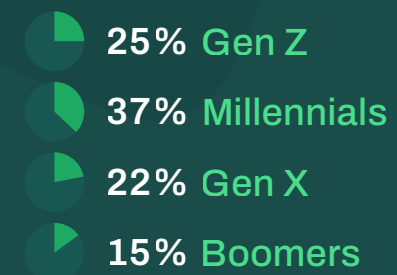
## Broaden its range of products or services



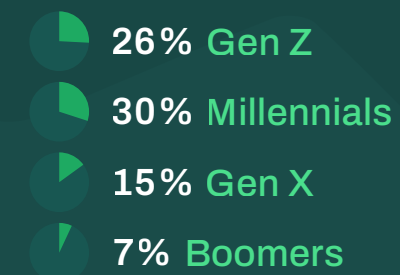
## Refine the digital user experience



## Strengthen data privacy policies



## Reconsider its stance on societal issues



# Big L Loyalty

If you aren't currently leveraging a dedicated loyalty program, you're likely missing out on revenue opportunities.

**Half of consumers** are *more* likely to engage in a loyalty program this year compared to last, while only 9% are less likely to engage (41% will be keeping their loyalty program participation constant).

When it comes to specific loyalty program desires, point/reward systems and exclusive discounts top the list for consumers. Loyalty programs can and *should* offer **more than just financial incentives**, but the allure of tangible rewards is undeniable. The key is constructing a loyalty program that appeals to the broad consumer affinity for cost-savings, while offering a personal touch that sets your program apart from the countless others whose appeals start and end with points-for-purchases.

As you can likely deduce from the variety of loyalty programs you've interacted with personally, not all are created equally. There's a lot to balance in an advanced "Big L" program, from the technical demands of creating dynamic loyalty tiers and earning systems, to the strategic challenges of curating compelling loyalty sequences that truly resonate with customers. The solution is an intelligent system of program management that can dynamically segment customers into loyalty tiers, reward non-transactional (but still valuable) customer interactions (like survey participation), and offer robust reward management functionalities to keep customers actively engaged.

## CORE "BIG L" LOYALTY PROGRAM CAPABILITIES

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Currency management   | <input type="checkbox"/> Loyalty status monitoring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Digital punch cards   | <input type="checkbox"/> Personalized offers       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dynamic loyalty tiers | <input type="checkbox"/> Reward management         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earning systems       |  |

## WORTH NOTING

is that more than a third of consumers find value in receiving exclusive access to products/events/services, while 30% find value in personalized product/service suggestions based on their loyalty program usage.

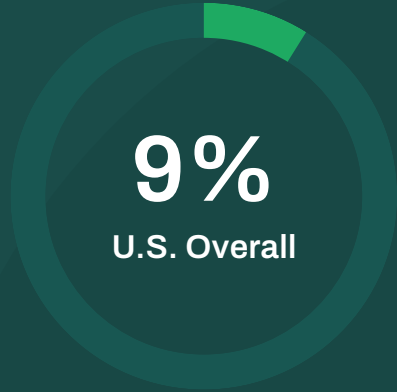
Only 21% of consumers overall are interested in the ability to connect with other people who like the brand, but this desire for a sense of community rises to a more considerable 30% for Gen Z and 31% for Millennials.

Are you more or less likely to engage in brand loyalty programs this year compared to last year?



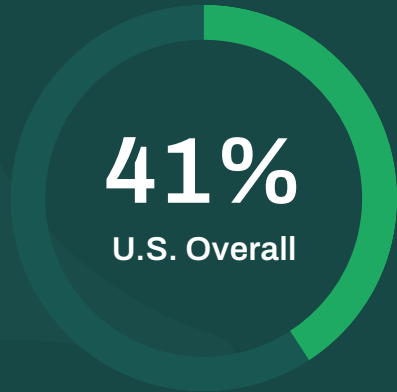
More Likely

- 44% Gen Z
- 66% Millennials
- 43% Gen X
- 30% Boomers



Less Likely

- 22% Gen Z
- 7% Millennials
- 6% Gen X
- 5% Boomers



No Change

- 34% Gen Z
- 27% Millennials
- 51% Gen X
- 65% Boomers



*Thinking about rewards and loyalty programs, what should top brands offer to keep you coming back?*



# Privacy, Zero-Party Data & the Value Exchange

Providing personalization while respecting the personal data of consumers is a balancing act for brands.

Insufficient consumer data, stored across multiple systems of record, will negatively impact the ability of brands to deliver experiences that are timely and relevant. But trekking too far in the direction of sensitive personal data can leave consumers feeling outright uncomfortable.

For better or worse (*better* for forward-looking marketers), the demise of third-party cookies and the intensification of privacy and anti-spam efforts by tech leaders like Google, Yahoo and Apple requires a fundamental shift in the way brands collect consumer data.

Optimizing personalization in a post-cookie environment where consumers, corporations and governments alike are placing heavier emphasis on data privacy will require a more direct-to-consumer approach, assisted with thoughtful messaging and a continued gravitation towards zero-party data acquisition.





