



# provoke

insights

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Unveiling Consumer Behavior:  
A Deep Dive into Impulse Shopping  
Summer 2024



# Background & Objectives

Provoke Insights is a trailblazer in research for branding, advertising, media, and content marketing initiatives. The company conducts a bi-annual study to stay up-to-date with the market trends across multiple industries.

In this comprehensive eighth-wave of the study, Provoke Insights evaluates Americans' sentiment, shopping impulse behaviors, and trust in the media. Continual inflation, layoffs, the presidential election, and the rapid growth of AI have impacted Americans' attitudes, concerns, and spending habits. This wave of research digs deep into the effect of these trends.

Provoke Insights has developed 13 industry-specific decks; this deck focuses on **trends in impulse shopping**.



# Methodology

Provoke Insights conducted a 15-minute survey among 1,500 Americans between the ages of 21 and 65. The study was in-field in April 2024.

A random stratified sample followed by weighting was used to ensure a high degree of sample representation of the U.S. population (household income, age, gender, geography, ethnicity, and children in the household). The sample was modeled to represent the latest US Census data.

Results based on this sample have a maximum margin of sampling error  $\pm 2.5\%$  at a 95% confidence level.

Statistical differences between subgroups indicated in this report were tested at a 95% confidence level. Significances are indicated by call-out boxes in graphs.





A photograph of a man and a woman standing together, holding shopping bags. The man is on the left, wearing a brown shirt and dark pants. The woman is on the right, wearing a white shirt and blue jeans. They are both holding shopping bags, one pink and one white. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

# An Overview of Impulse Shopping

A third of consumers indulge in impulse purchases at least weekly. Gen Z and urban residents are among those who engage in spontaneous shopping more frequently. Even individuals who are facing financial constraints still impulse buy.

The primary categories for these spur-of-the-moment purchases are apparel and furniture. However, there are significant differences in impulse shopping generationally. Younger shoppers are more likely to make spontaneous alcohol purchases, whereas older age groups often splurge on unplanned apparel and luxury items. On the other hand, skincare, hotel stays, vitamins, and airline tickets are purchased more deliberately.

***Businesses should pay closer attention to the phenomenon of impulse shopping and how these behaviors can impact their brand's marketing strategies. Depending on the degree of impulse purchasing in a particular category, media decisions and messaging may need to be tailored accordingly.***



# Recommendations

## Shopping Experience

Shopping in-store is particularly alluring for impulse buyers, who enjoy browsing aisles. Many of these consumers often purchase to keep pace with the latest trends.

- 1 **Marketers can create "Impulse Moments" by focusing on in-store marketing. This can be achieved through innovative store layouts, interactive displays, and engaging product demonstrations that capture the attention of customers.**
- 2 **For ecommerce sites, it's vital to create interactive and immersive shopping experiences that offer a similar browsing experience to that of physical stores. This can be achieved through tactics such as virtual try-on tools for apparel items, 360-degree product views, and interactive quizzes that help customers discover new products that they might not have considered otherwise.**

## Media Influence

Regarding media influence, TV and TikTok ads and promotions are the most impactful to impulse buyers, while other traditional mediums like radio and magazines struggle to capture their attention.

- 3 **TV is still king, meaning that advertising on streaming or cable will influence impulse purchasers. However, given the significant impact of social media, partnering with influencers with a strong presence on these channels can be highly effective. Collaborating with influencers to showcase products authentically and engagingly can capture impulse buyers' attention and drive conversions.**



# Trends in impulse Shopping





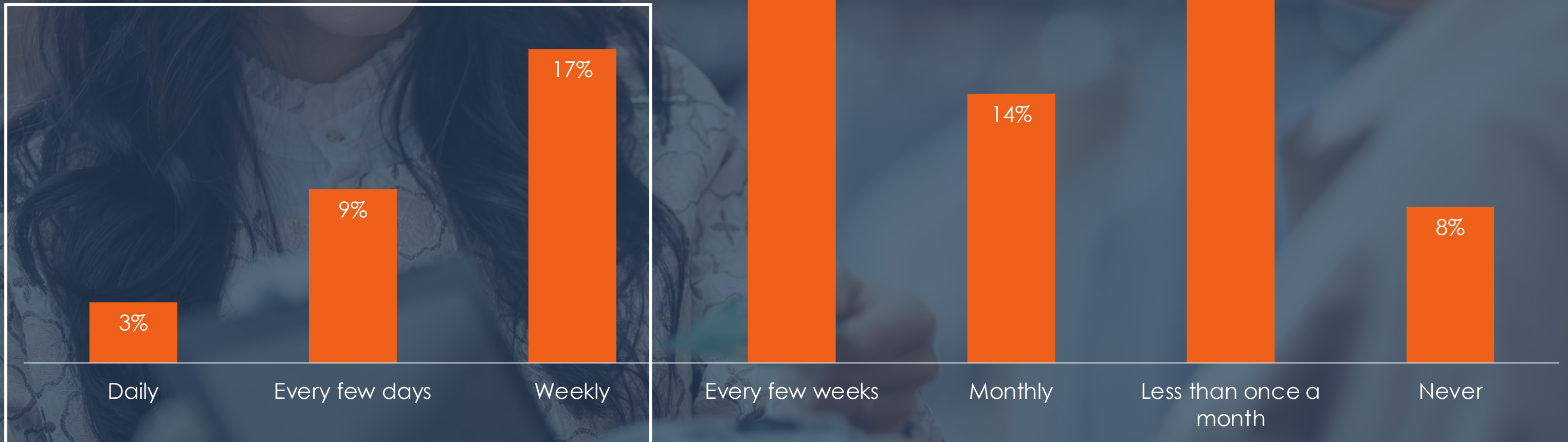
# Impulse Shopping Frequency

Nearly every consumer engages in impulse shopping, with around one-third doing so on a weekly basis.

