

insightrix

The Saskatchewan Shopper Intelligence Report

How urban, small-city, and rural consumers define price, confidence, and convenience in Saskatchewan.

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Methodology

This study is part of Inshtrix's ongoing Saskatchewan consumer intelligence program and was designed to understand how residents approach holiday spending, shopping behaviour, and decision-making amid ongoing economic pressure.

Survey Design:

Online survey of Saskatchewan residents, aged 18+ via Inshtrix's proprietary *SaskWatch Research*® online panel.

Sample & Data Collection:

The study was conducted with a representative sample of approximately 800 residents in Saskatchewan. Region, age and gender quotas were set to match the 2021 Canadian census.

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Saskatchewan shoppers are protecting the holidays by spending with intention, not excess.

As the holiday season reaches its peak, Saskatchewan shoppers are showing discipline, not disengagement. Most are spending about the same as last year, while a growing share is spending less. This shift is driven by affordability pressure and a strong desire to stay in control. Shoppers are not cancelling the holidays. They are editing them.

Spending restraint is most pronounced among younger shoppers, particularly Gen Z, where financial pressure limits flexibility. This is not a pullback from participation. It is a recalibration of expectations.

At the same time, Gen X and women continue to anchor holiday spending decisions, bearing responsibility for maintaining traditions while actively managing household budgets. Families with children are still spending more overall, but even these households are prioritizing essential categories over discretionary ones.

Holiday budgets are concentrated and intentional. Most shoppers are operating within a narrow, practical spending range, focusing on gifts that feel meaningful rather than expansive. Higher spending aligns with life stage, not impulse, reinforcing that generosity in Saskatchewan remains measured and purposeful.

Digital and social channels are central to how shoppers manage this balance. Facebook and Instagram dominate holiday inspiration across the province because they are familiar, trusted, and embedded in everyday routines. These platforms are not driving excess spending. They are helping shoppers organize ideas, compare options, and validate decisions. Social media is acting as a planning tool, not a pressure point.

Younger shoppers supplement this behaviour with TikTok and YouTube, using video to reduce uncertainty through reviews, demonstrations, and peer validation. Across all ages, earned content matters more than advertising. Reviews, ratings, and gift guides provide reassurance that limited dollars are being spent wisely.

This season is defined by careful choice. Saskatchewan shoppers are steady, value-driven, and highly intentional. Brands that succeed are those that show up clearly and consistently in trusted digital spaces, support informed decisions, and understand the realities shaping how people are spending right now.

What does this mean for brands?

Restraint is not resistance.

Shoppers who are spending less are still participating. They are prioritizing value, relevance, and confidence. Messaging that acknowledges financial pressure while reinforcing wise choices will resonate more than urgency or volume-driven tactics.

Be present where decisions are being validated.

Facebook and Instagram remain the primary spaces where holiday ideas are discovered, revisited, and confirmed. These platforms function as planning environments. Consistent visibility and clear information matter more than novelty.

Earned content carries more weight than promotion.

Reviews, ratings, and gift guides are doing the heavy lifting in decision-making. Shoppers want proof that their money is being spent wisely. Supporting credibility through social proof is more effective than increasing ad frequency.

Support careful choices, not impulse.

Shoppers are researching, comparing, and narrowing options. Transparent pricing, product reassurance, and simple comparisons help reduce friction. The brands that win make it easy to feel confident, not pressured.

Speak to responsibility, not indulgence.

Households with children and primary decision-makers are carrying the emotional and financial weight of the holidays. Messaging that reinforces practicality, durability, and thoughtfulness aligns better than aspirational excess.

Flexibility matters more than channel loyalty.

Shoppers are moving between online and in-store environments as needed. Brands that support this flexibility with consistent pricing, information, and experience will meet shoppers where they are.



**Steady hands
on the wallet,
Saskatchewan
shoppers aren't
panicking;
they're pacing.**

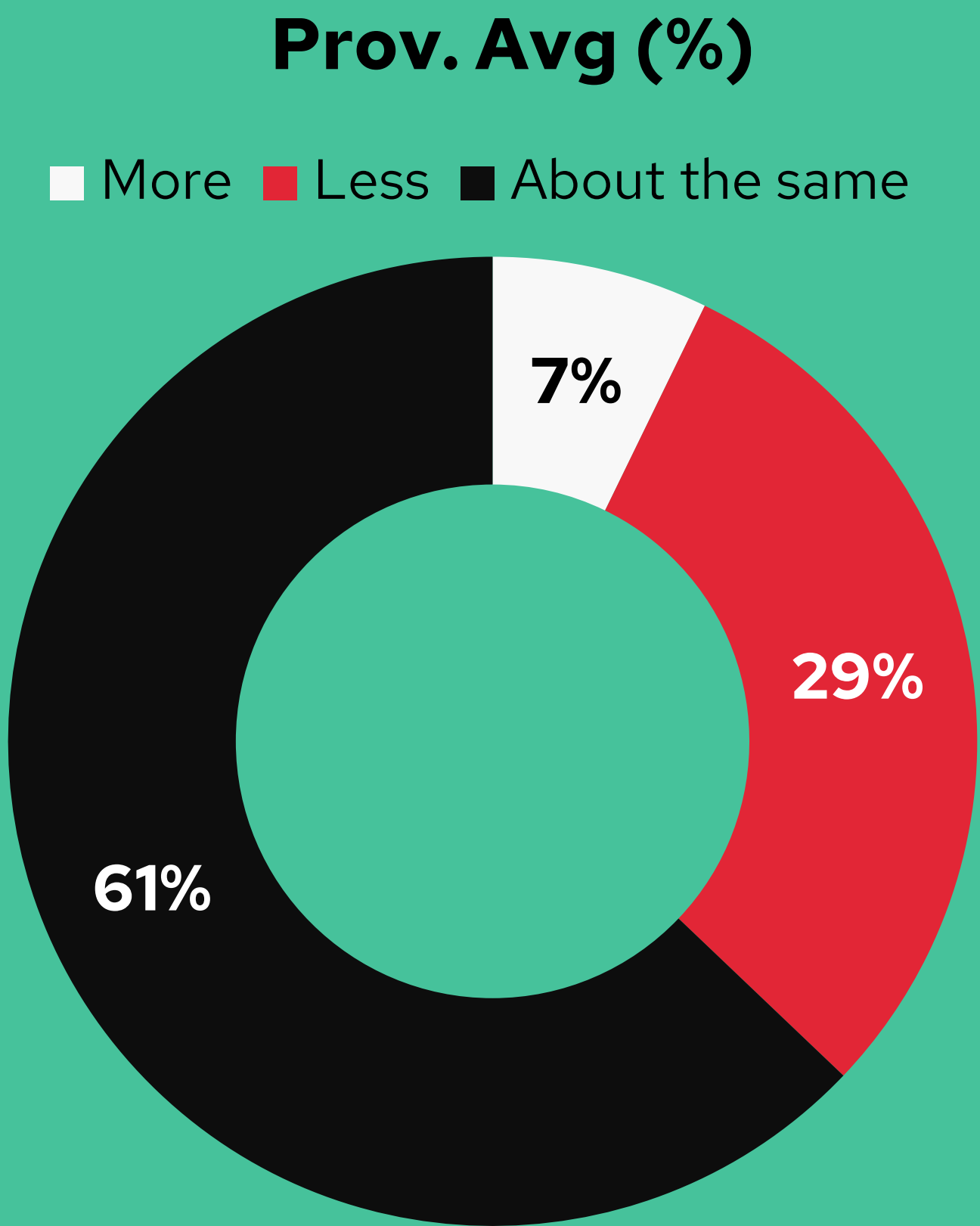
*Q3 Compared to last year, do you plan to spend more, less or about the same on holiday shopping?
Base: All Respondents (n=800).*

Shoppers aren't cancelling the holidays. They're merely managing them.

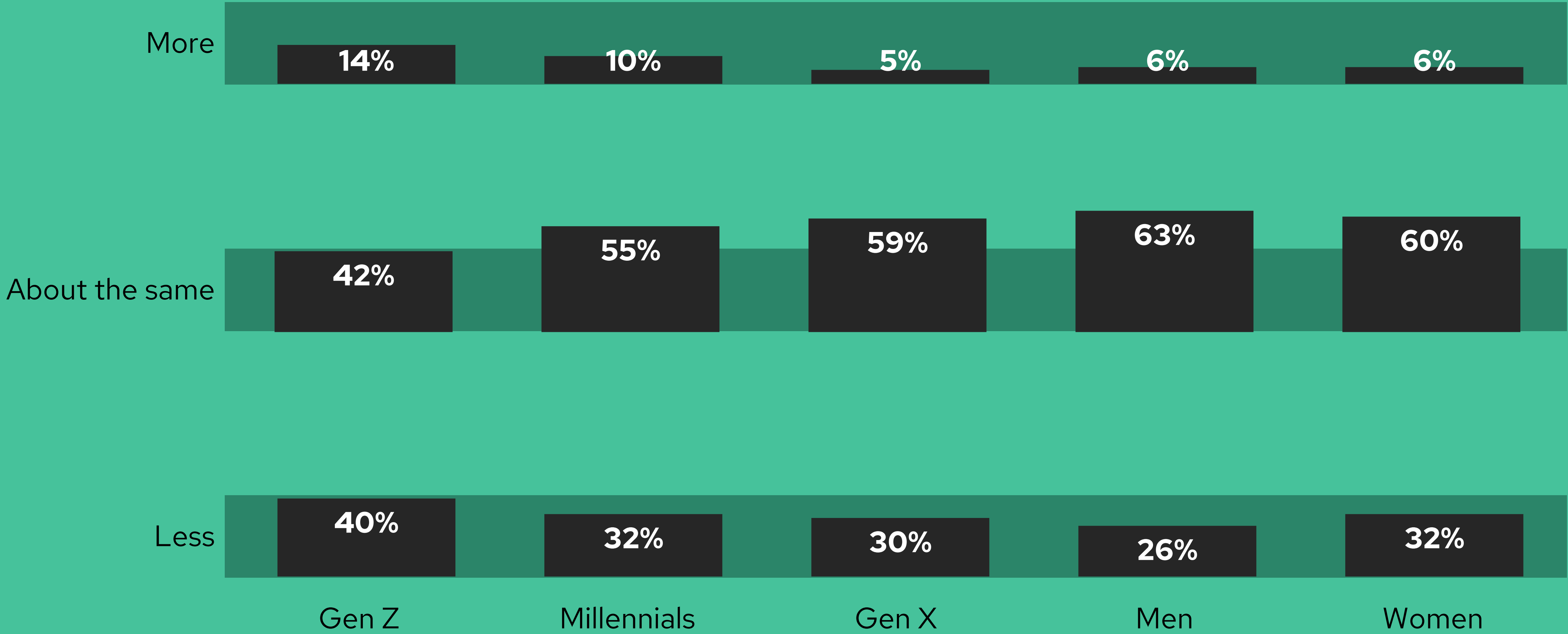
Across age and gender, Saskatchewan shoppers are overwhelmingly choosing stability over extremes.

Roughly 6 in 10 plan to spend about the same as last year, signalling a cautious but confident mindset. Gen Z stands out slightly, with a higher likelihood of spending less, reflecting financial vulnerability rather than disengagement.

Meanwhile, Gen X and women show the strongest commitment to maintaining spending, reinforcing their role as holiday anchors within households.



Planned Holiday Spend (by Generation, Gender)



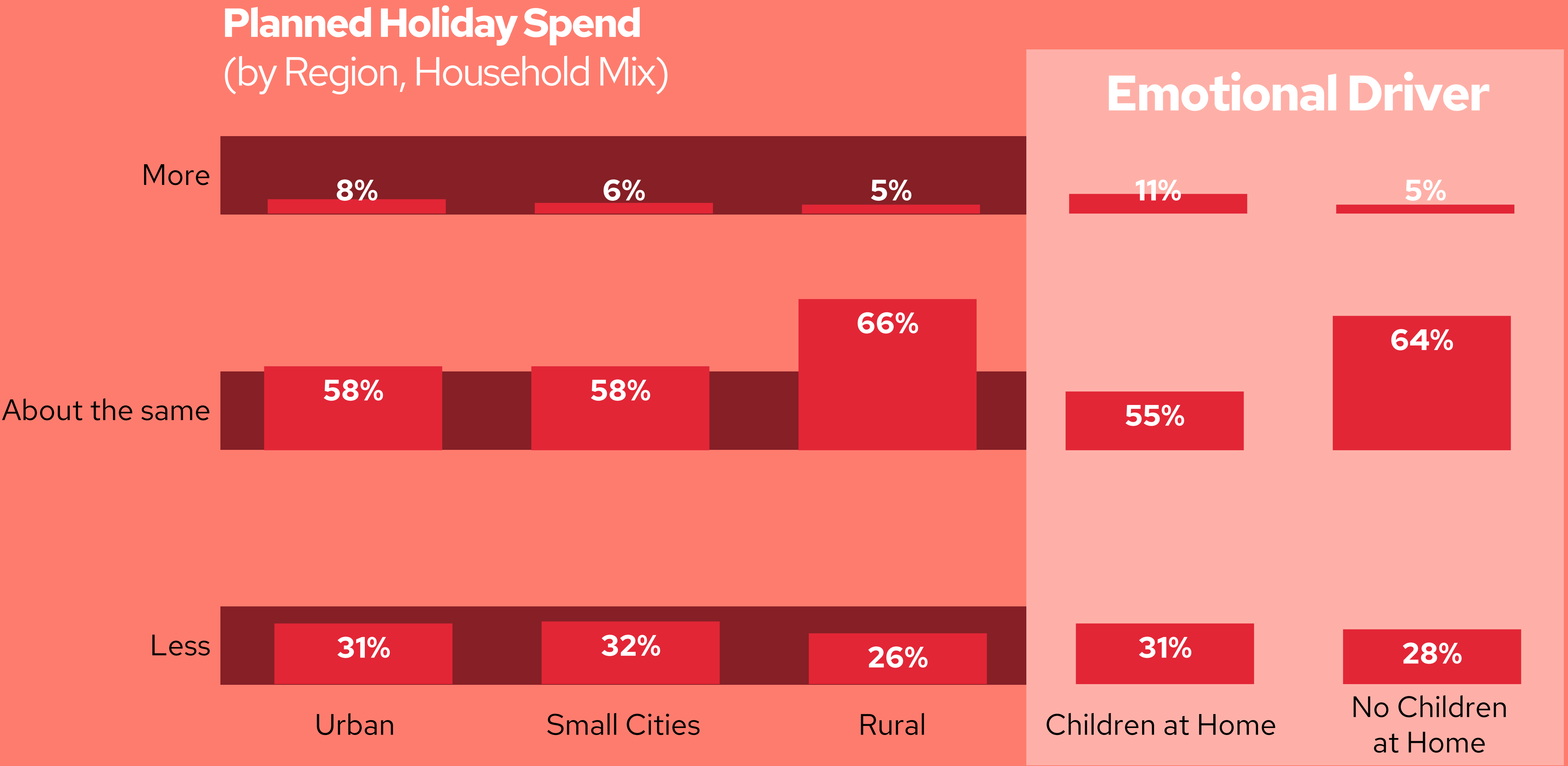


Where you live
and who you live
with quietly shape
the holiday
budget in
Saskatchewan.