## Brand Interactions:

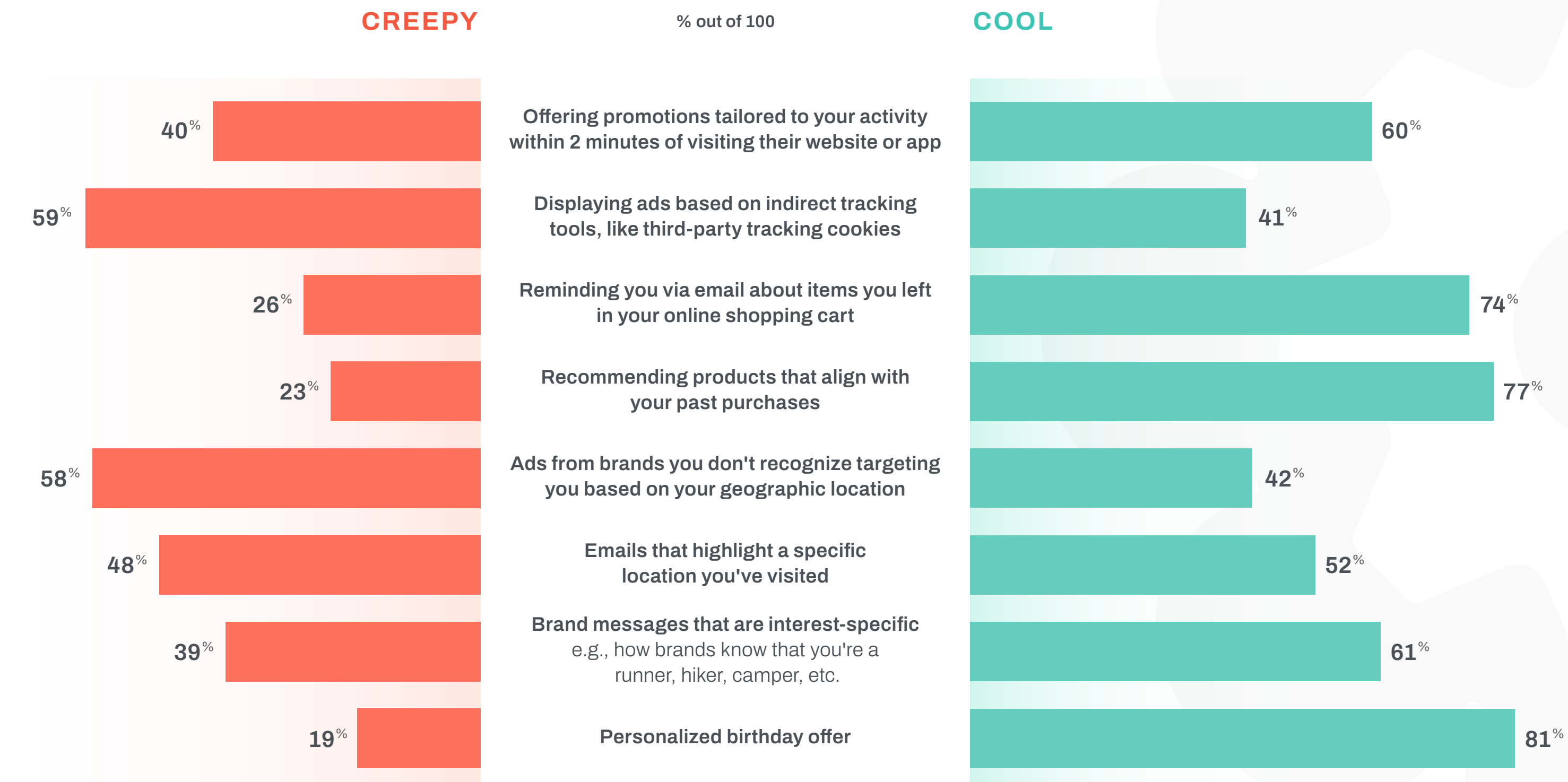
### **CREEPY VS. COOL**

There are a variety of brand interactions that can satisfy the consumer desire for personalization without setting off alarms.

Abandoned cart reminders, birthday offers, recommendations based on past purchases and interest-specific messages all resonate with a strong majority of consumers. Contrarily, a sizable portion of consumers find ads based on indirect tracking tools and location-targeted ads from unknown brands as decidedly “creepy.”

Of course, comfort levels with the utilization of personal data will vary, highlighting the importance of probing for consumer preferences early on in relationships. A simple preference form that covers opt-ins and outs for data usage and a checklist for the types of messages contacts would like to receive is always good practice.

# Do you find these brand interactions creepy or cool?



# Consumer Behavior Regarding Privacy

What are consumers actually doing on an individual level to protect their data privacy?

In the last year, just shy of half have deleted unused mobile apps and browser extensions, while **more than 40% have tightened the privacy settings on their online accounts** and have decided to share less about themselves online. *Deleting, tightening, sharing less.* The universal consumer method for data privacy is simple: shield the world from their data. But with cookies crumbling, brands absolutely need the ability to convince consumers to impart their data – behaviors, preferences, motivators and the like are all critical data points for delivering robust personalization.

Notably, the Baby Boomer stereotype regarding tech-aversiveness certainly isn't present – Boomers even rank first among age groups when it comes to using two-factor authentication (2FA).



*In the last 12 months,* have you done the following on your mobile, tablet, or desktop PC?