Frequency of Impulse Shopping

29%

of consumers make impulse purchases at least weekly












29%

of consumers make impulse purchases weekly

Base: Impulse shop at least weekly (n=439)

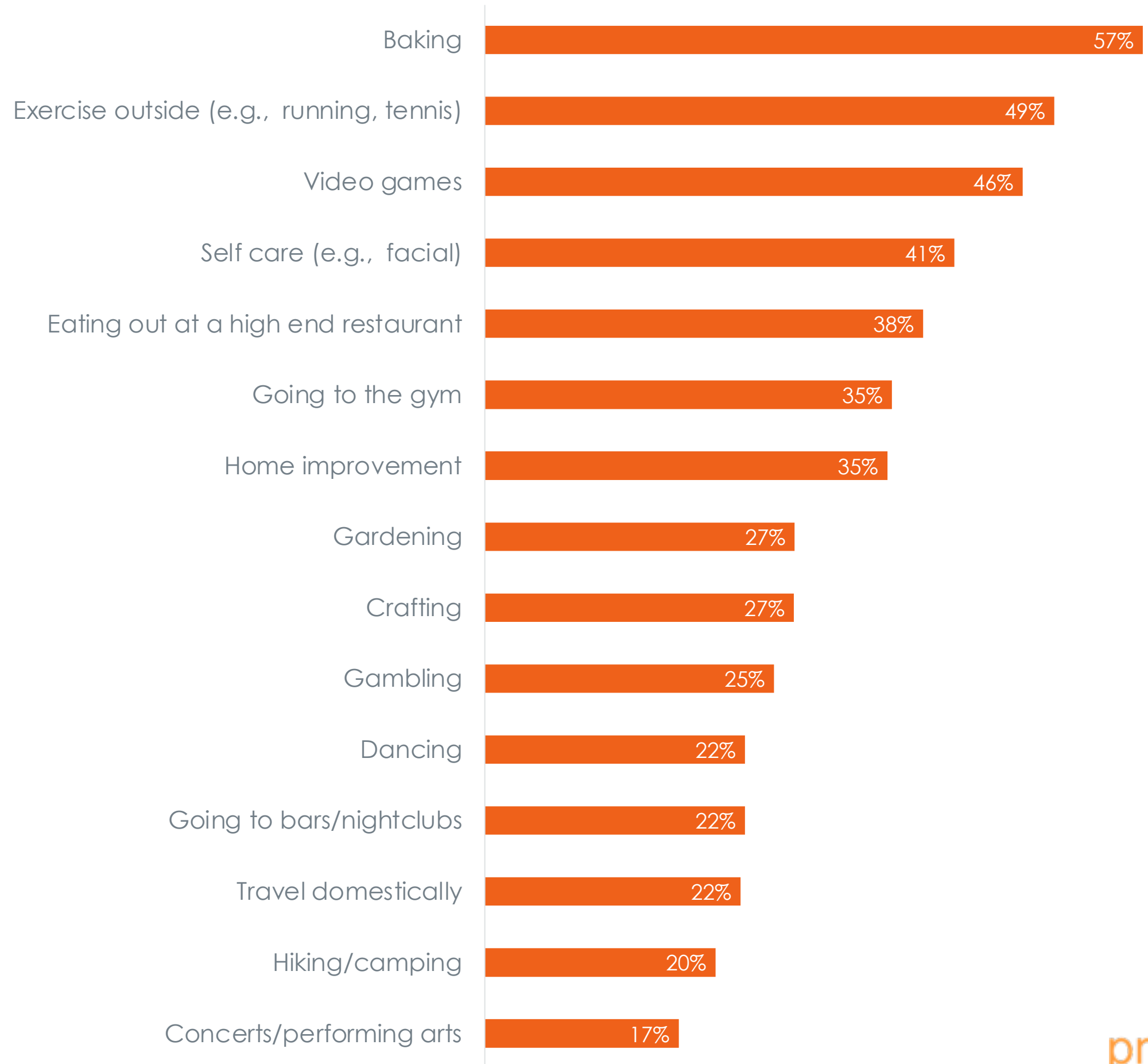
## Who is Significantly More Likely to Impulse Shop at least Weekly?

-  44% Gen Z
-  39% Urban
-  36% Carry credit card balance
-  35% Have children
-  34% Male



# Impulse Shoppers Have Several Interests

Top 15 Activities Participated in the Last Month





# Weekly Impulse Shoppers Financial Position

Impulse shopping frequently does not necessarily indicate financial security. Over two-fifths of those living paycheck to paycheck or in debt still choose to impulse buy weekly.