Holiday spending isn't about geography. It's about responsibility and ritual.

Spending intentions remain consistent across urban, small city, and rural Saskatchewan, reinforcing the province's shared economic reality.

The real inflection point is household composition. Families with children are more likely to spend more, while child-free households tend to be more restrained. The presence of children doesn't just increase spend – it prioritizes the holidays.



Q3 Compared to last year, do you plan to spend more, less or about the same on holiday shopping?
Base: All Respondents (n=800).

Reasons for Spending _____.

More money, more mouths... or more mindfulness?

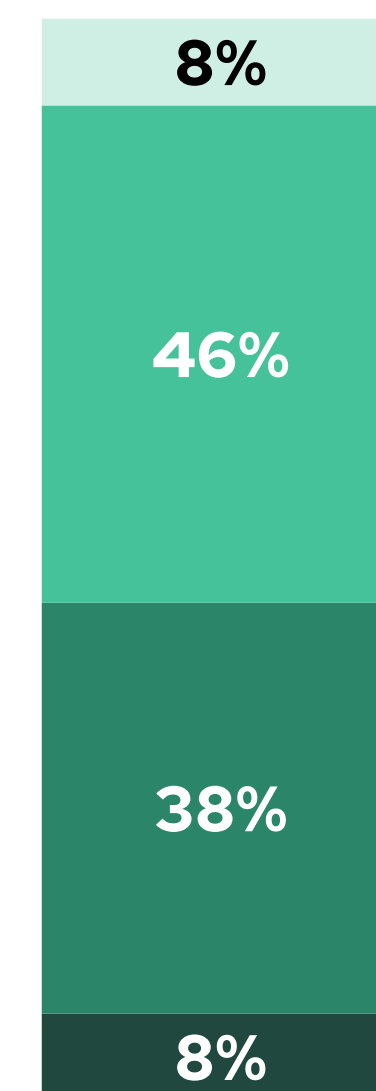
Spending more this season is often tied to life momentum. Improved finances, especially among Gen Z (46%), and family growth among Millennials (50%) and Gen Z (38%) are key accelerators.

Spending less, however, is overwhelmingly driven by inflation and cost-of-living pressures, not a lack of holiday spirit. Saskatchewan shoppers aren't opting out. They are recalibrating.

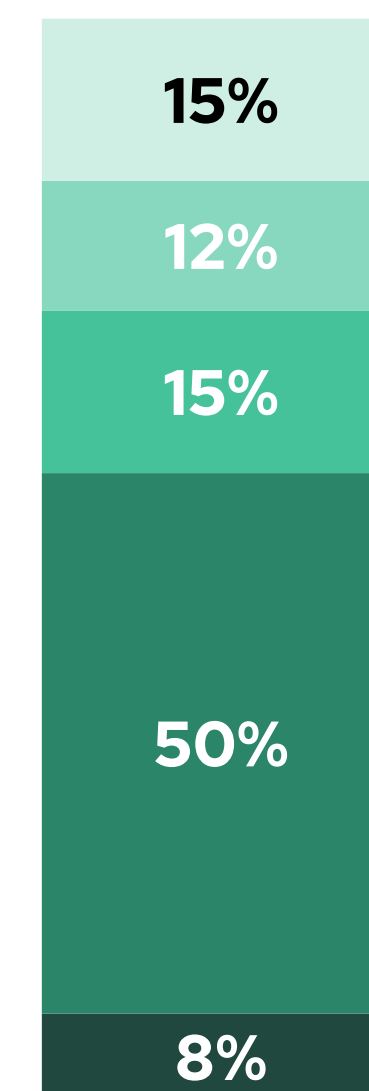
Spending shifts are practical, not pessimistic.

Reasons for spending more.

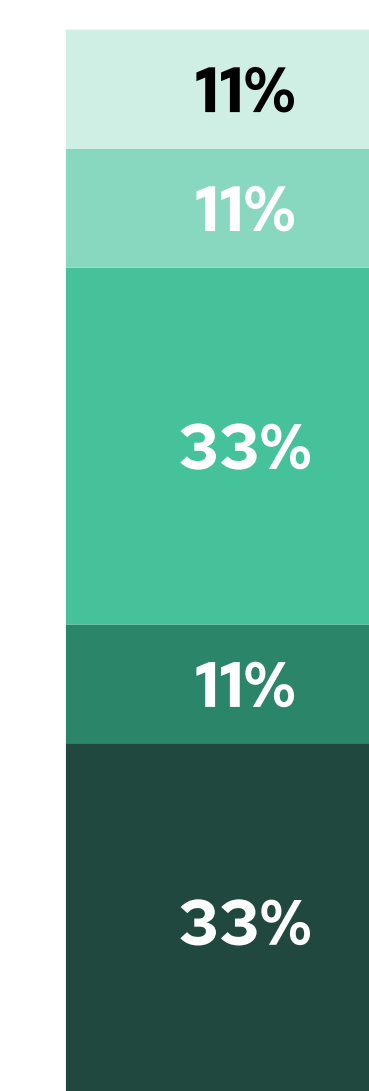
■ Inflation/Increased Costs ■ Family Growth ■ Better Finances ■ Wanting a Better Experience ■ Specific Gift/Travel Plans



Gen Z



Millennials



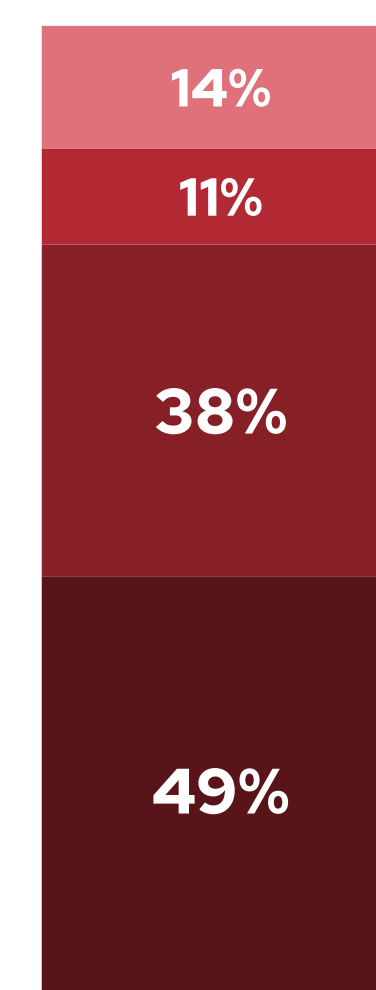
Gen X



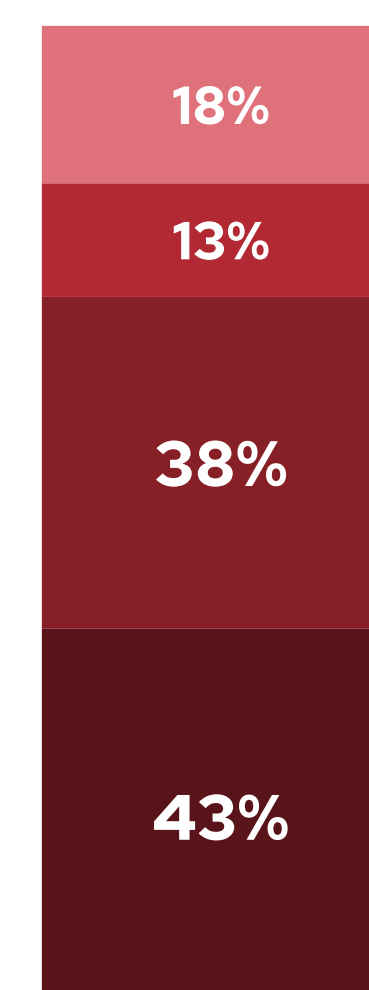
Baby Boomers

Reasons for spending less.

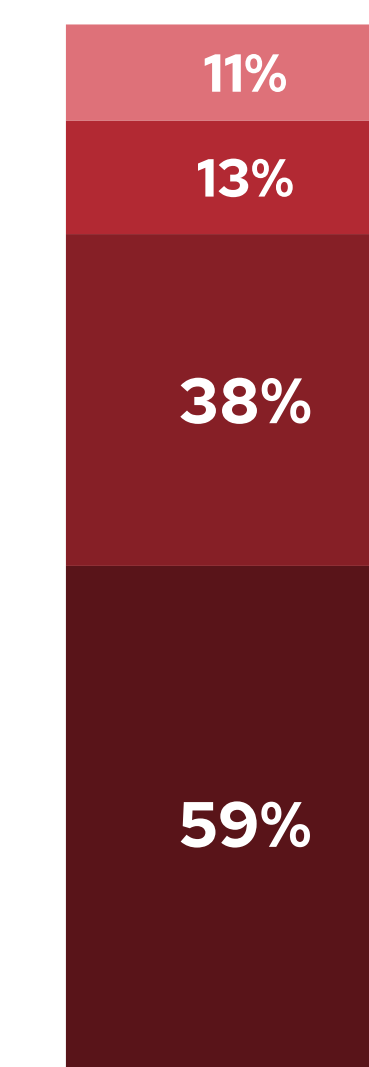
■ Inflation/Increased Costs ■ Financial Constraints ■ Life Circumstances ■ Shift in Priorities



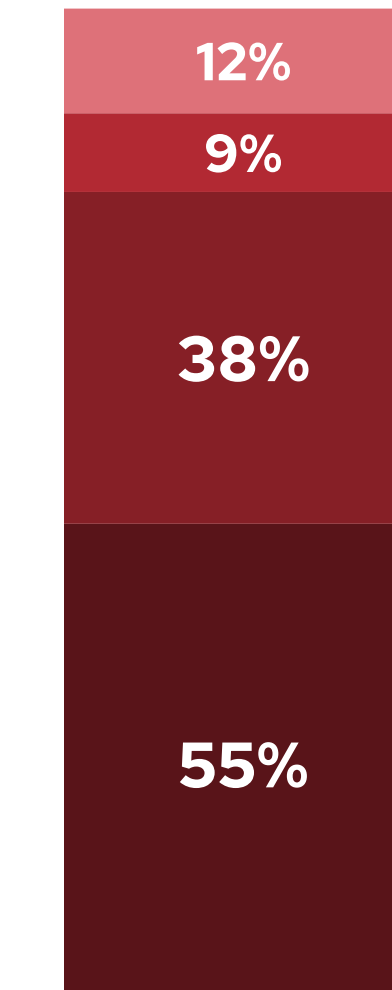
Gen Z



Millennials



Gen X



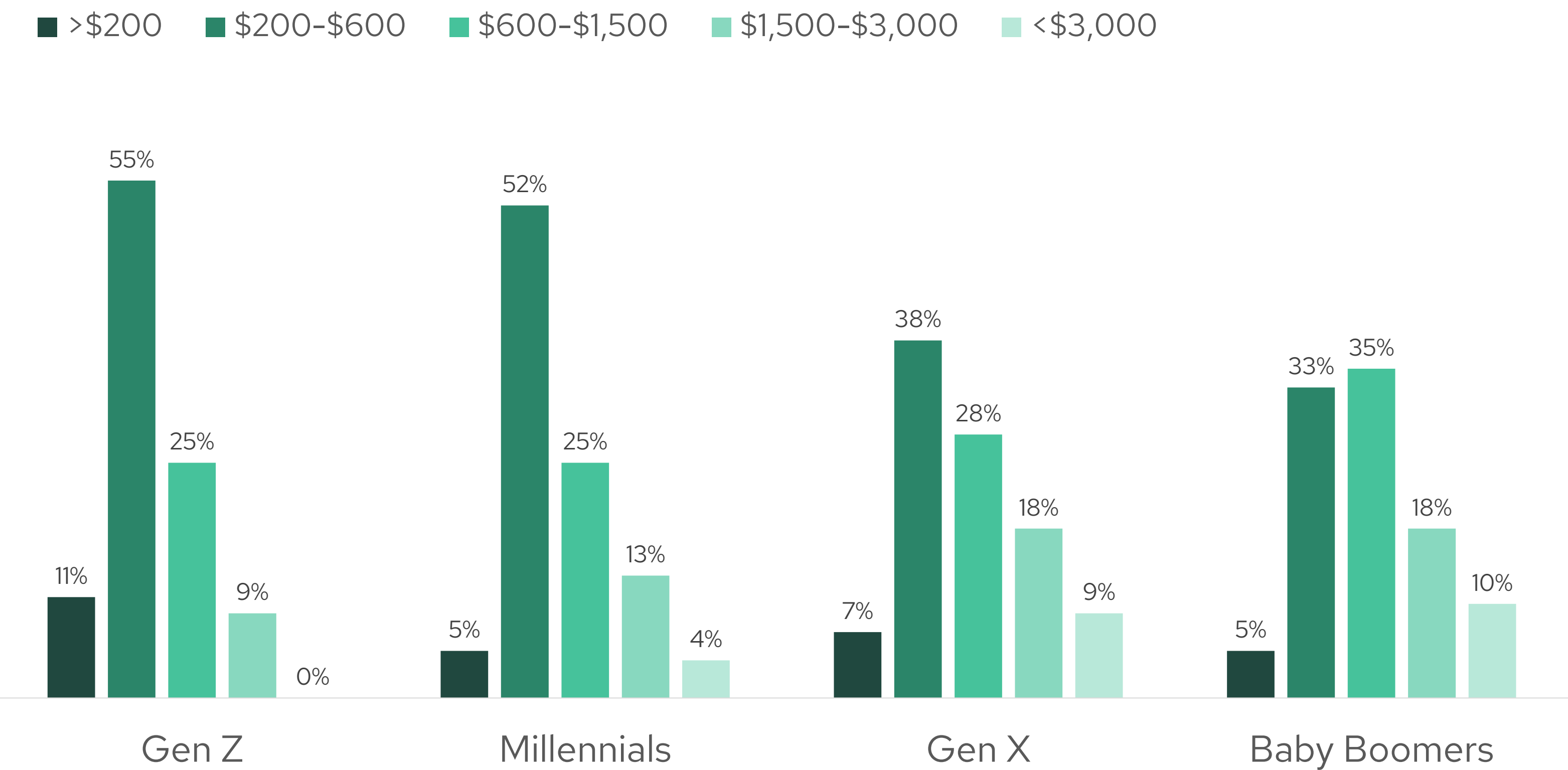
Baby Boomers

Q4: What are the main reasons for spending more this year? – Categorized, Base: Respondents who intend to spend more this year, n = 52, Respondents who intend to spend less this year, n = 233