Created a strong, unique password and used two-factor authentication

- 38% Gen Z
- 50% Millennials
- 55% Gen X
- 58% Boomers



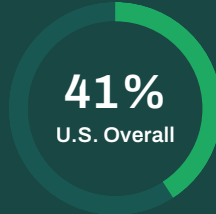
Deleted unused mobile apps and browser extensions

- 34% Gen Z
- 41% Millennials
- 59% Gen X
- 66% Boomers



Shared less about myself online

- 38% Gen Z
- 42% Millennials
- 40% Gen X
- 42% Boomers



Tightened privacy settings across some of my online accounts

- 30% Gen Z
- 44% Millennials
- 38% Gen X
- 47% Boomers



Searched for an email from a favorite brand in my spam folder and moved it to my inbox

- 25% Gen Z
- 37% Millennials
- 32% Gen X
- 37% Boomers



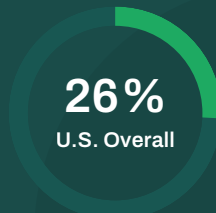
Blocked search engines from tracking me or used privacy-centric search engines

- 32% Gen Z
- 28% Millennials
- 33% Gen X
- 38% Boomers



Revoked third-party app connections to my online profiles  
e.g., Facebook, Google

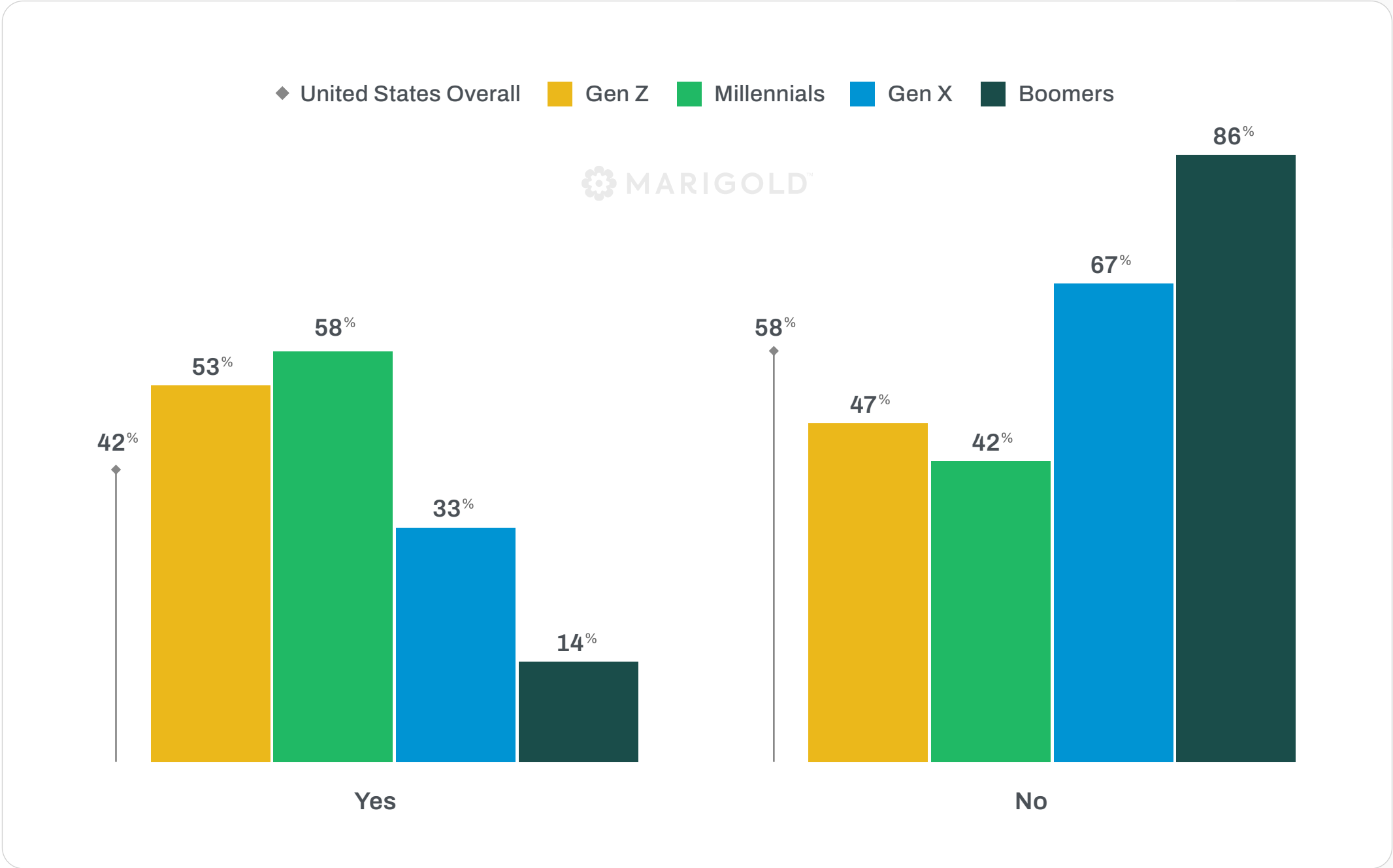
- 31% Gen Z
- 28% Millennials
- 28% Gen X
- 24% Boomers



Browsed online via a virtual private network (VPN)

- 30% Gen Z
- 33% Millennials
- 22% Gen X
- 16% Boomers

Were you aware that cookies, which track visitor activity on websites, *are being withdrawn soon?*



# The Value Exchange

You need data. Consumers have it. Thankfully, the vast majority of consumers are willing participants in the value exchange. The challenge just lies in pinpointing the precise methods most successful at inspiring consumers to share said data.

The allure of saving money makes financial incentives arise as a key contender.

**Nine in ten consumers say they find both discounts/coupons and loyalty points/rewards to be valuable exchanges for their personal data.**

The “value” in the value exchange doesn’t have to be monetary, though. Data acquisition initiatives are a great opportunity to flex your relationship marketing muscles and make your audience feel like VIPs. Offer them exclusive content, like previews, eBooks, guides, recipes, whatever your niche may be, and make the “cost of entry” participation in a survey, poll or quiz designed to collect zero-party data.