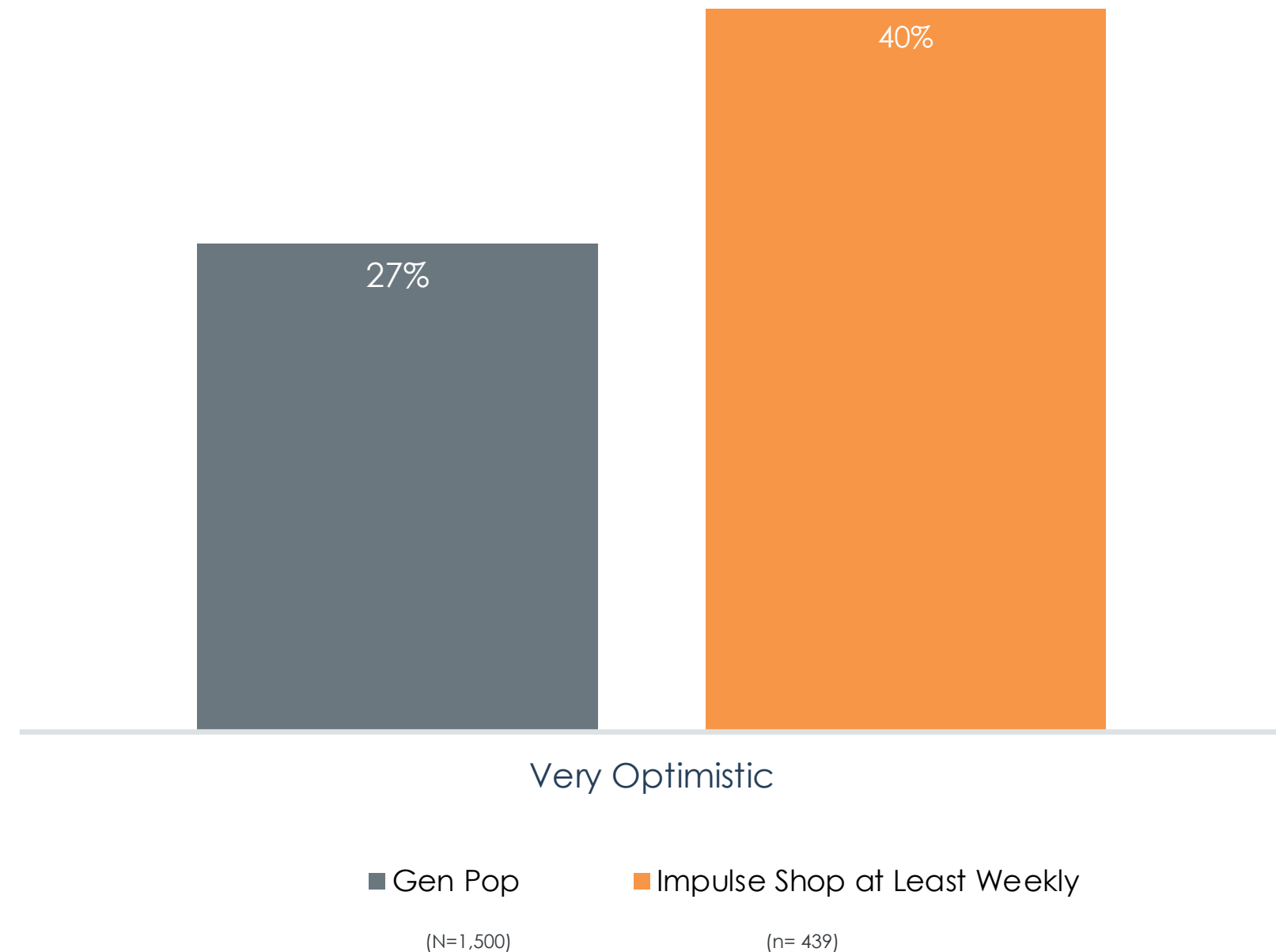


# Optimism

Compared to the average shopper, individuals who make impulse purchases have a more optimistic view of the future.

Base: All Qualified Respondents (N=1,500)