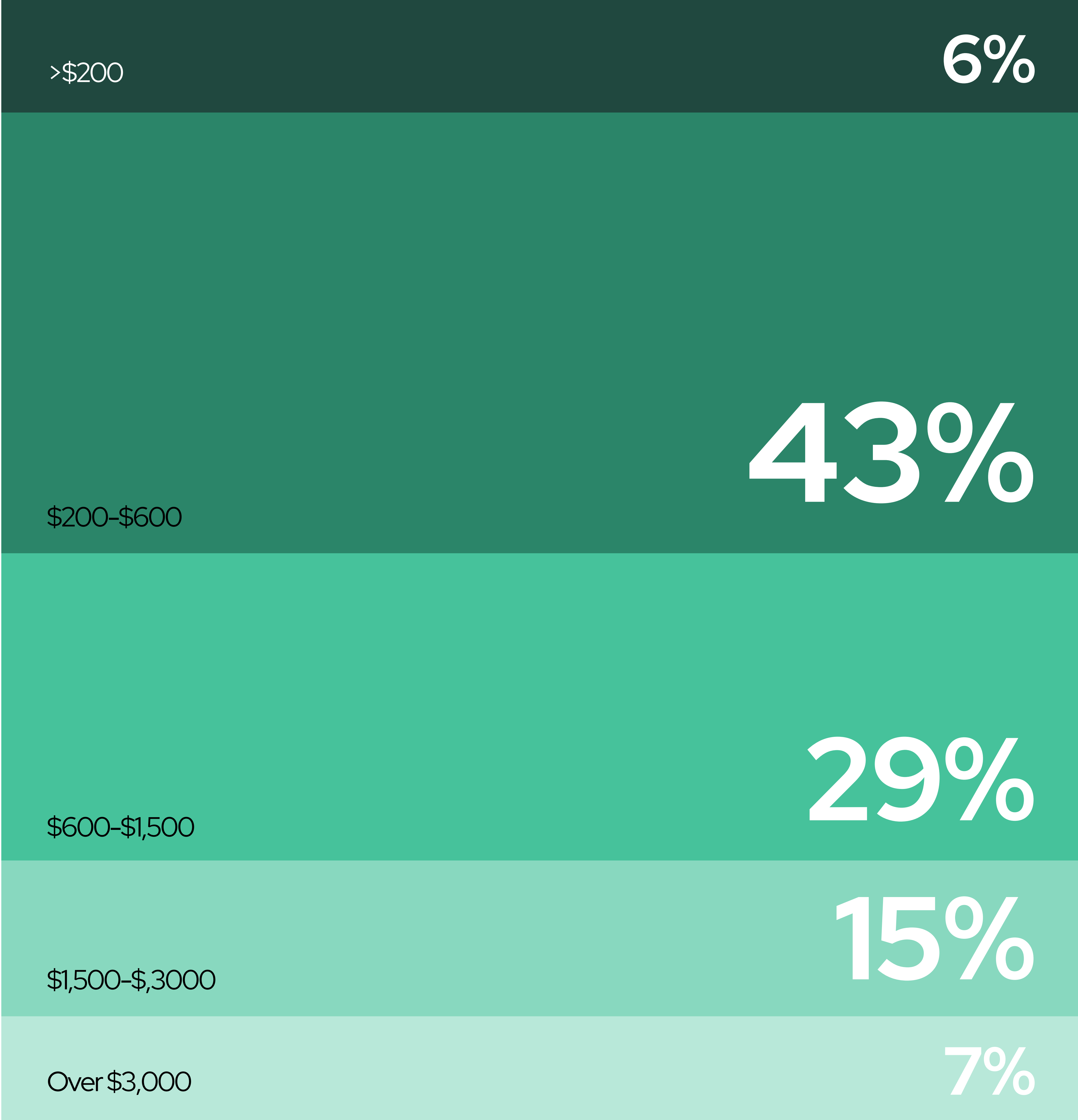
Holiday generosity scales with life stage – not impulse.

The sweet spot lives between \$200 and \$600 – and most shoppers stay right there.

Planned Holiday Spend (by Generation)



Q5: About how much do you expect to spend in total? Base: All respondents, n = 514



Kids don't just change the holidays, they multiply them.

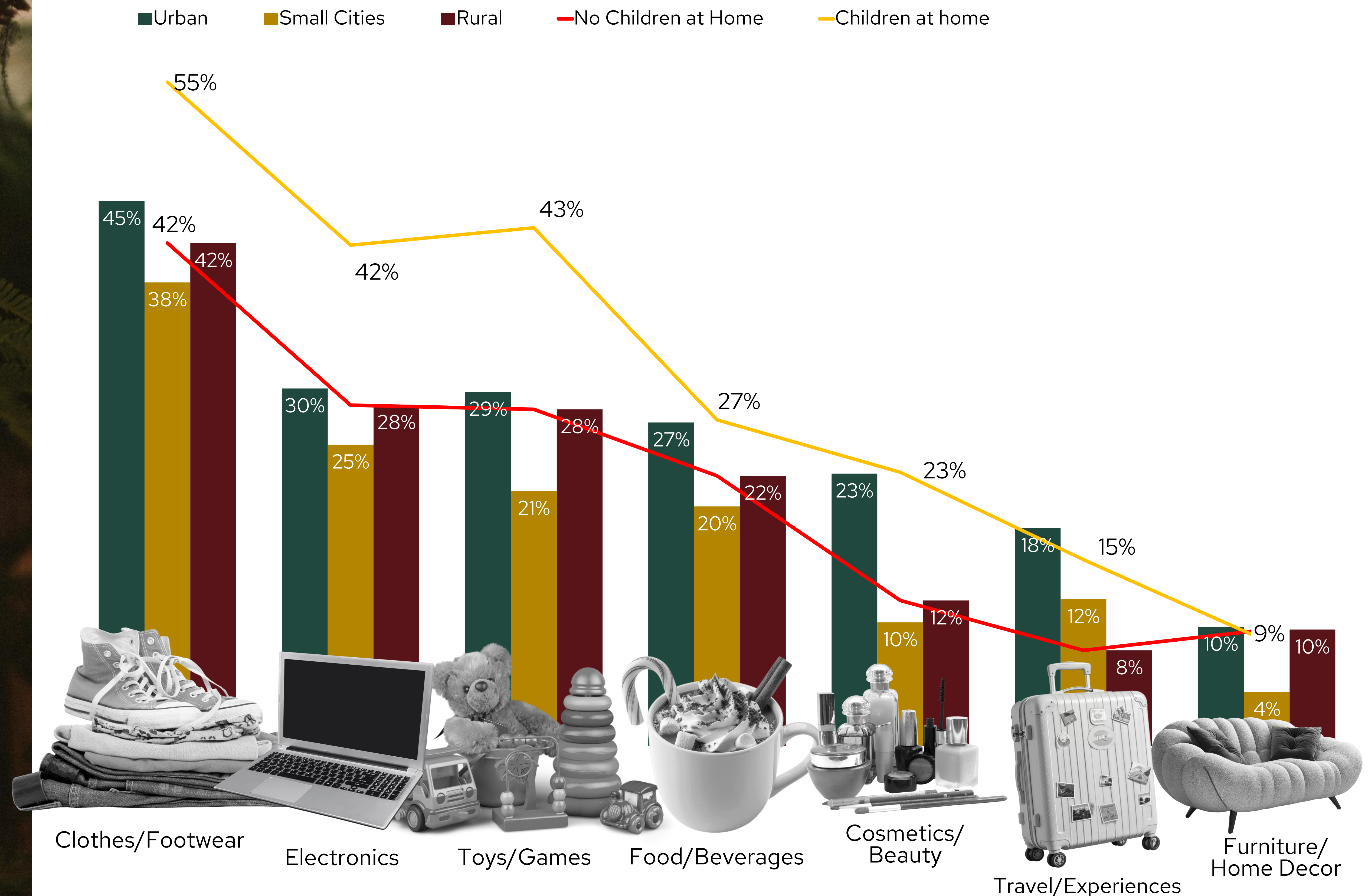
Households with children consistently outspend across nearly every category, including clothing (55%), toys (43%), and electronics (42%). Urban shoppers amplify this further, adding discretionary categories like beauty (23%) and travel (18%).

Child-free households spend – but they spend selectively.

Q6: Which categories will you spend the most on? Base: All respondents, n = 800

Holiday Shopping Trends for 2025, by Category

(by Region and Household Mix)



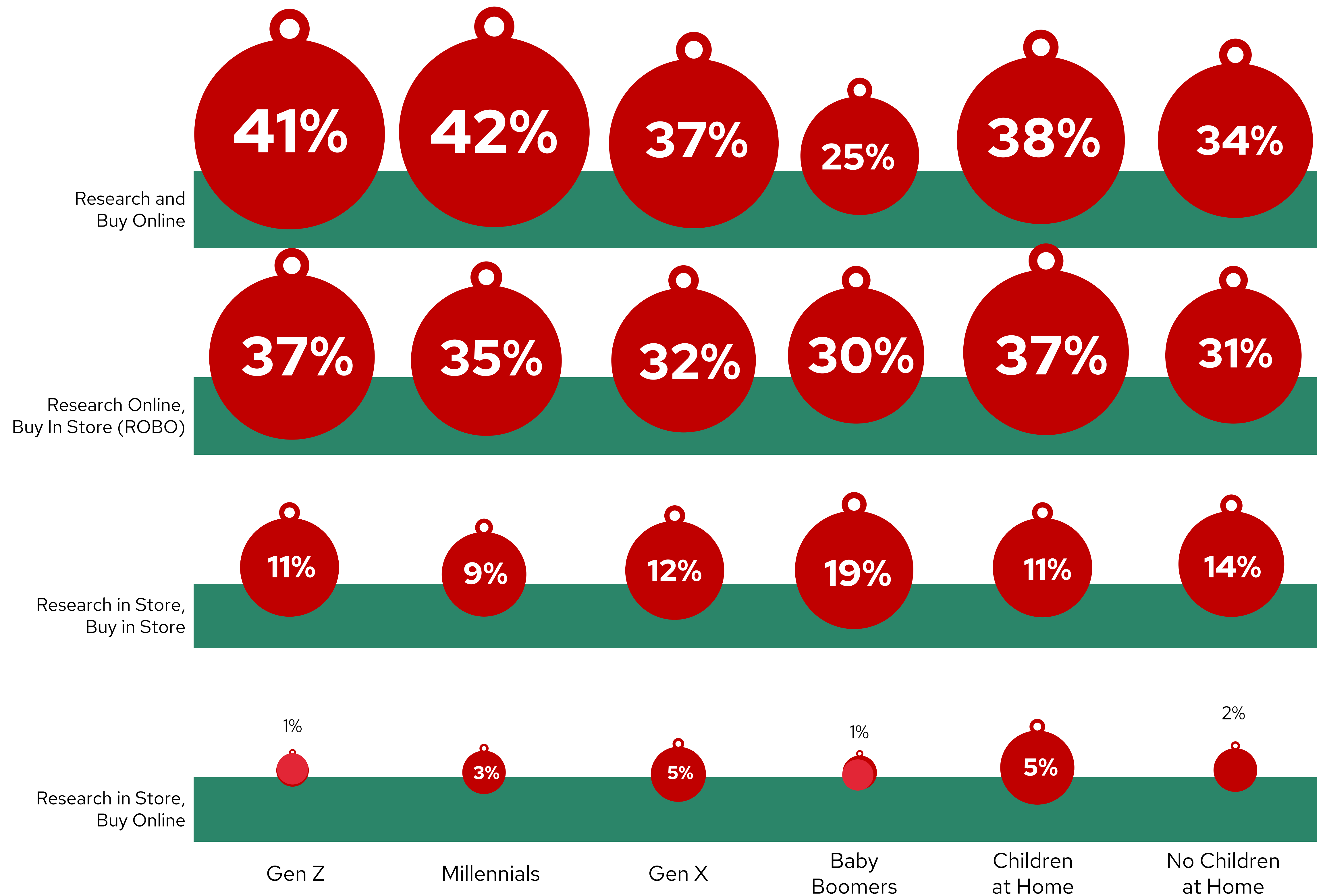
The holiday shopper is multichannel and rarely linear.