Elsewhere, cultivating a sense of community can be a powerful tool for data collection. When customers feel like they’re part of a community, they feel more willing – perhaps even *compelled* – to provide their input, opinions and perspectives. **67% of consumers find community (like connecting with other people who like the brand) as a valuable exchange for their personal data**, with exceptionally high levels of value observed among Gen Z (77%) and Millennial (79%) consumers.

## Take this short quiz about your travel style

Select ✕ or ♥ to tell us about your style



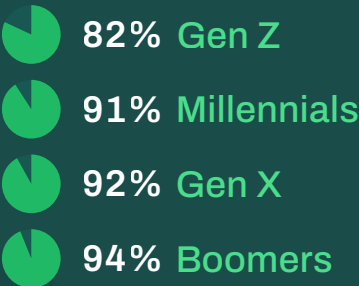
Brands often provide something of value in exchange for personal data.

Which types of benefits *are the most valuable to you?*

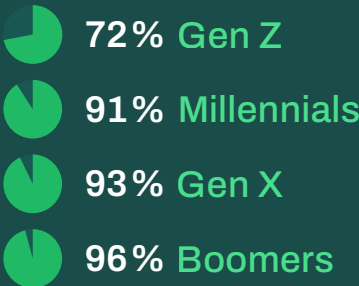
% answering “very valuable” or “somewhat valuable”



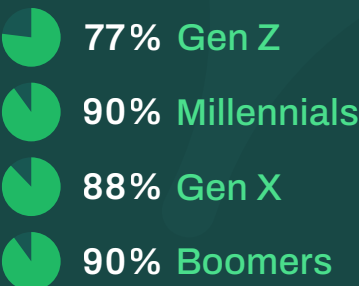
Loyalty points/rewards



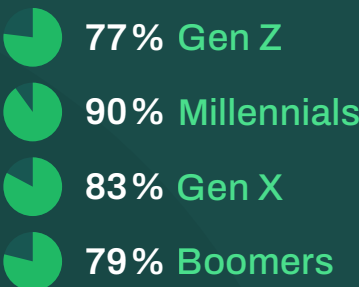
Discounts or coupons



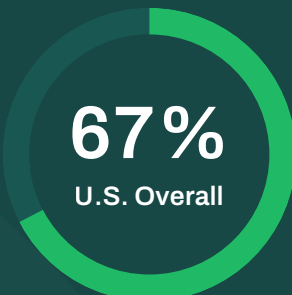
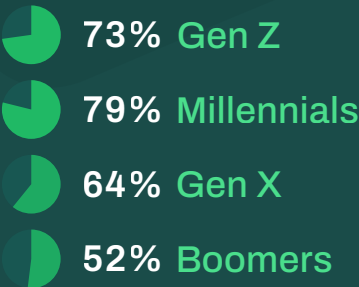
Early and/or exclusive access to offers



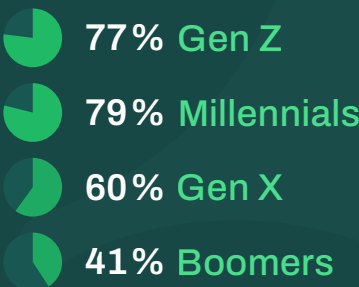
A chance to win something



Unlocking content e.g., exclusive videos



Community i.e., I want to connect with other people who like the brand



# Customer Surveys

Great surveys are the gold standard for zero-party data acquisition. Coming directly from the consumer, the data from a survey is free from much of the ambiguity that is part and parcel of third-party data. No assumptions, no stitching together narratives. Just straightforward data provided voluntarily by the consumer – a win for data integrity.

Surveys are versatile, and the use cases are extensive. Consider the following:

- ❑ **New customer survey:** A pivotal moment in the early phase of the customer's journey, this is an ideal time to enhance your customer knowledge. What are their product/service preferences? What are their communication preferences? Are they trying to achieve a particular goal? Could their career field, hobbies or lifestyle be useful information? A new customer survey can dramatically improve your ability to segment audiences.
- ❑ **Customer experience survey:** What's working for customers, and what could use improvement? This could be the experience they have interacting with your brand online, or it could be their experience with your services.
- ❑ **Future products/services survey:** Determining which products or services you should develop? Trying to identify features that are worth the investment? Launch a product survey and let customers know it's their chance to influence future offerings. To get more granular, send targeted surveys to those personas that are most critical to resonate with – these could be customers who use a particular product that is the greatest contributor to revenue or those who are the most actively engaged with your brand, as examples.
- ❑ **Lapsed customer survey:** Customers leave brands for a variety of reasons. It's a good idea to reach out and provide them an opportunity to state why they left. Leverage the information collected to bolster win-back efforts and dampen future attrition.

If you've dabbled in survey research before, you've likely heard of abandonment or drop rate.

These refer to the act of respondents exiting the survey prior to completion. We want customers to complete our surveys. So how do we do that? **Seven in ten** consumers cite they are *more* likely to complete a survey if it's easy to take. This is simple enough to address – make the instructions clear, ensure the interface is intuitive, and test the survey via mobile to ensure it's mobile-optimized.