Top Box on a 4-point scale

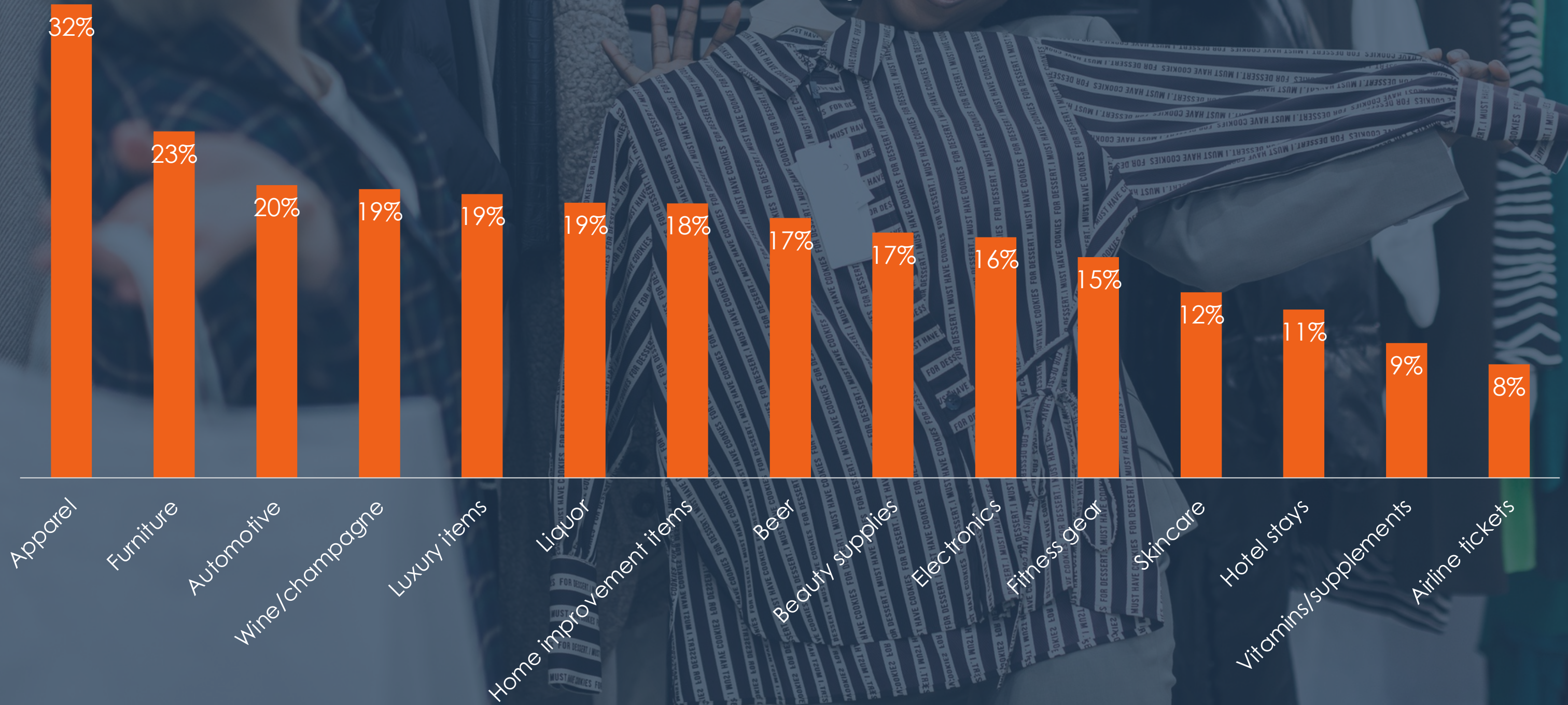




# Unplanned Purchases

Apparel is the most common item consumers purchase impulsively. Skincare, hotel stays, vitamins, and airline tickets are purchased more deliberately.

Most recent purchase in category was unplanned





# Unplanned Purchases: Generational Differences

Younger shoppers are more likely to buy alcohol on the spot, while older cohorts are more often spontaneously purchasing apparel and luxury items.

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers
	Base sizes vary			
Apparel	25%	28%	36%	41%
Furniture	26%	25%	20%	19%
Automotive	10%	19%	24%	19%
Wine/champagne	41%	20%	14%	13%
Luxury items	14%	25%	9%	25%
Liquor	23%	20%	17%	12%
Home improvement items	37%	18%	13%	17%
Beer	28%	18%	15%	14%
Beauty supplies	20%	16%	18%	10%
Electronics	16%	17%	18%	6%
Fitness gear	12%	18%	7%	22%
Skincare	12%	14%	8%	17%
Hotel stays	35%	8%	10%	8%
Vitamins/supplements	11%	12%	7%	5%
Airline tickets	7%	8%	8%	7%

*\*Shaded boxes indicate significant differences*

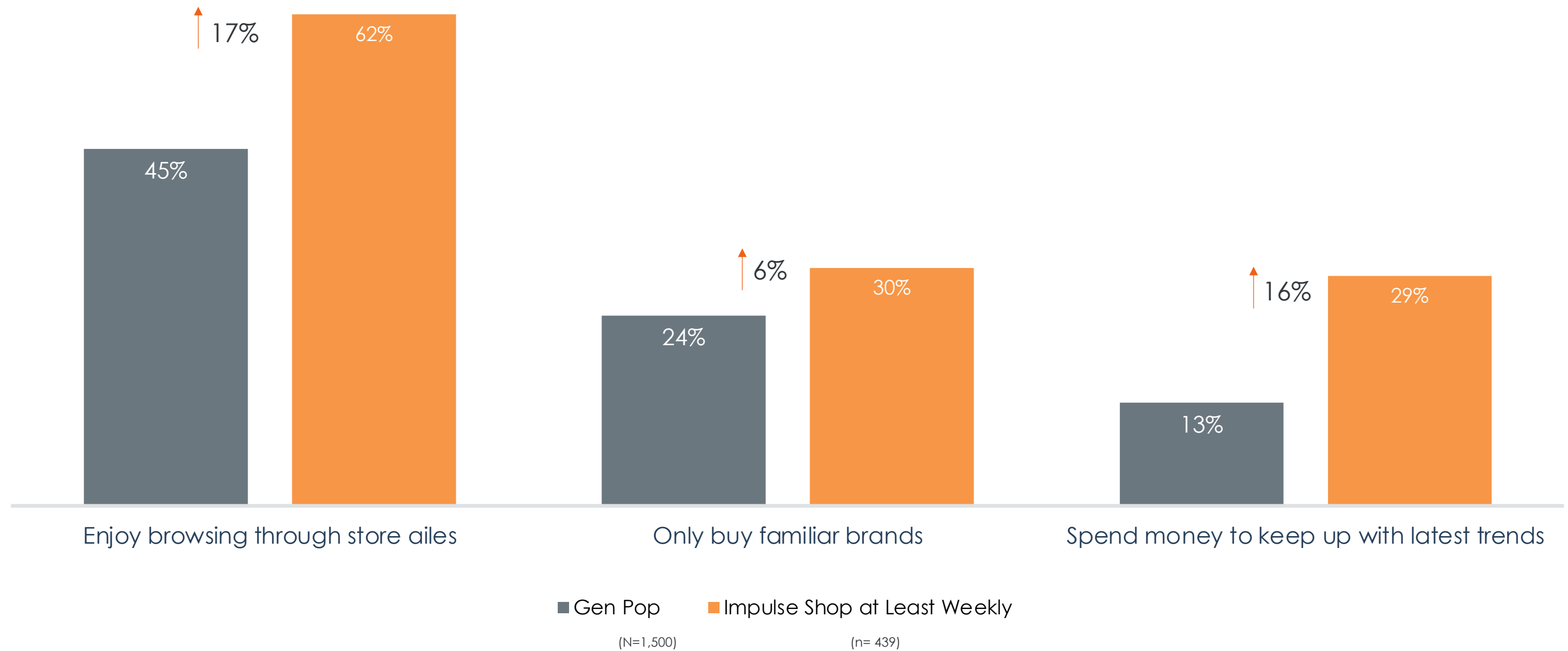
Base: All Qualified Respondents (N=1,500)