Saskatchewan shoppers fluidly blend online and in-store behaviours. However, research online and buy online dominate, driven by a need for price confidence and tactile reassurance.

Meanwhile, fully online paths are gaining relevance thanks to their convenience and access to reviews.

Winning brands don't *force* a path. They *support the switch*.

Saskatchewan Holiday Shopper Behaviour (by Generation, Household Mix)



Q7: Which of the following best describes your shopping behaviour? Base: All respondents, n=800

sale

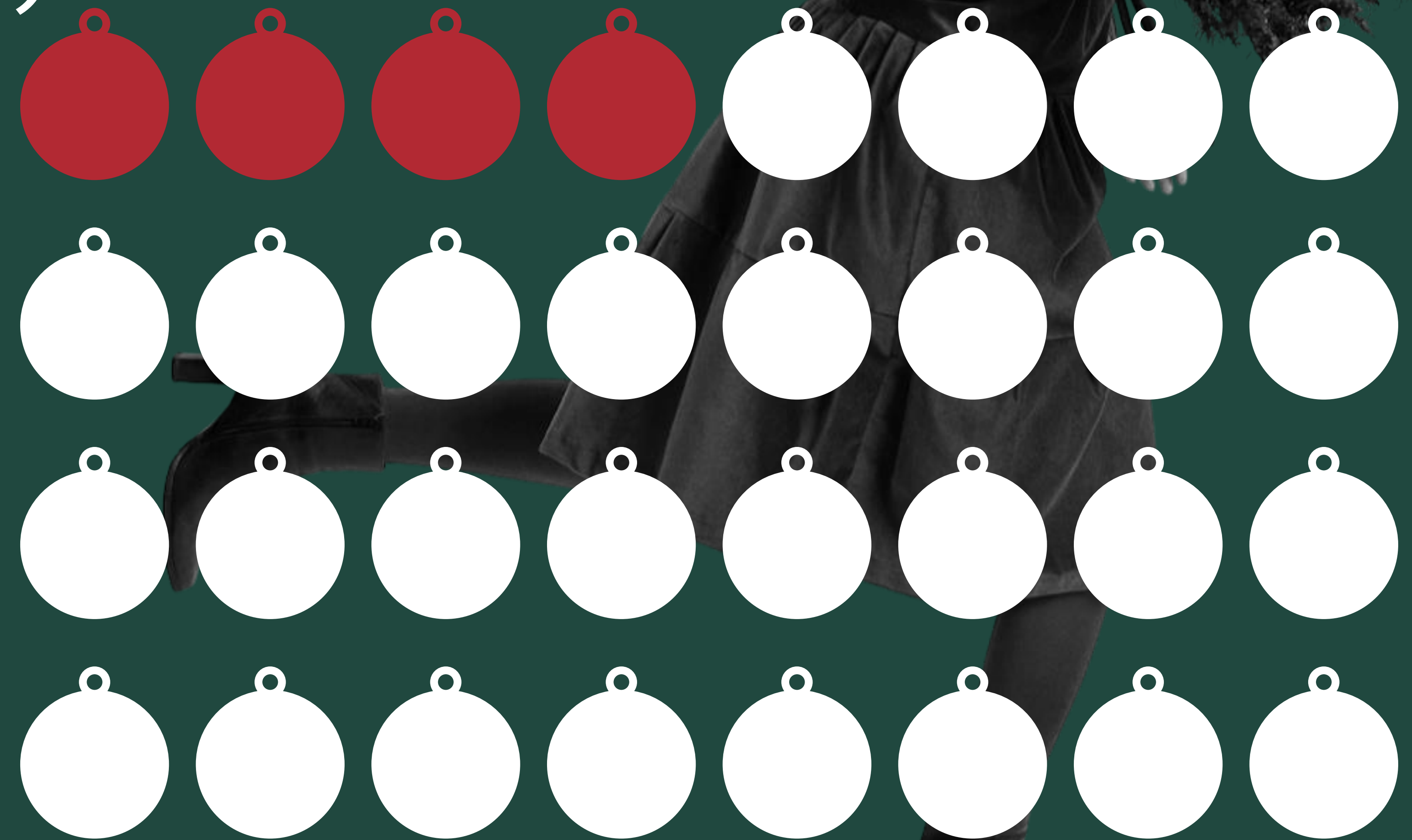
The Best Price no deal = no dance

Price remains non-negotiable, but it's only the *entry ticket*. Younger shoppers seek transparency and speed through digital channels, while older shoppers rely on patience and experience.

Deal-seeking is universal but deal *definition* is generational.

87%

Important (NET)





Inflation, you speak?

Oh no – Saskatchewan Shoppers have a plan for that.

These behaviours show intent, not sacrifice. Holiday shoppers are actively managing inflation through preparation, not postponement.

Q1: How do you typically prepare for holiday shopping?
Base: All respondents, n = 800

54%

Make a shopping list

43%

Research deals in advance

40%

Look for holiday promotions and gift guides

37%

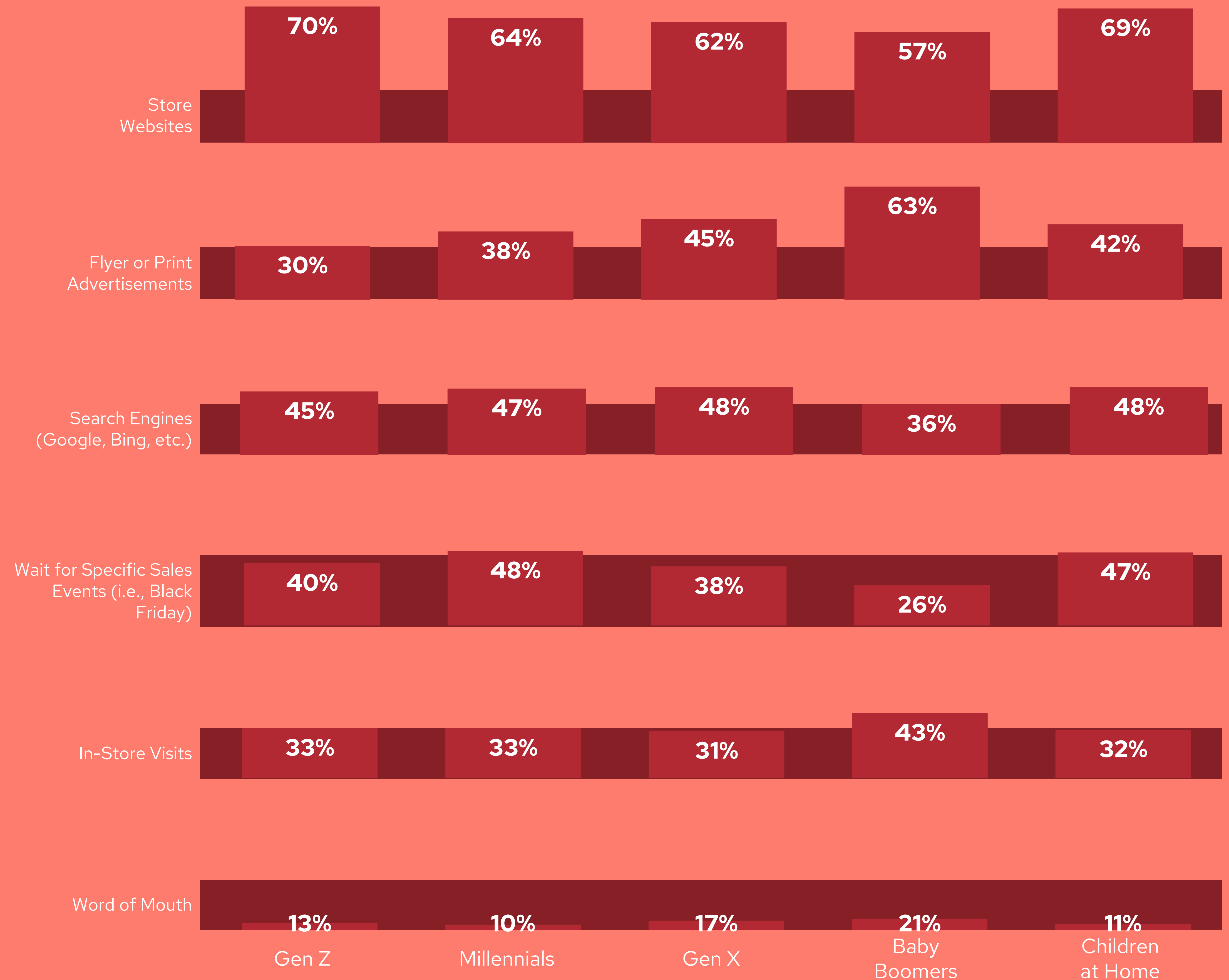
Set a budget

Your website is your store flyer now.

Store websites dominate price discovery across all segments – even among those who ultimately buy in-store. Flyers still matter, especially for older and rural shoppers, but digital has become the connective tissue of price trust.

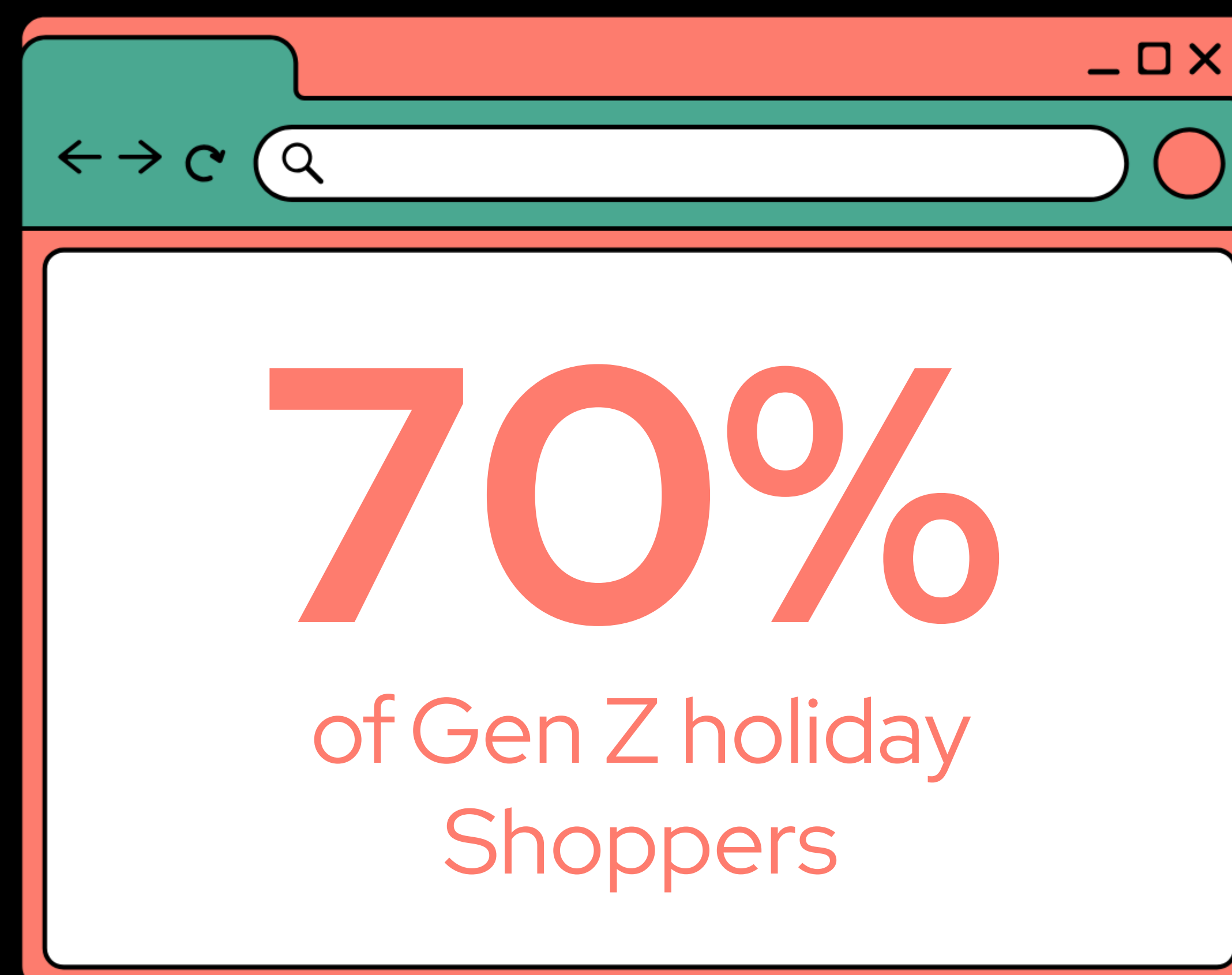
Q9: How do you usually find the best price?
Base: Respondents whom best price is important for purchase decisions, n = 694

Finding the Best Price (by Generation, Household Mix)





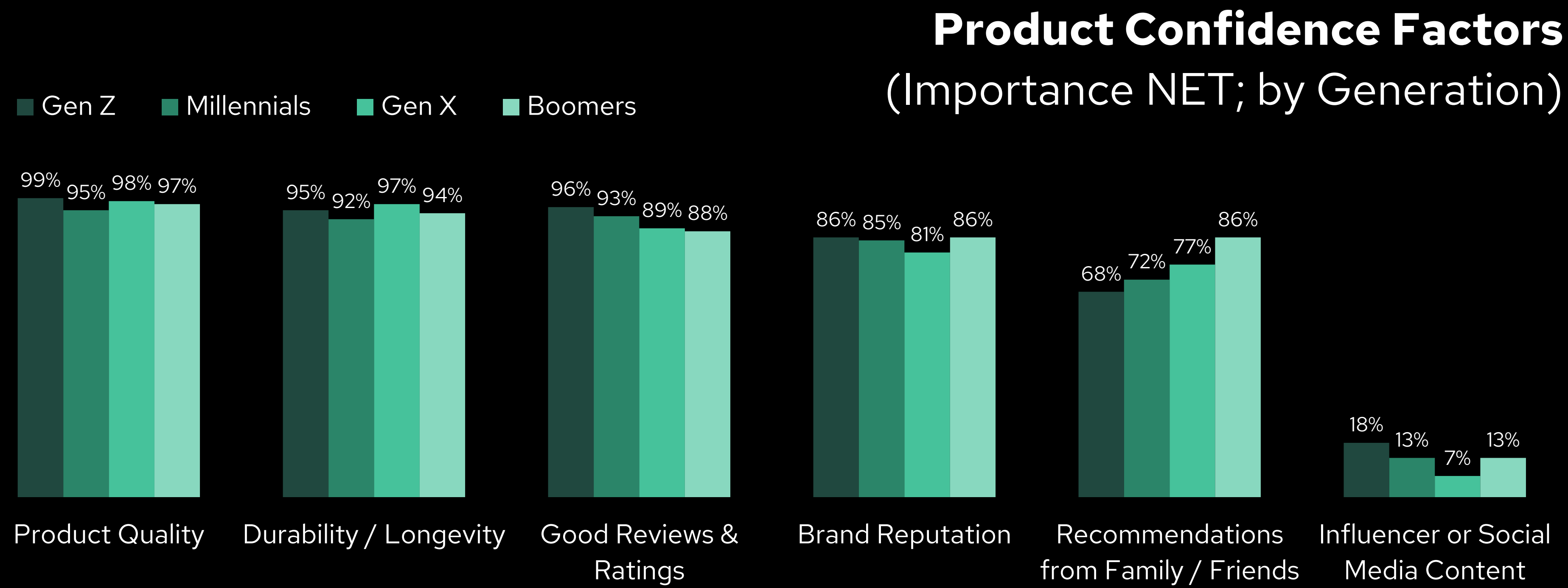
who **'Research Online, Buy In Store'**, find their best price on **'Store Websites'**.



say they use **'Store Websites'** to find the best price.