**NOTE:**

## Make the survey's purpose clear from the outset.

It's good practice to let respondents know why you're surveying them and how their responses will help to achieve something. Aside from just being transparent, this can also yield more completions. For example, 62% of consumers cite they are *more* likely to complete a survey **if it will be used to inform product or service development.**

## Another consideration is survey length.

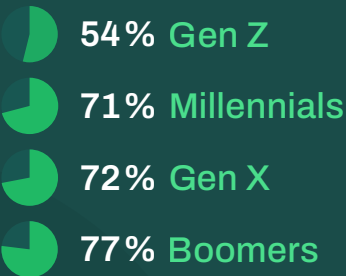
Once you begin building out a survey questionnaire, you realize there are a slew of questions that could yield valuable data. It's easy for a survey's length to get out of hand, fast. But consumers tend to be more receptive to shorter surveys – **58% say they're more likely to complete a survey if it has fewer than ten questions.** Try sticking to just a handful of questions – this will reduce fatigue and make customers more open to participating in future surveys because they know the survey won't be a behemoth.

Another good practice on this front is to have colleagues take the survey before going live – ensure they take it through the actual interface respondents will be using, rather than just reviewing the document where the questions lie. This process can help measure the level of fatigue respondents may experience, while also helping to reveal any quirky interface errors that may be present.

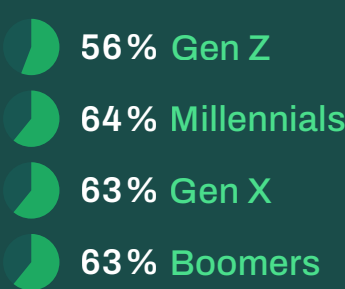
Factors that make a consumer *more likely to complete a survey*



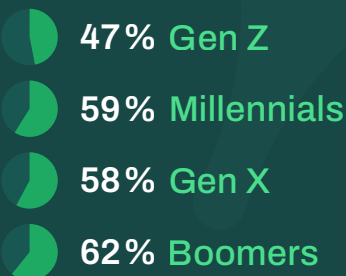
The survey is easy to take  
e.g., intuitive interface, mobile friendly



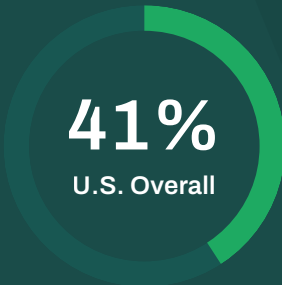
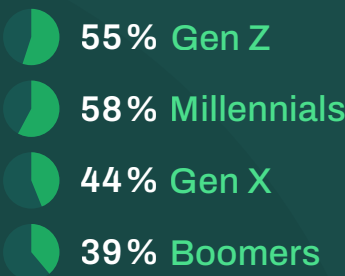
The survey will be used to inform product or service development



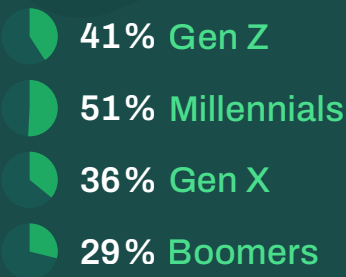
The survey has fewer than ten questions



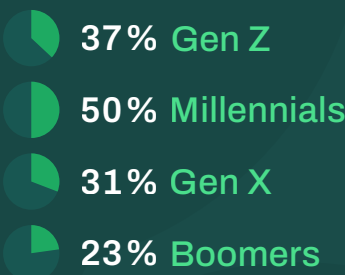
The survey includes image-based questions



The survey is text-only  
e.g., only written questions, no visuals



The survey has ten or more questions



# *Navigating* Social Media Pessimism

Pessimism surrounding social media isn't a new phenomenon. Concerns ranging from data privacy to content moderation to mental health effects have long been closely tied to social media – its immense value in marketing has been undeniable through it all. The degree of consumer pessimism in 2024, though, is worth addressing.

## Why the Pessimism Exists

There are a slew of factors contributing to pessimism.

Nearly half of consumers do not trust social media platforms with their data, while even greater numbers **feel they have been manipulated by algorithms (61%), don't trust the advertising they see (58%), see a lot of content that doesn't interest them (72%), and don't believe these platforms do enough to delete harmful content (66%).**



# Consumer Response

**More than half of consumers say they're actively engaging with social media less** for the sake of their mental health and **43% have closed or stopped using an account** in the last year in response to posts they've seen.

## Why It Matters

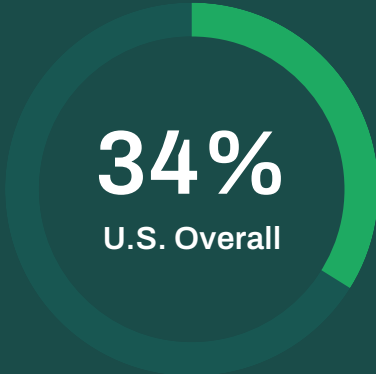
*"Consumers have some negative feelings about social media. So what? It's not like we can just abandon our social media efforts – that'd put us at a massive competitive disadvantage!"* is what you're probably thinking.

It's true. The bigger story here is the importance of maintaining direct communication with your brand's audience *in addition* to your social media efforts. If consumer fatigue regarding social media does materialize into less interaction and engagement with your brand's socials, how will your customers be impacted? The answer is that the impact will be minimal if you've got an intelligent, multi-channel messaging strategy in play.

Put simply, there is safety in being able to communicate with your customers across multiple channels, like via email, SMS and mobile apps. Getting opt-ins for channels outside of social media gives you more control over your messaging and will dampen the blow in the event of reduced social engagement.