# Shopping Attitudes

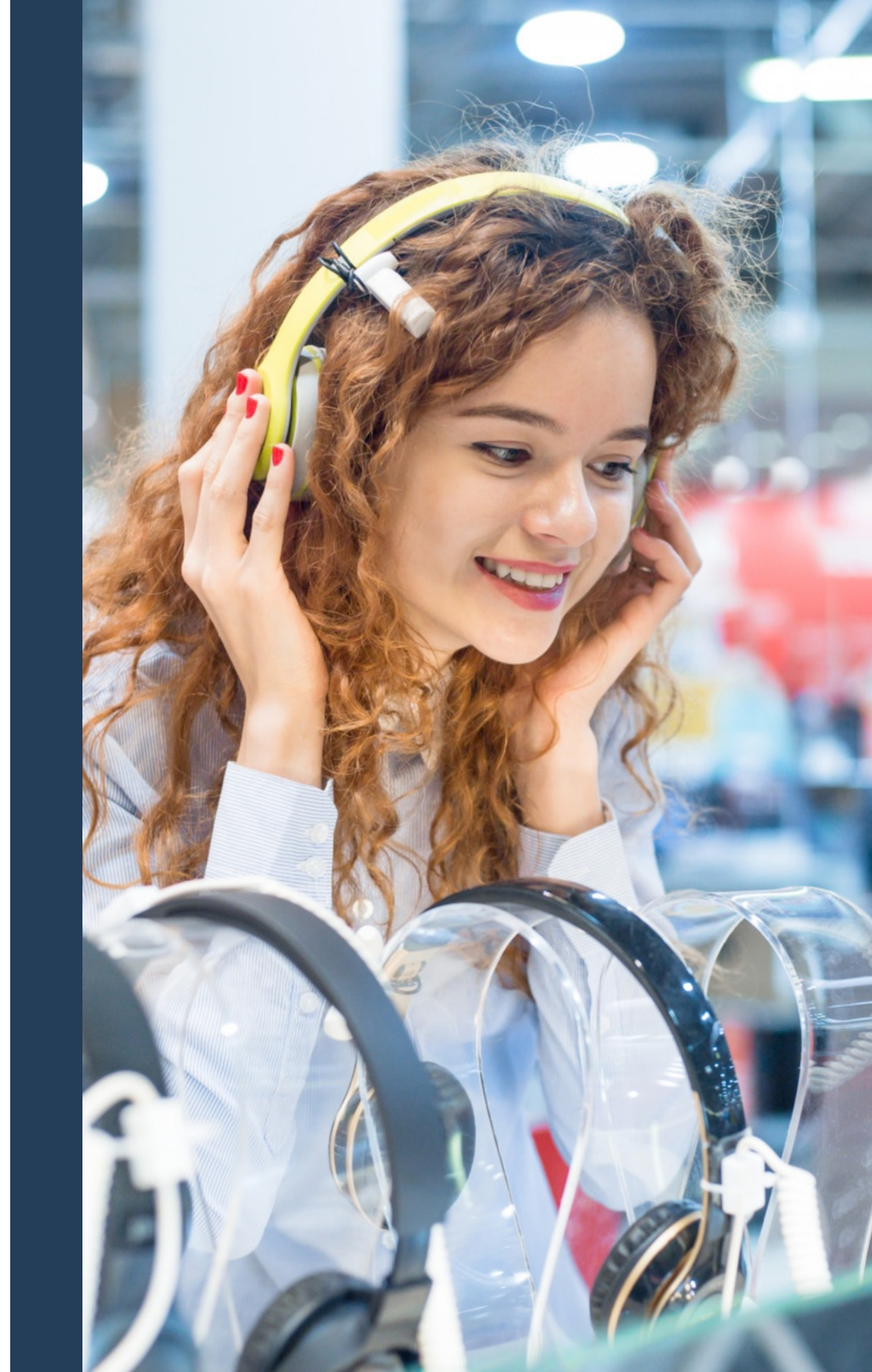
Impulse shoppers especially enjoy shopping in-store. They are also more inclined to indulge in purchases to stay current with the latest trends.