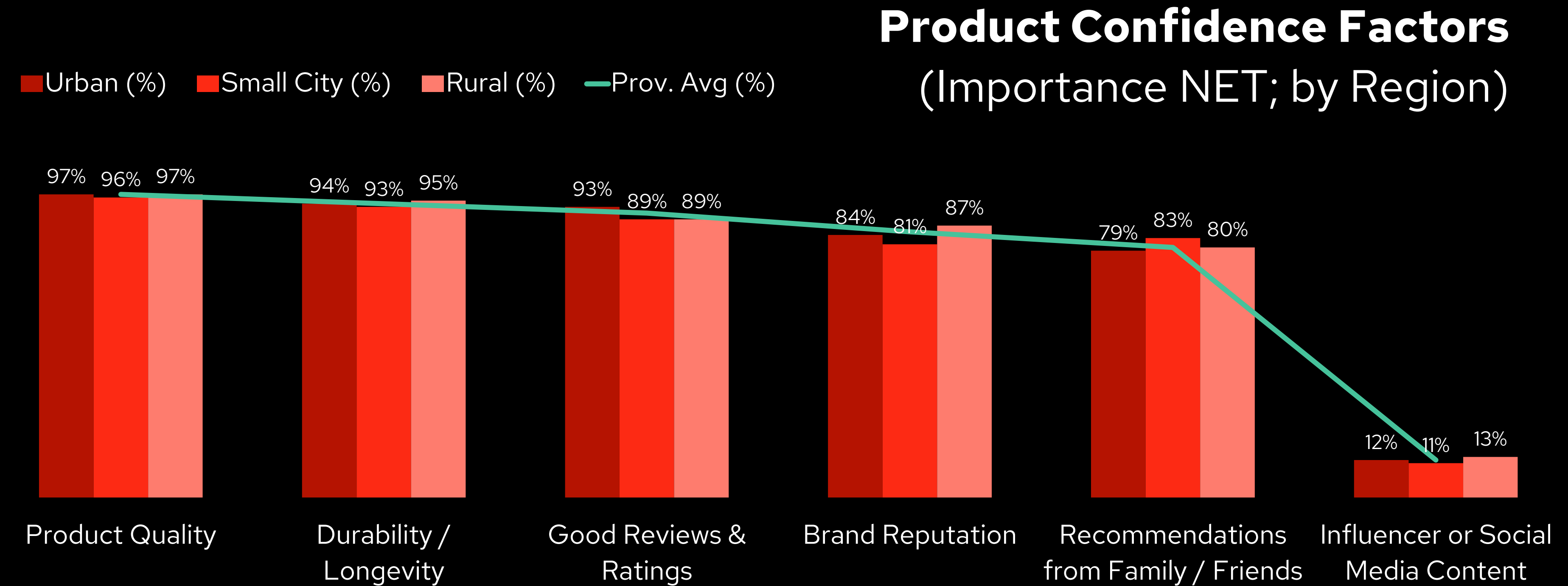
say they use **'Flyers or Print Ads'** to find the best price.



When deciding to buy a gift, what matters most?

Across Saskatchewan, product confidence strengthens with age. Still, its sources evolve – Gen Z and Millennials appear to prioritize online-first, leaning heavily on good reviews and ratings (93-96%). When deciding to buy a gift, they take a digital, often crowdsourced approach.

Gen X and Boomers validate through experience and reputation. For them, personal recommendations and brand trust outweigh hype. Their confidence builds over time and is not easily influenced.



Q10. When deciding to buy a gift, how important is each of the following factors? Base: All respondents, excluding "Not sure", n=779-792.

**Trust builds
bottom-up, not
top-down.**



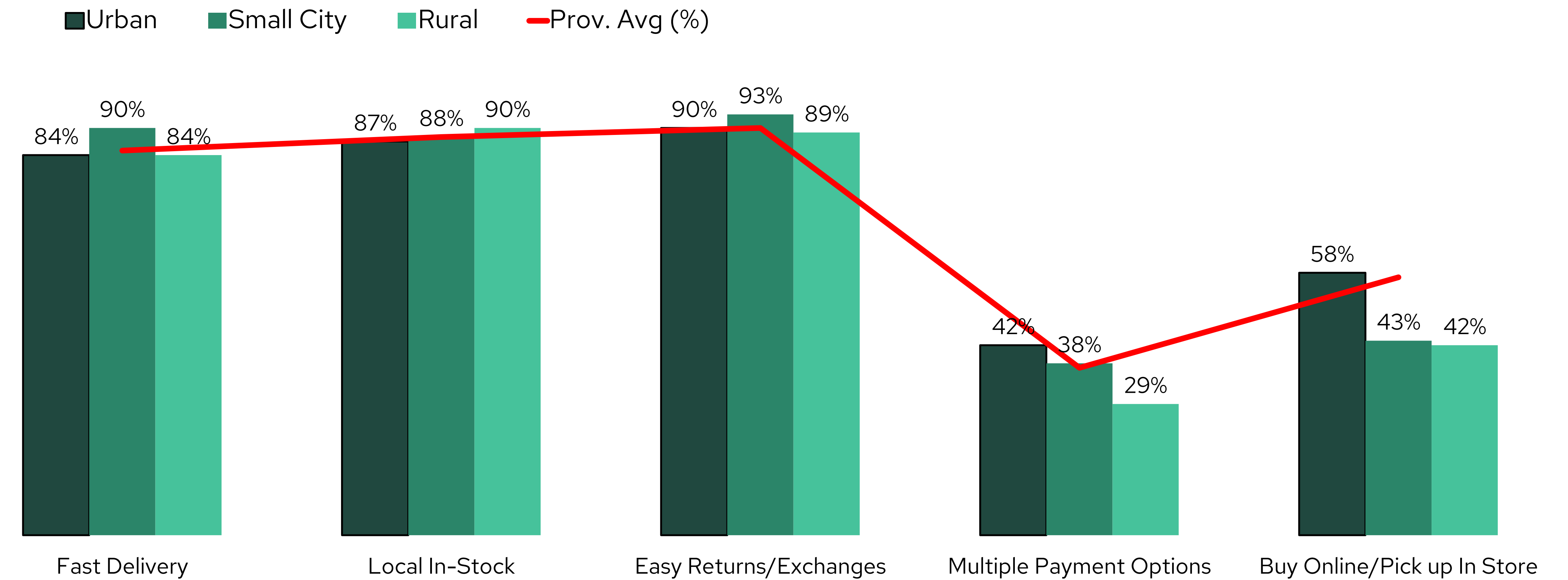
Fast, fair, flexible or forget it.

Convenience is table stakes. Shoppers expect speed and availability, but not at the cost of fairness. Delivery delays are tolerated less than price inconsistencies.

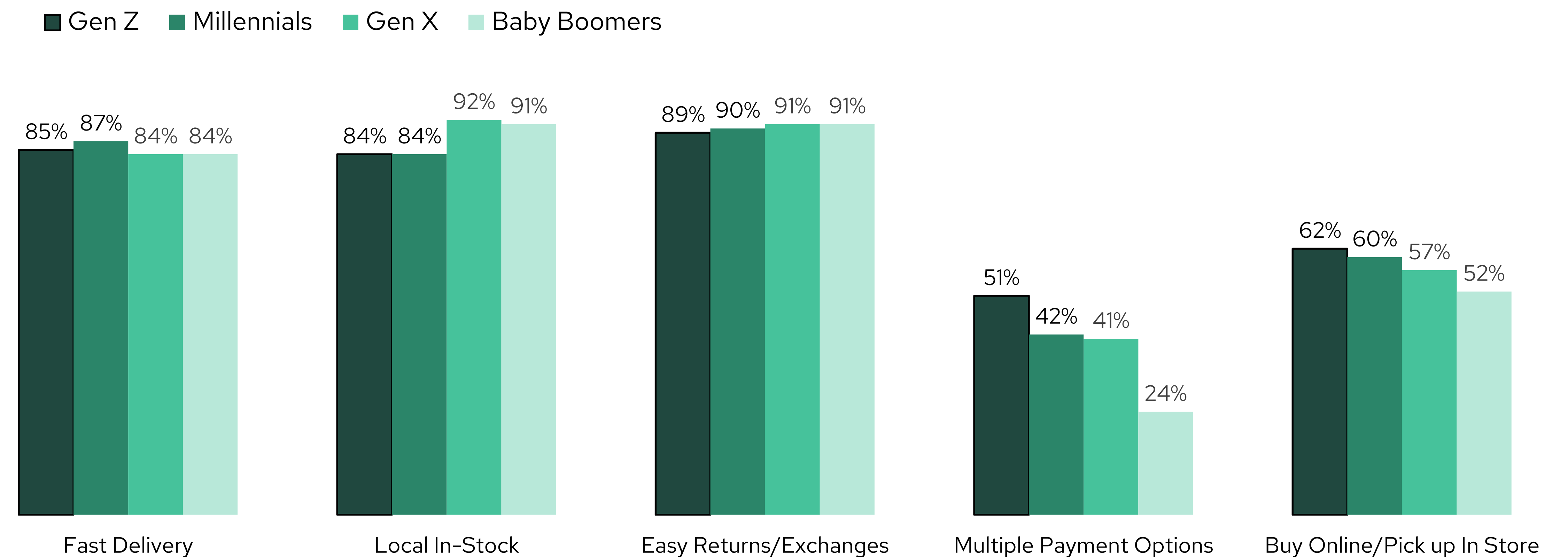
Saskatchewan shoppers will wait,
but only when value feels earned.

Q12: How important are the following to your final purchase decision?
Base: All respondents, excluding "Not sure", n=782-792

Importance in Purchase Decision (by Region)



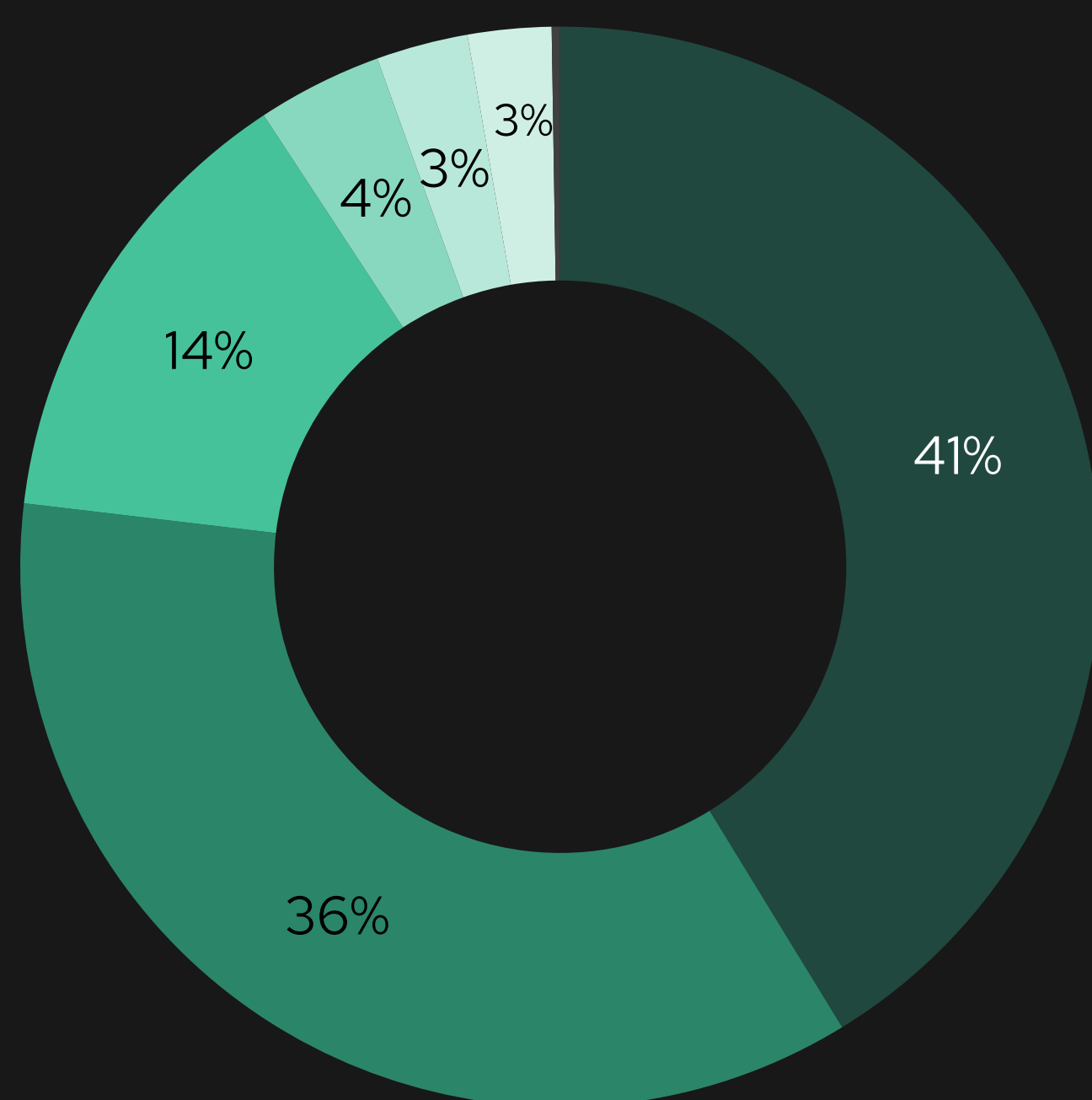
Importance in Purchase Decision (by Generation)



Trust ranks higher than ads.