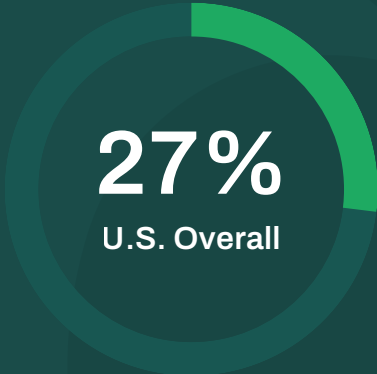


Regarding social media platforms and the security of your personal information, which of the following statements best describes your attitude?



I trust social media platforms to use my data more responsibly moving forward

- 37% Gen Z
- 42% Millennials
- 31% Gen X
- 21% Boomers



I don't trust social media platforms with my data at all, but my behavior hasn't changed

- 29% Gen Z
- 23% Millennials
- 28% Gen X
- 35% Boomers



I don't trust social media platforms with my data at all, and I'm changing my behavior

- 17% Gen Z
- 15% Millennials
- 27% Gen X
- 36% Boomers

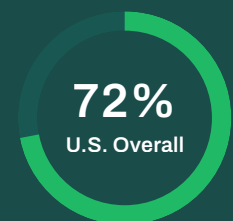


My data is going to be out there no matter what, so I don't bother trying to control it

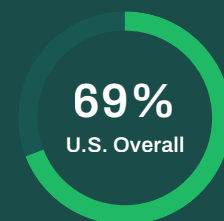
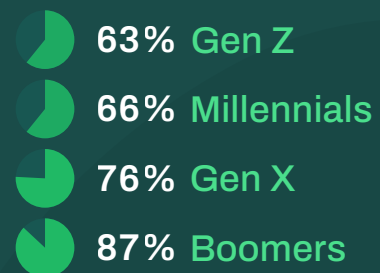
- 17% Gen Z
- 20% Millennials
- 14% Gen X
- 9% Boomers

# Thinking about your opinions and use of social media channels...

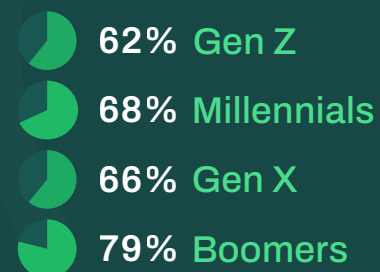
% answering "agree"



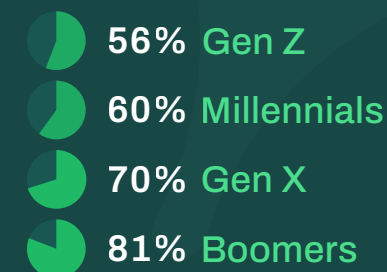
I see a lot of content these days which doesn't interest me



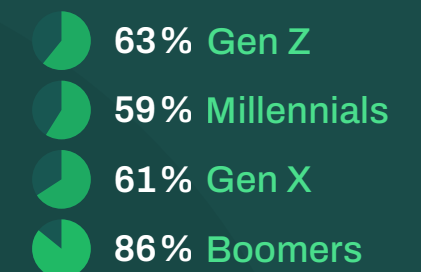
I'm concerned about the polarization of political opinion on social media



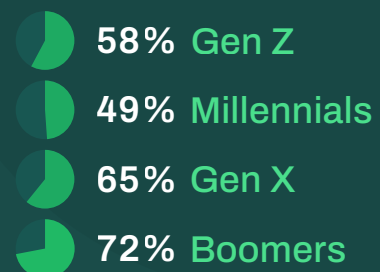
I don't think social media platforms do enough to delete harmful content



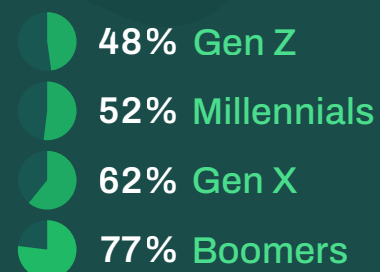
I'm sharing less data with platforms because it's too hard to track how it's being used



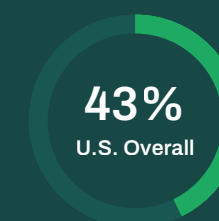
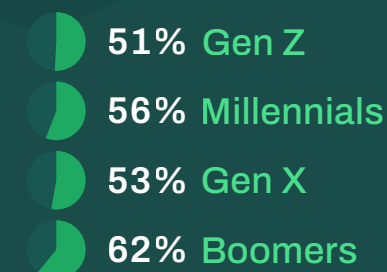
I don't trust the advertising I see on social media



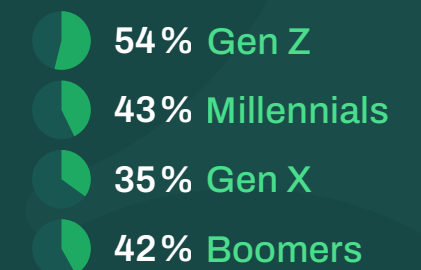
I feel manipulated by the algorithms and rules which control what content I see