**Top 2 Box** on a 7-point agreement scale





# Despite the Expense, High-Ticket Items Are Frequently Purchased on Impulse



*"I went to Best Buy to purchase Dre Beats. I ended up also purchasing a Dell all in one for \$2,800 plus pair of Bang and Olufsen stereo headphones for \$922.00."*

*"I had time to kill, I browsed a store nearby and ended up purchasing a home theater system."*

*"I bought new electronic device online out of curiosity, and it was expensive."*

*"I was with someone who went to Best Buy and I decided to buy a pair of headphones."*



# Sales Ignite Impromptu Buying



*"A Michael Kor's handbag was on sale for \$131 and that's a 60% off \$328 the original price and I bought it."*

*"I saw a pair of shoes I've been wanting to buy on sale and bought them. I wasn't planning on buying them that day."*

*"We purchased the PS5 on a whim because it went on sale, and because of that we had to buy a new shelf for it to sit on. Those were both decisions made the same day which I typically do not do."*





# Relevant Media Sources for Brand Promotion

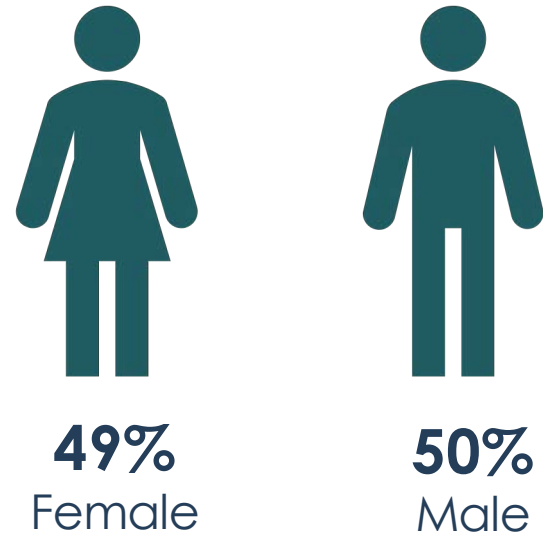
Out of 15 media channels ranked, impulse shoppers find ads/promotions on TV and TikTok the most relevant. Traditional mediums like radio and magazines struggle to capture their attention.

		Index Percent
Above Average	Television	19%
	TikTok	8%
	News publications	4%
	Facebook	2%
Average	Instagram	0%
	YouTube	0%
Below Average	Radio	-1%
	Magazines	-3%
	Podcasts	-3%
	Blogs	-3%
	X (formally Twitter)	-3%
	Reddit	-5%
	Pinterest	-6%
	Threads	-7%
	Snapchat	-7%