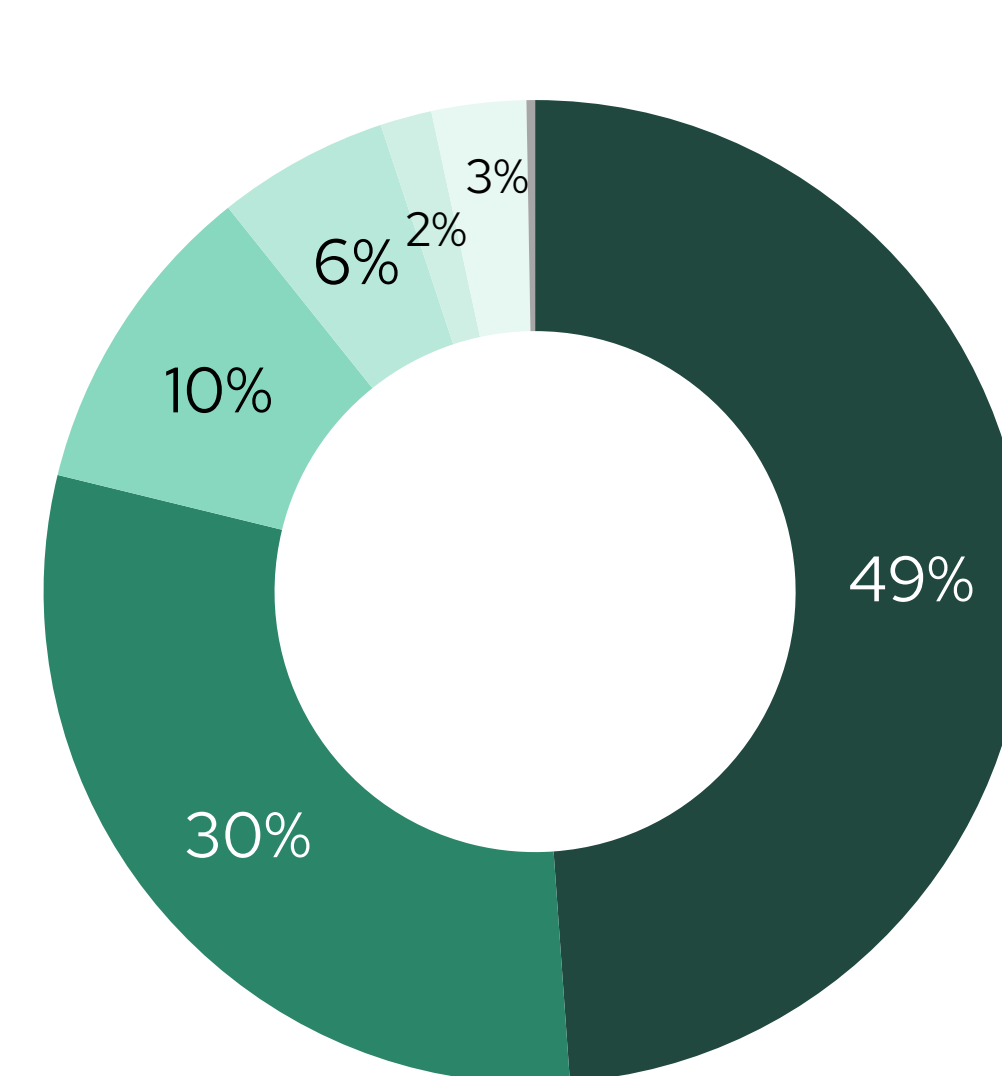
Across Saskatchewan, product research is multichannel, with shoppers using different methods to research products for the holidays, such as Google search and friends and family, as the top ways to find information that drives consumers during the holiday season. Rural shoppers still value in-store expertise, while younger shoppers outsource trust digitally.

- Google search
- Friends / family
- Retailer websites
- AI tools (ChatGPT, Perplexity, etc.)
- In-store staff advice
- YouTube
- Social media creators / influencers

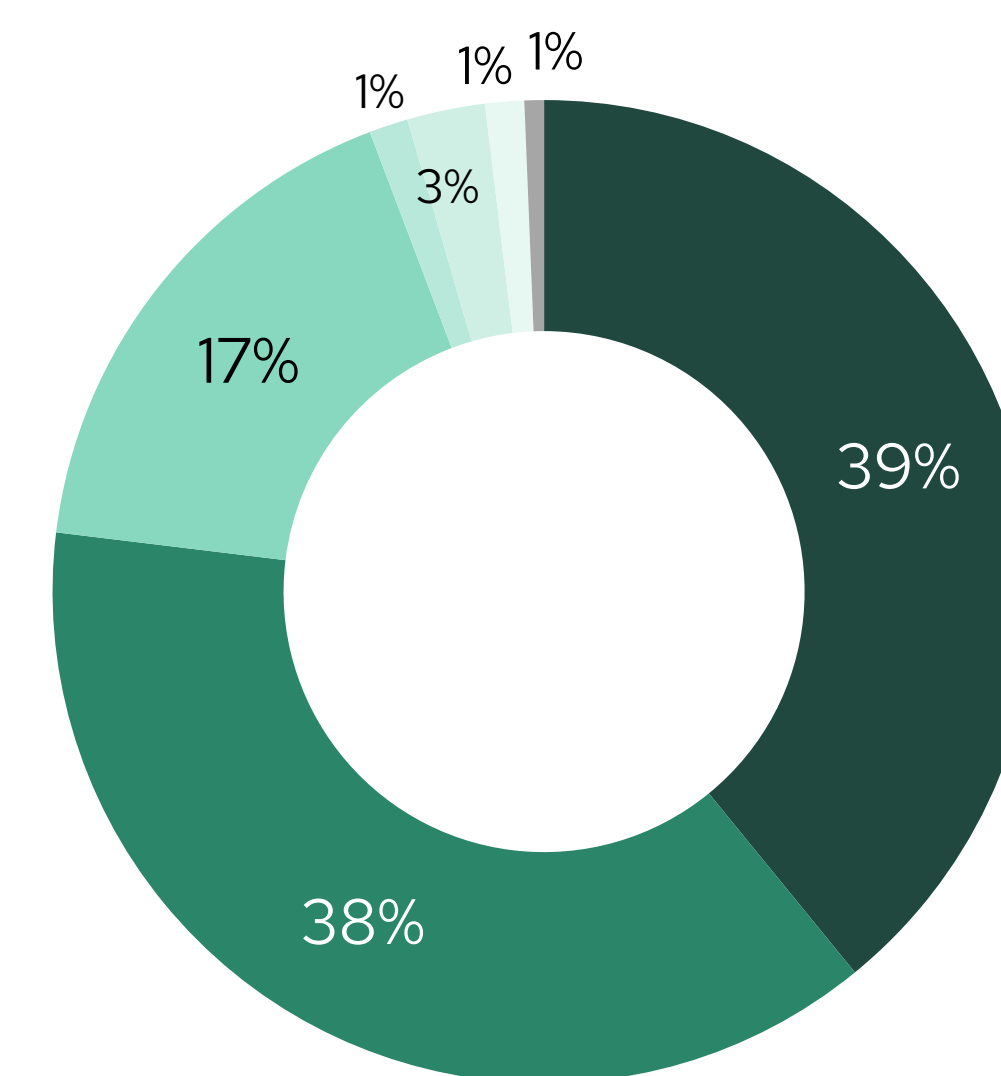


Q11: What sources do you trust most to conduct product research?
Base: All respondents, n=800

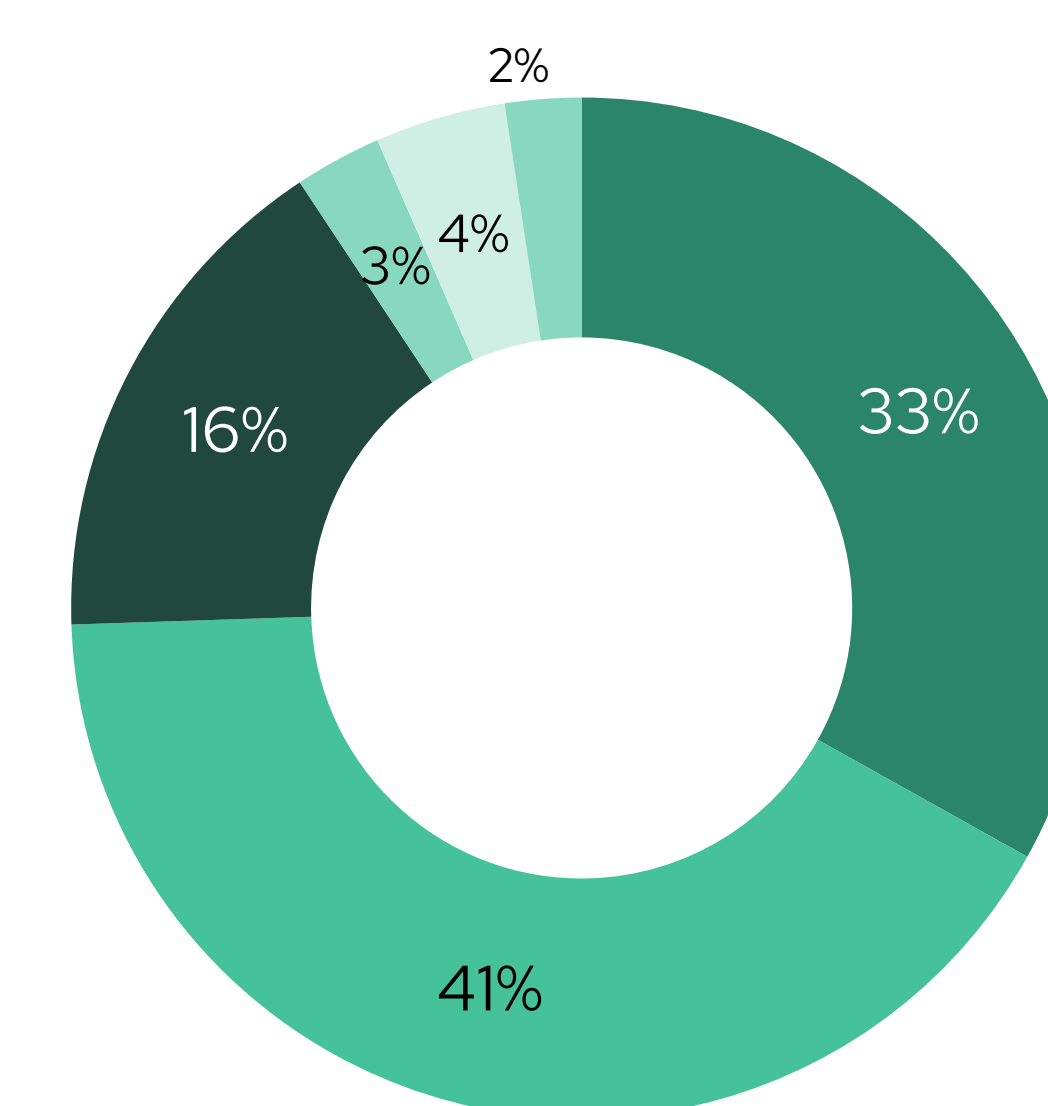
Top Most Trusted Sources For Product Research (by Region)