I'm actively engaging less with social media for the sake of my mental health



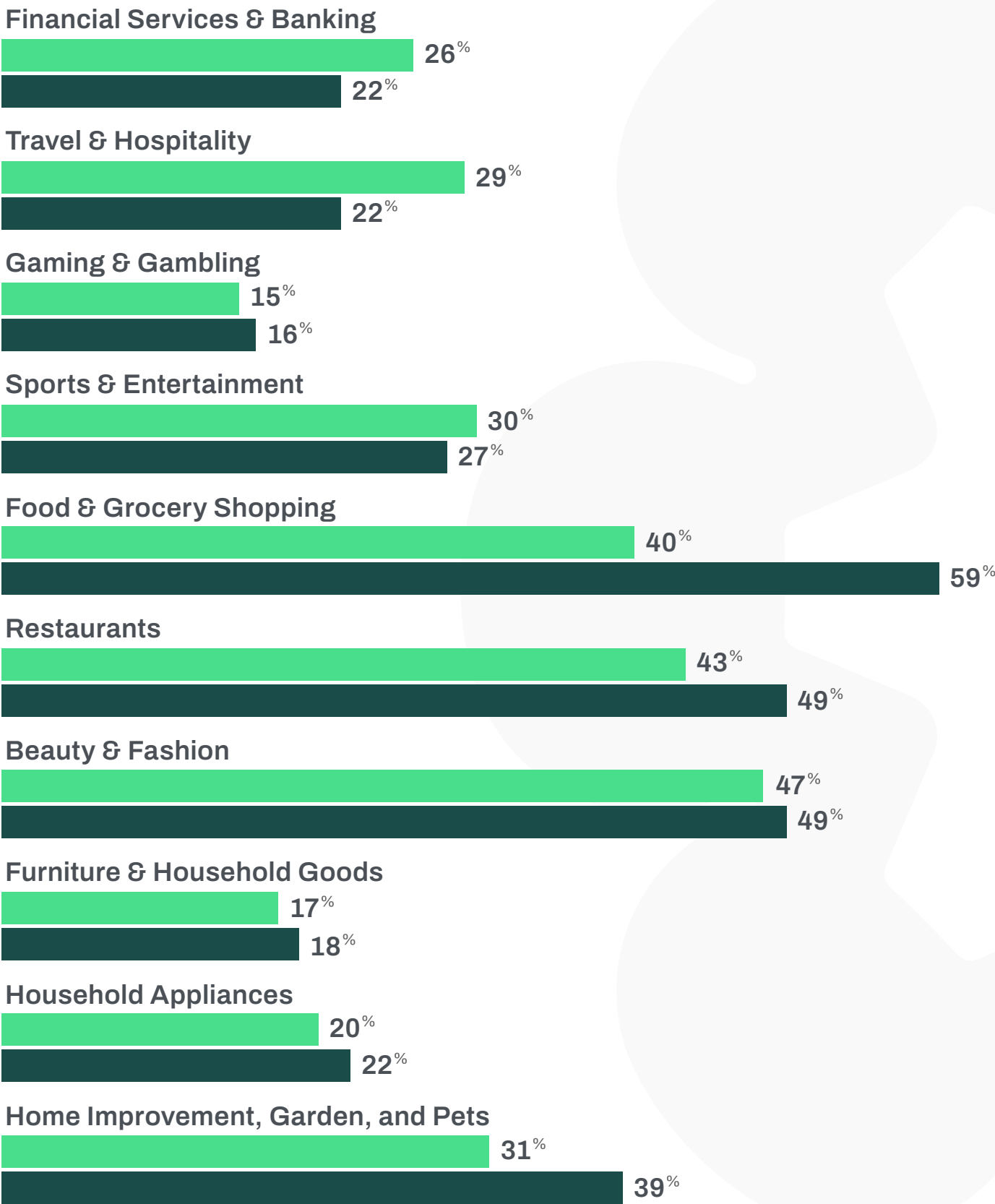
I have closed or stopped using an account in the last year because I have been upset by posts I have seen