# Respondent Profile

## Gender



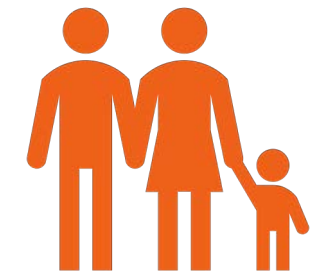
\*<1% other identity

## Generation

42 years old  
Median Age

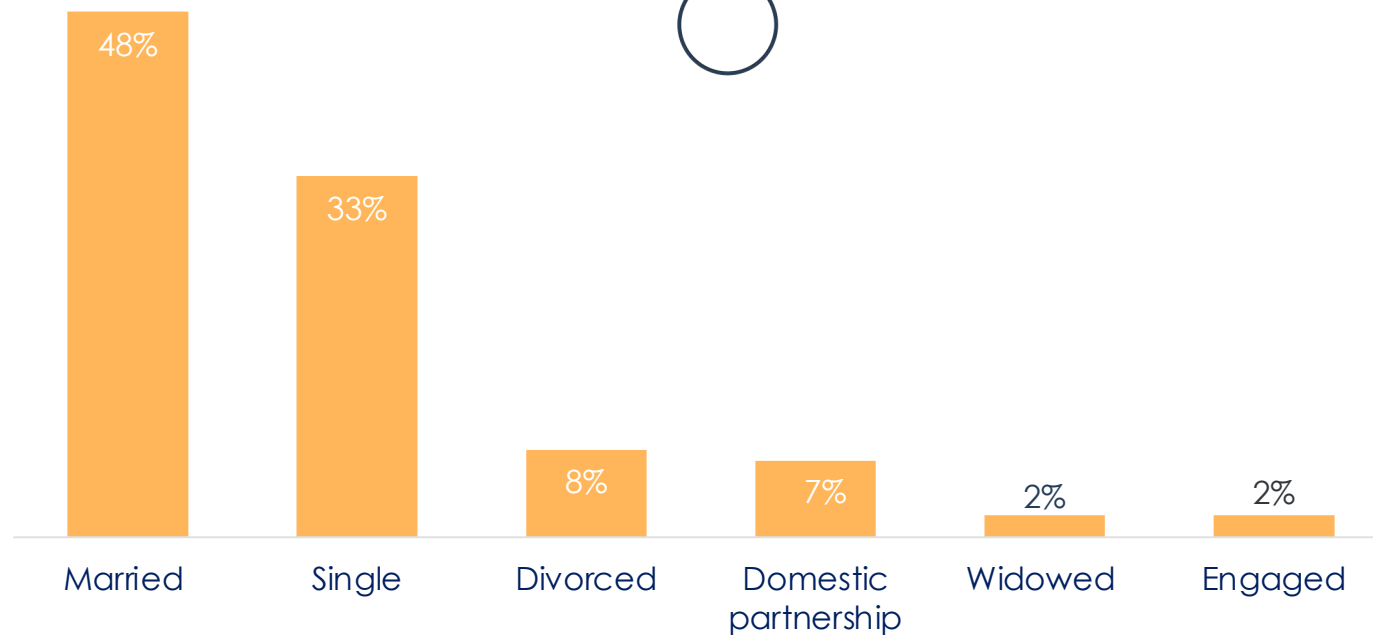


## Parental Status

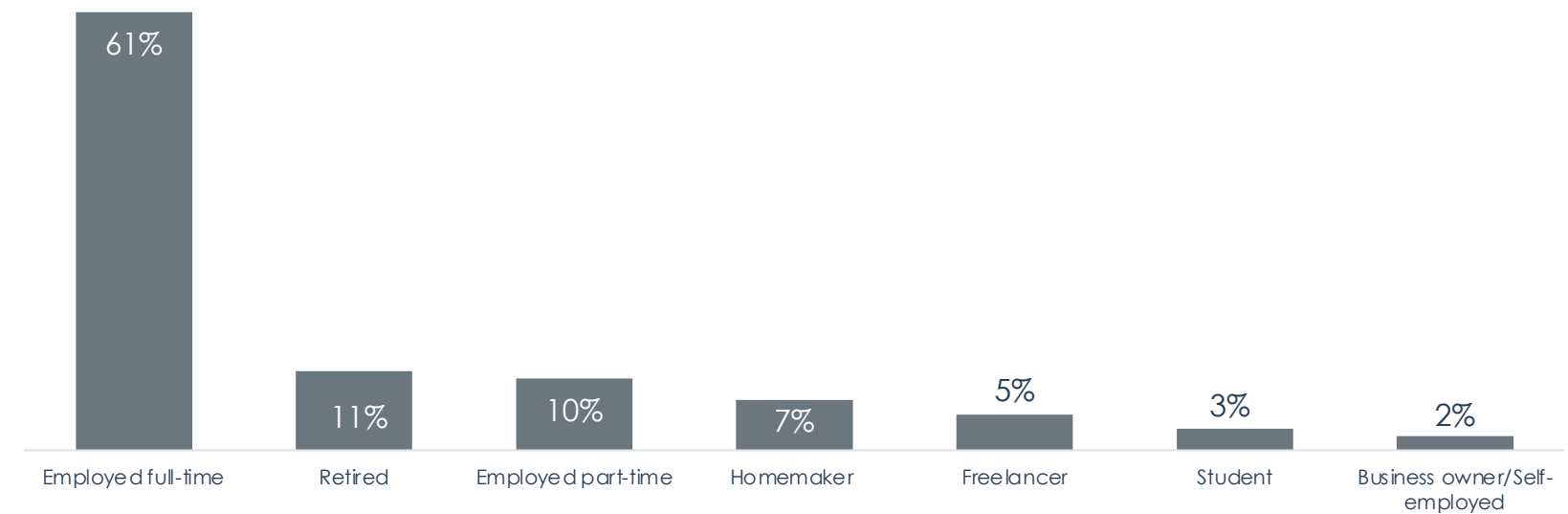


39%  
Have children

## Marriage Status



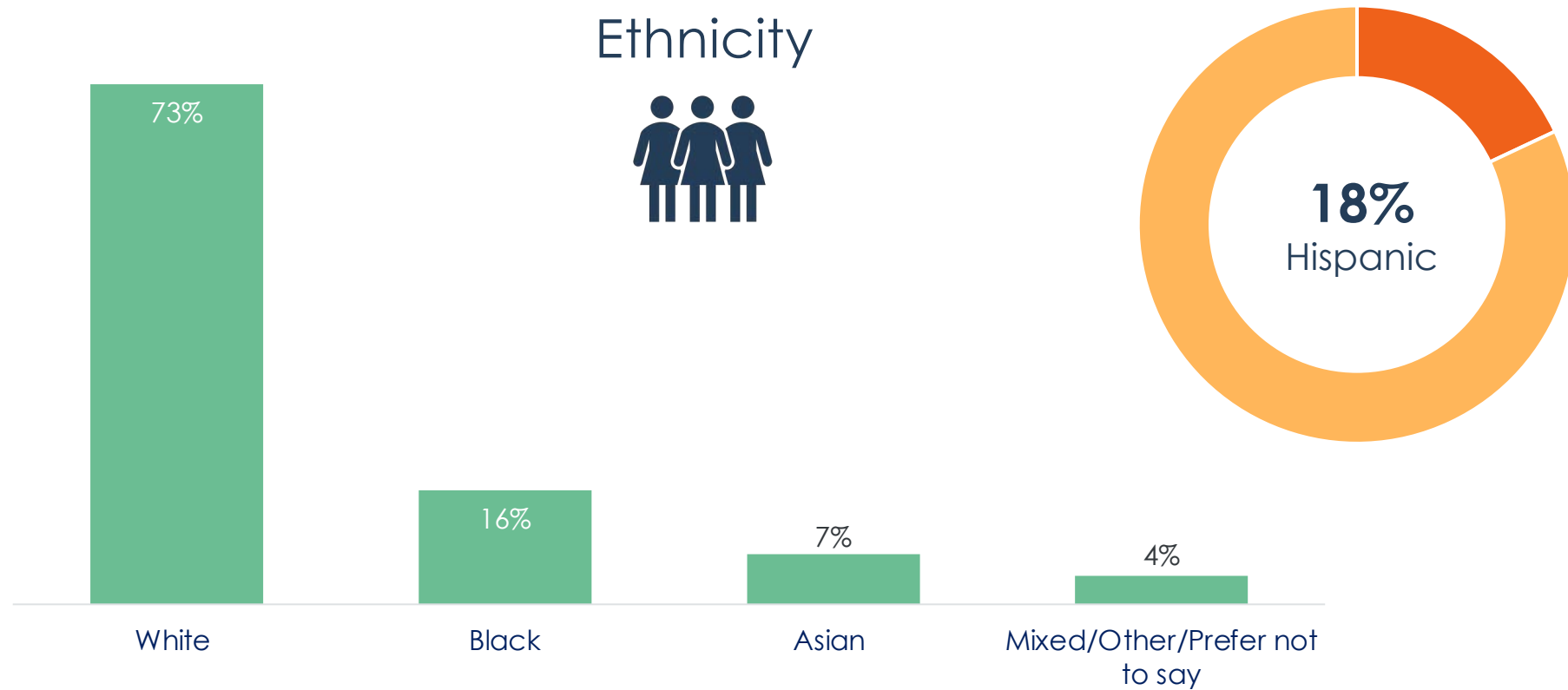
## Employment Status





# Respondent Profile


## Ethnicity



## Political Party

**37%**   
Democrat

**26%** **I**  
Independent

**30%**   
Republican

**\*7%** Prefer not to say/Other

## Area



**26%**  
Rural

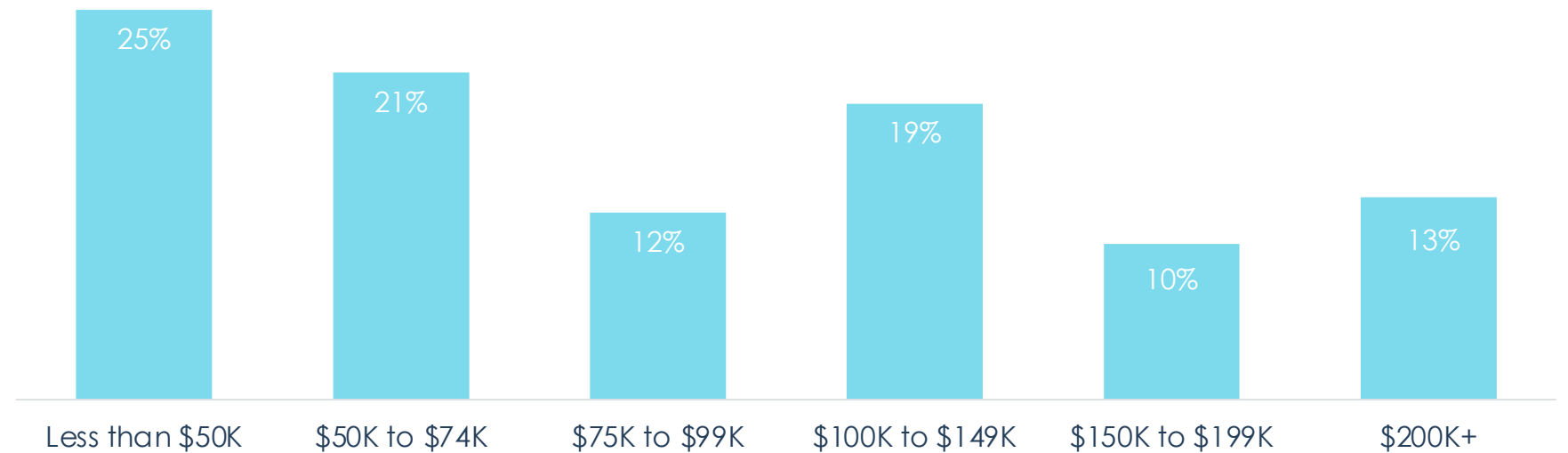


**49%**  
Suburban



**25%**  
Urban

## Household Income





# About Provoke Insights



Founded on the premise that research should better align with marketers' needs, Provoke Insights' innovative approach empowers brands to navigate today's marketing verticals. As a builder of brands, the firm focuses on research for consumer needs, market opportunities, and branding.

Provoke Insights conducts traditional market research projects and develops agile, innovative initiatives to meet the quick and varied needs of today's ever-changing market.

Provoke Insights stands out from other full-service market research firms as we solely specialize in branding and advertising initiatives. Our staff consists of researchers that are also seasoned brand & media strategists.

For more information or press inquiries, reach out to [info@provokeinsights.com](mailto:info@provokeinsights.com).