Urban



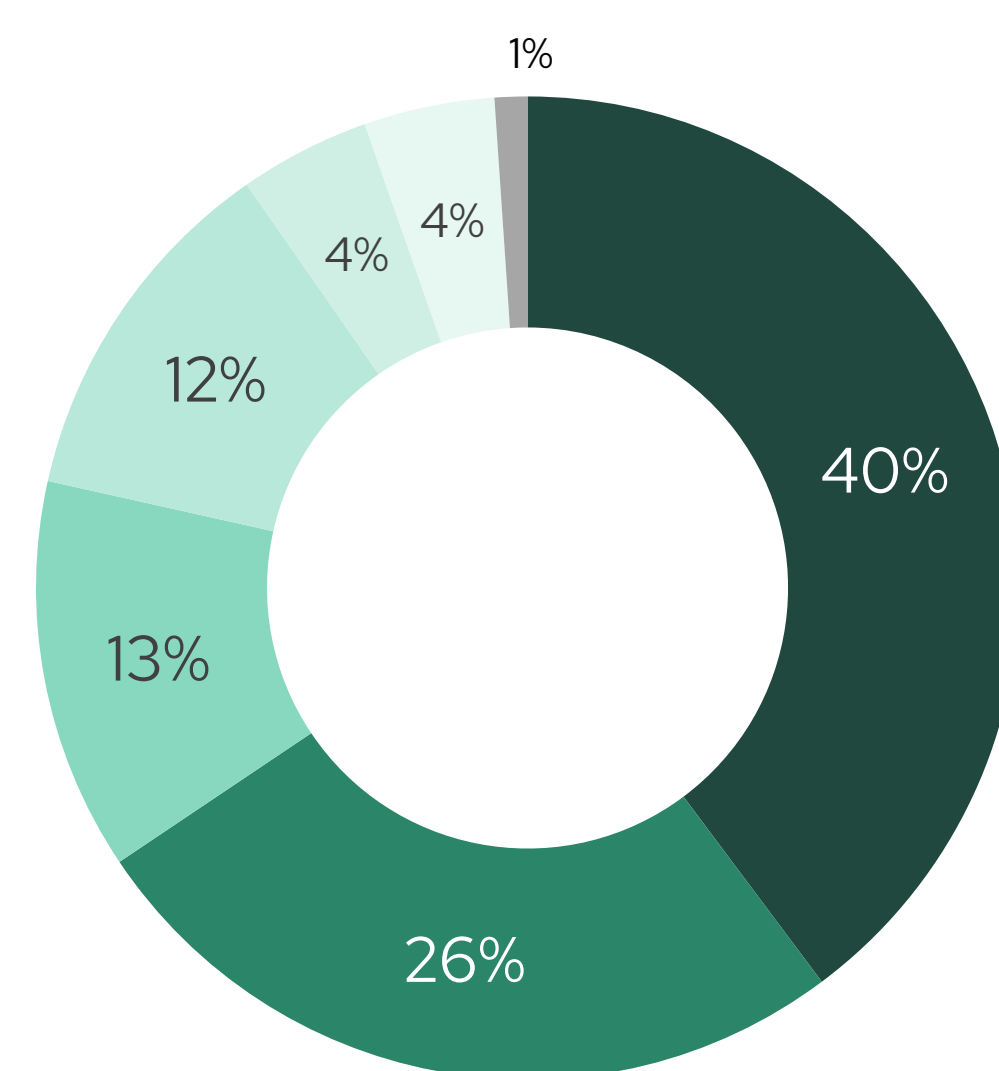
Small Cities



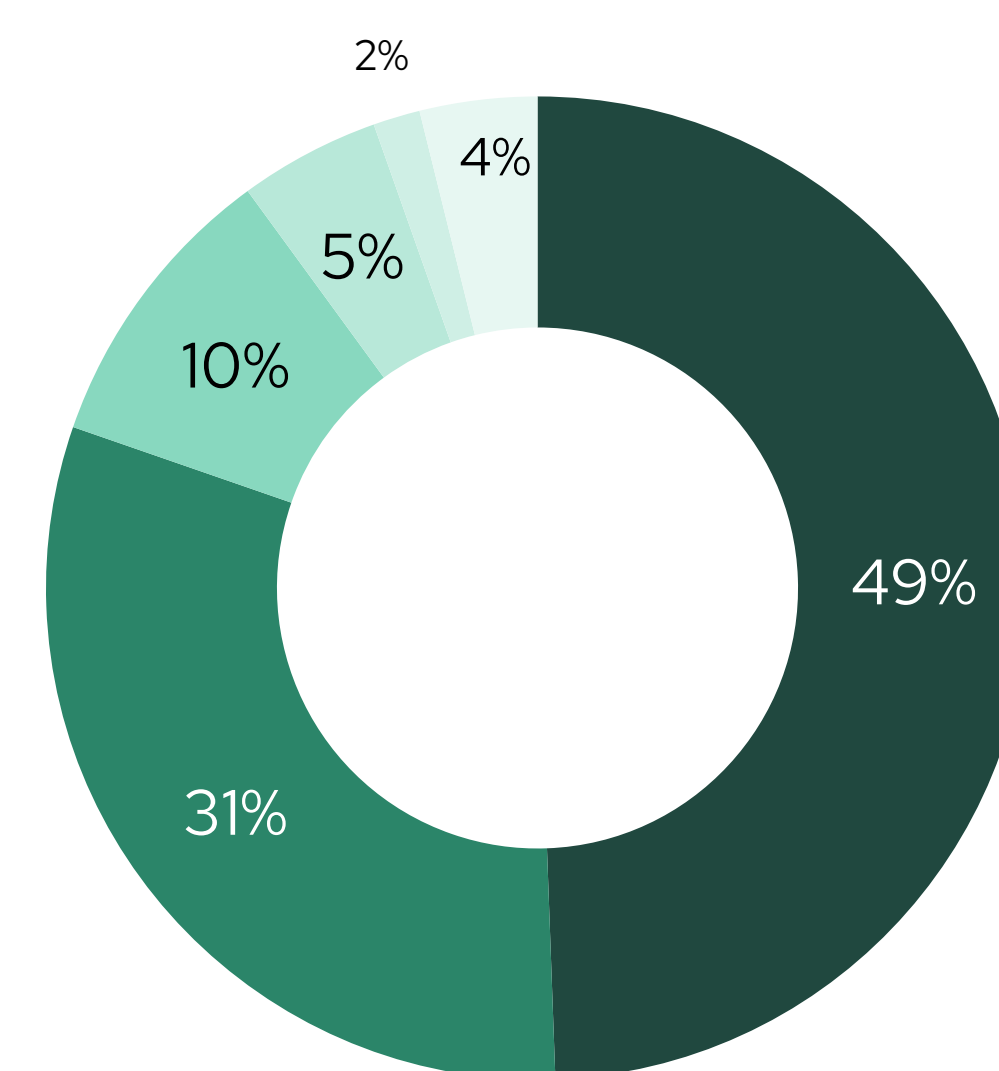
Rural

- Friends / family
- Retailer websites
- Google search
- In-store staff advice
- YouTube
- AI tools (ChatGPT, Perplexity, etc.)
- Social media creators / influencers

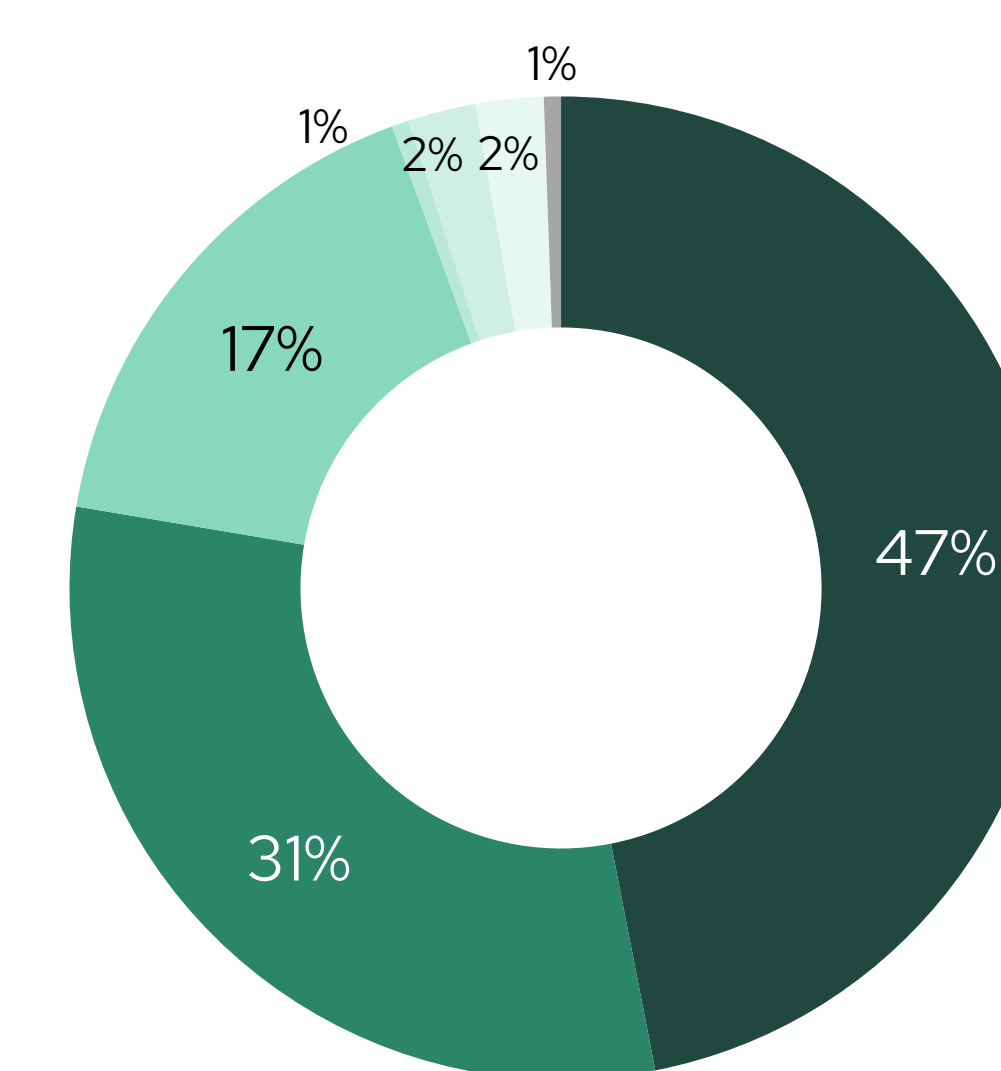
Top Most Trusted Sources For Product Research (by Generation)



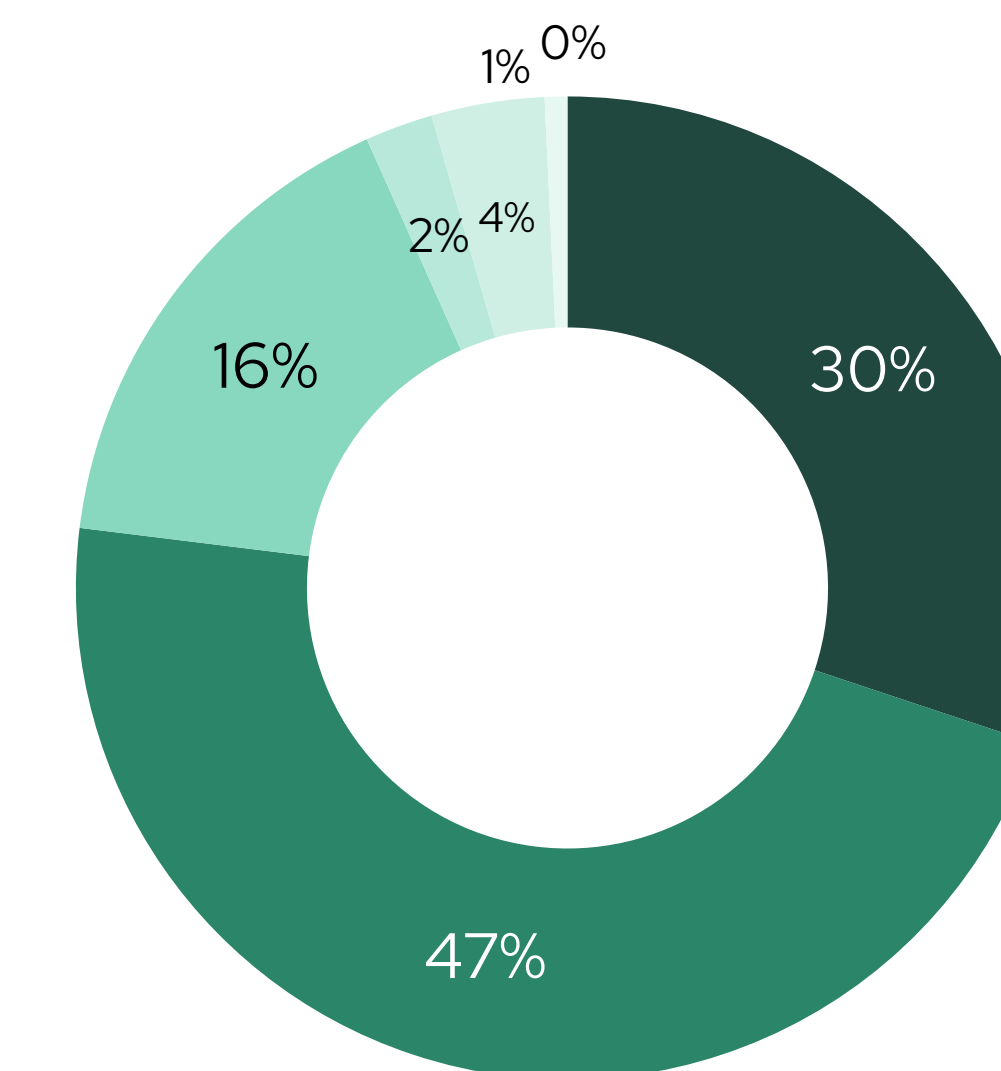
Gen Z



Millennials



Gen X



Baby Boomers



What Digital Behaviours Influence Holiday Shopping in Saskatchewan?

Earned media (especially reviews) vastly outweighs owned content in influence. Gift guides act as decision shortcuts, while ads support awareness more than conversion.