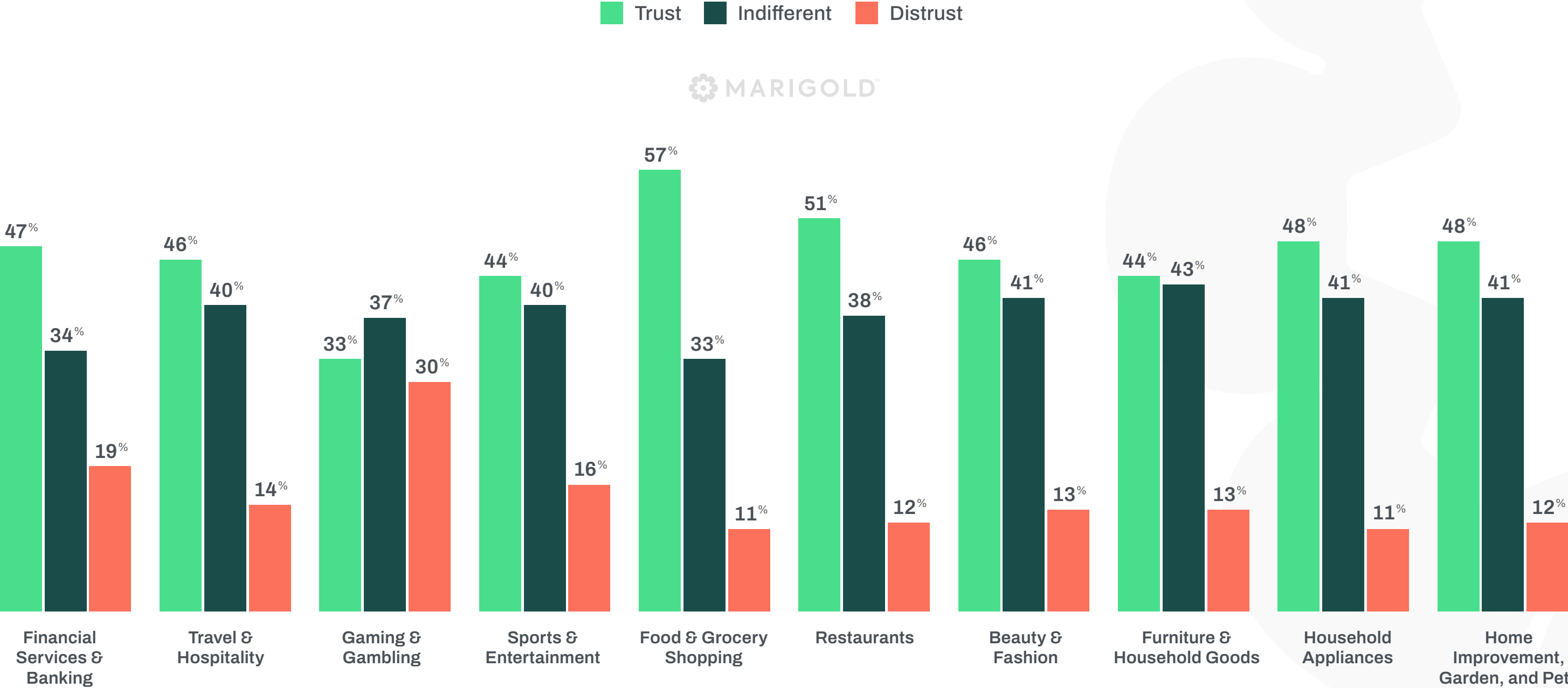
# Industry Statistics

Thinking about the brands you've made a purchase from in the last six months, *were they based in any of the following industry sectors?*

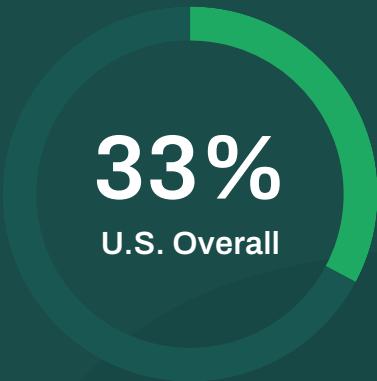
Online In-Person



How much do you trust brands in the following industries to use your data *to provide personalized marketing & services?*



*In the past 12 months* have you donated to any of the following after receiving an email or message?



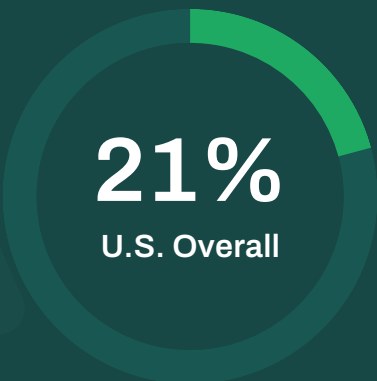
Charitable Organization

- 28% Gen Z
- 39% Millennials
- 21% Gen X
- 36% Boomers



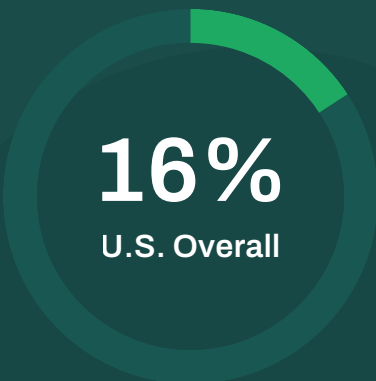
Nonprofit Advocating for Social Causes

- 29% Gen Z
- 24% Millennials
- 16% Gen X
- 15% Boomers



Medical Research

- 27% Gen Z
- 28% Millennials
- 10% Gen X
- 14% Boomers



University/Higher Ed

- 19% Gen Z
- 22% Millennials
- 10% Gen X
- 6% Boomers



Veterans' Organization

- 21% Gen Z
- 21% Millennials
- 12% Gen X
- 12% Boomers



Cultural Institution

- 10% Gen Z
- 18% Millennials
- 6% Gen X
- 5% Boomers



## Wrap Up

From consumer demands for personalization to the critical importance of loyalty strategy to the creation of truly compelling offers and promotions, the need for advanced marketing technology is imperative for modern brands.

But with tech consolidation efforts growing, this marketing technology also needs robust multi-channel functionalities. **Marigold** delivers just that. Email, SMS, push notifications, mobile wallets, loyalty programs, zero-party data acquisition – our advanced solutions span across the areas that matter. And when you consolidate your tech with a single vendor, data across channels and platforms becomes more actionable and more manageable.

Of course, advanced marketing solutions are only part of the story. Strategy is also deeply rooted in our relationship marketing approach. We offer a wide range of strategic support services, from loyalty insights to program management to tech implementation and beyond.

If you're ready to take the next step in optimizing your marketing efforts, *[connect with us today.](#)*

# Where *relationships* take root.

Marigold's approach to Relationship Marketing stands alone in a world of one-size-fits-all marketing technology companies. Our solutions are designed for your specific size, industry, and maturity, giving you the technology and expertise you need to grow the relationships that grow your business, from customer acquisition to engagement to loyalty. And, with a team of strategists that provide insights into what's working, what's not, and what's changing in your industry, you're able to maximize ROI every step of the way.

Great marketing isn't just about conversion, but true connection. Learn why 40,000 businesses around the world trust Marigold to be the firm foundation they need to help relationships take root.

Find out more at [MeetMarigold.com](https://meetmarigold.com)