Earned Media

64%

Product Reviews

36%

Gift Guides

Owned Media

26%

Advertisements
Before/During/After Videos

18%

Brand Videos

Meta is the Top Social Media Brand for Holiday Inspiration

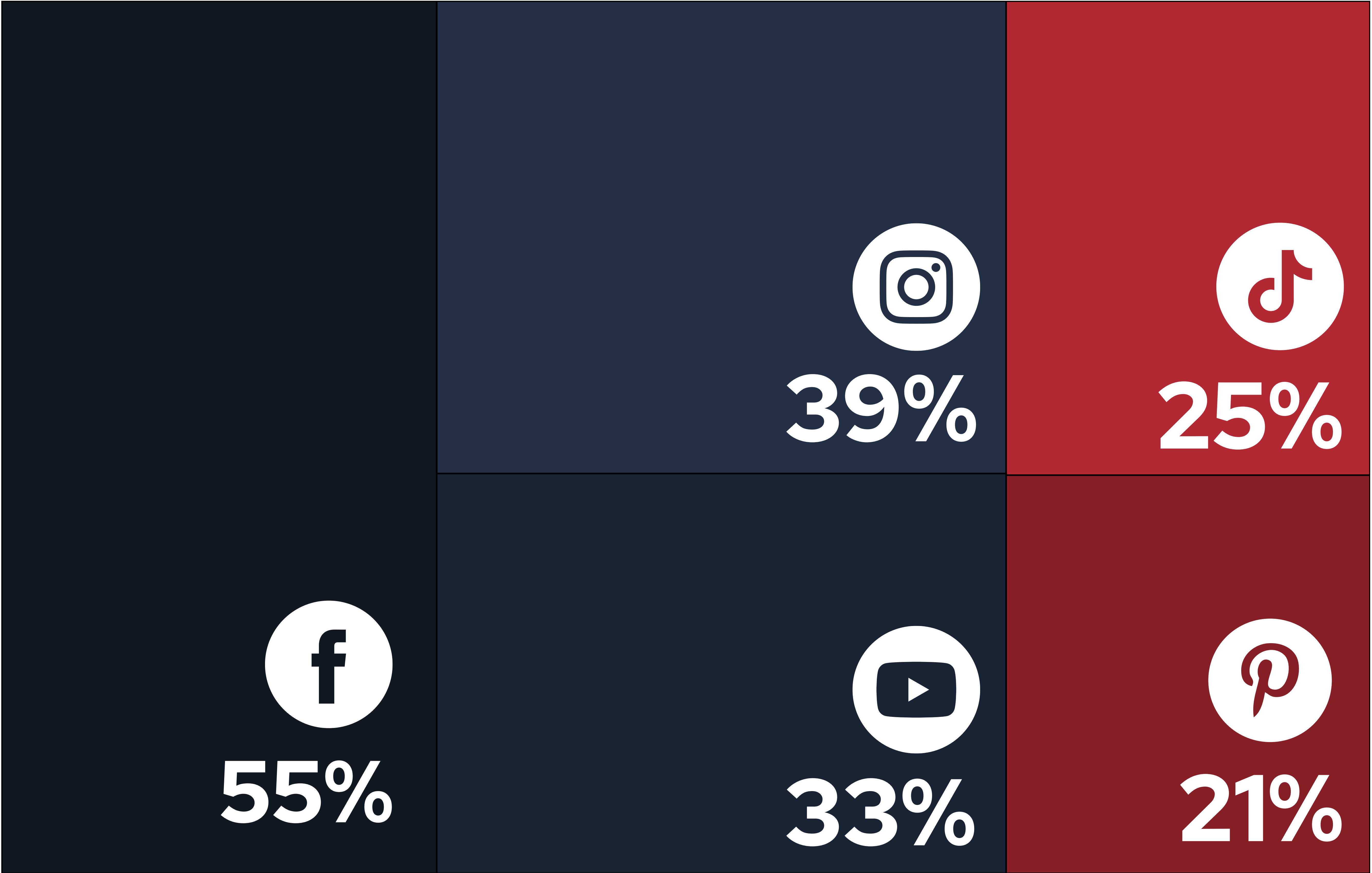
Across Saskatchewan's total population, Facebook and Instagram lead as the most commonly used social platforms for holiday inspiration. Together, Meta platforms account for the largest share of social-based discovery, outpacing YouTube, TikTok, and Pinterest.

This indicates that, at a population level, holiday inspiration on social media is not fragmented across many platforms. Instead, it is concentrated within a limited ecosystem where reach and familiarity remain high.

While emerging platforms play a role, their influence is secondary in the overall market. The majority of social inspiration still occurs on platforms with broad adoption across age groups.

Q16. "Which social media platforms do you browse for holiday inspiration?"
"Base: All respondents, excluding "Do Not Use Social Media for Holiday Inspiration"
(n=443)

Social Platforms Used for Holiday Inspiration (Prov. Avg %)



Holiday Inspiration is Visually Driven

Meta platforms, led by Facebook and Instagram, continue to anchor social inspiration during the holidays. This dominance isn't driven by trends or hype, but by consistency. These platforms are where Saskatchewan shoppers already spend time, follow people they trust, and encounter content that feels relevant to their lives.

While newer platforms like TikTok play a growing role, particularly among younger shoppers, they complement rather than replace established channels. YouTube continues to serve as a bridge between entertainment and research, offering longer-form validation when shoppers want to go deeper.

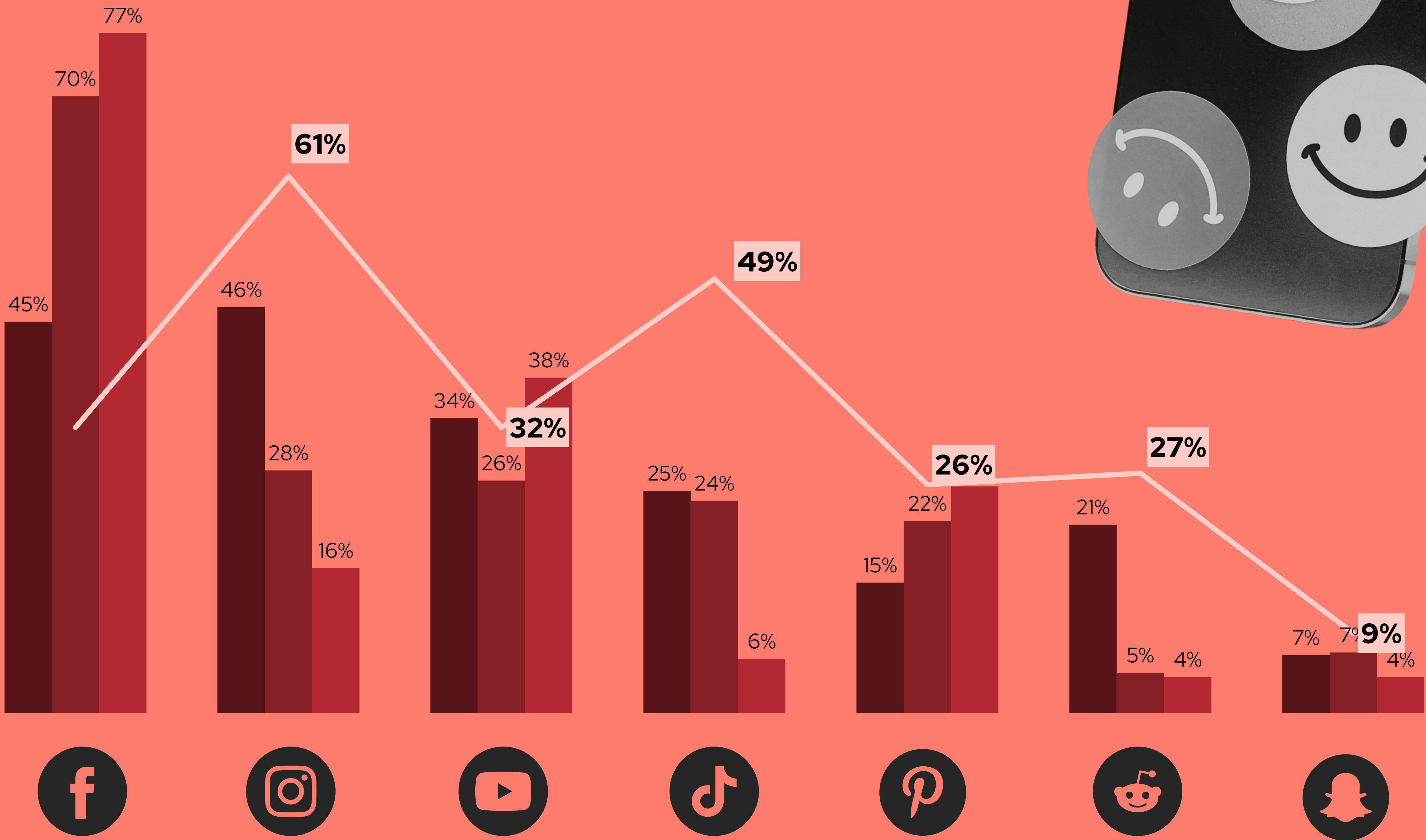
Pinterest and other niche platforms remain useful, but secondary. They support planning and saving ideas rather than driving broad inspiration.

Q16. "Which social media platforms do you browse for holiday inspiration?"
"Base: All respondents, excluding "Do Not Use Social Media for Holiday Inspiration"
(n=443)

Gen Z consistently over-indexes across visual social platforms, while older shoppers rely less on social discovery overall.

Social Platforms Used for Holiday Inspiration (by Generation)

■ Millennials ■ Gen X ■ Baby Boomers — Gen Z



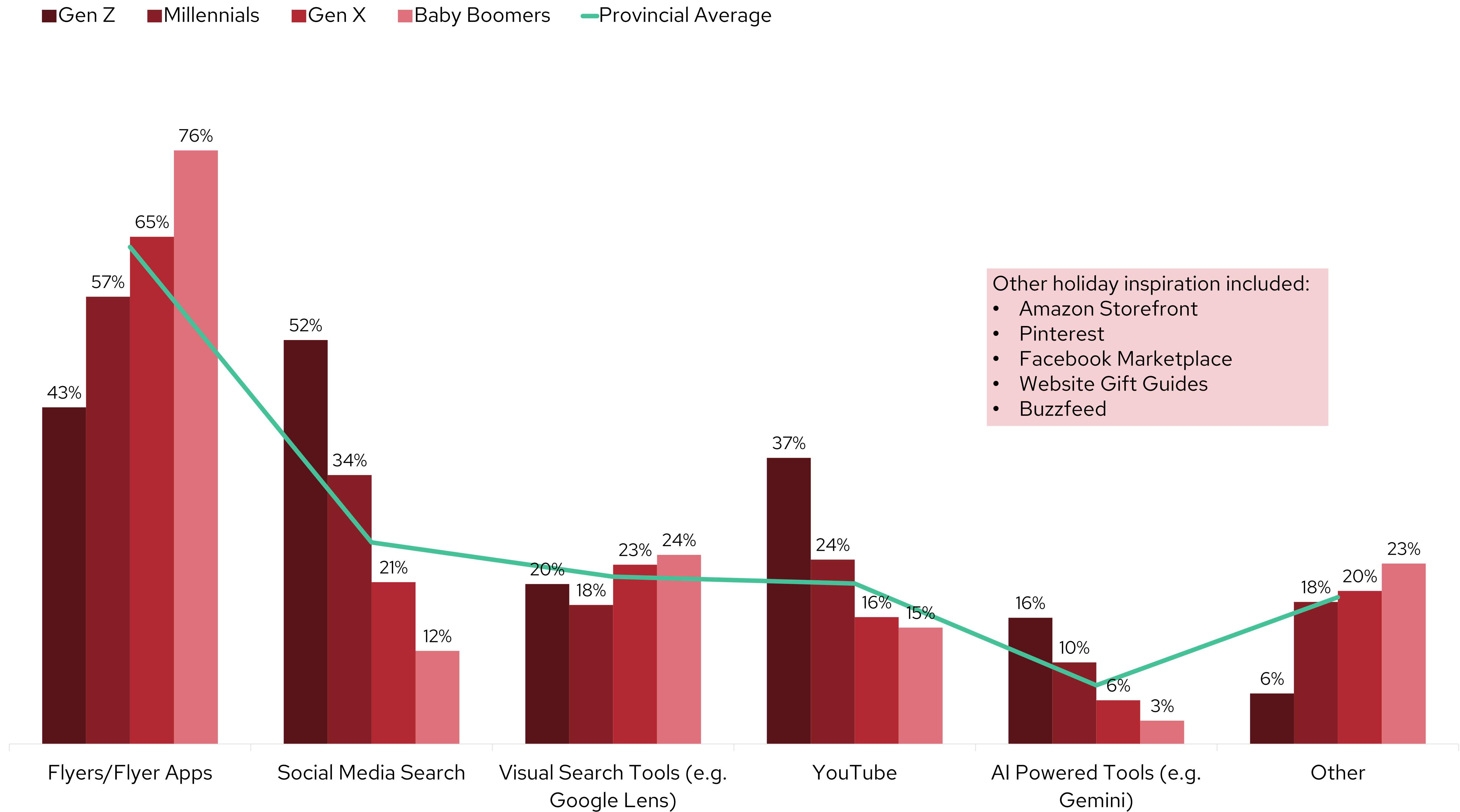
Searching for holiday inspiration online looks different by age, but it's grounded in the same need.

Across generations, Saskatchewan shoppers use digital tools to *reduce uncertainty*, not to chase trends. Gen Z and Millennials move fluidly across platforms, while Gen X and Boomers rely on proven channels like flyers and direct search.

The difference isn't openness to technology; it's how much validation is required before committing.

Younger shoppers explore broadly across social and search, while older generations return to familiar sources – not out of habit, but because they work.

Digital Discovery for Holiday Inspiration (by Generation)



Q18 When shopping for holiday gifts, which of the following ways do you typically search for inspiration or products? Base: All Respondents, n=800.

Appendix

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Insightrix Research Inc. (Insightrix) is a member of the Canadian Research Insights Council (CRIC) and confirms that this research fully complies with all CRIC Standards, including the CRIC Public Opinion Research Standards and Disclosure Requirements (<https://www.canadianresearchinsightscouncil.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/CRIC-Public-Opinion-Research-Standards-and-Disclosure-Requirements-1.pdf>)

Basic Disclosure Elements	Details
Research sponsor	Insightrix
Research/Data collection supplier	Insightrix
Population represented	Adults in Saskatchewan
Sample size	n= 800
Mode of data collection	Online, omnibus survey
Source of sample	Insightrix SaskWatch Research® panel (http://saskwatch.ca .)
Respondent compensation	Respondents were provided panel points as an incentive to complete the survey.
Type of sample	Non-probability
Start and end dates of data collection	September 16 – September 24, 2025
Margin of sampling error for total sample	Since the research is conducted online, it is considered to be a non-probability proportion sample; therefore, margins of error are not applicable. However, the margin of error can be estimated to be ±3.5 percentage points.
Are the data weighted?	No. Region, age and gender quotas were set to match the 2021 Canadian census.
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Happy Holidays
from insightrix