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## Membership

### CTA SMART HOME RESEARCH BUNDLE

This bundle brings together CTA research to help smart home and connected technology companies understand **Gen Z technology behavior** and how **creators influence product discovery and engagement**.

Built from CTA research used year-round to guide the consumer technology ecosystem, these insights support informed decision-making for 2026.



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# Membership

## How to Use This Research Bundle

This bundle combines two complementary CTA reports:

- Exploring Technology Preferences Among Gen Z
- Exploring the Creator Economy: How Creators Earn, Engage, and Evolve

Together, these reports provide a connected view of **who Gen Z consumers are, how they adopt technology, and how creator-driven influence shapes awareness, trust, and purchasing decisions in the smart home market.**

Use this research to:

- Understand Gen Z technology ownership, usage, and purchase considerations
- Evaluate the role of creators and product influencers in discovery and engagement
- Inform product positioning, messaging, and go-to-market planning
- Support strategic planning and investment decisions for 2026

This bundle is designed for product, marketing, and growth teams seeking data-driven insight to guide smart home strategy.

Learn more about CTA membership at [CTA.tech/membership](https://cta.tech/membership).

# Exploring Technology Preferences Among Gen Z

The Authoritative Source for Consumer Technology Market Research

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## About Consumer Technology Association:

As North America's largest technology trade association, CTA® is the tech sector. Our members are the world's leading innovators — from startups to global brands — helping support more than 18 million American jobs. CTA owns and produces CES® — the most influential tech event in the world. Find us at [CTA.tech](https://cta.tech). Follow us [@CTAtech](https://twitter.com/CTAtech).

## About CES:

CES® is the most influential tech event in the world — the proving ground for breakthrough technologies and global innovators. This is where the world's biggest brands do business and meet new partners, and the sharpest innovators hit the stage. Owned and produced by the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)®, CES features every aspect of the tech sector. CES 2024 will take place on Jan. 9-12, 2024. Learn more at [CES.tech](https://ces.tech) and follow CES on [social](#).

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# Methodology and Research Objectives

CTA's *Exploring Technology Preferences Among Gen Z* was administered as an online survey among 2202 U.S. adults (ages 18-plus) and children (11 to 17, recruited via their parents) from October 4 through 18, 2023. The margin of sampling error at 95% confidence for aggregate results is +/-2%. Sampling error is larger for subgroups of the data. As with any survey, sampling error is only one source of possible error. Precautionary steps were taken in all phases of the survey design and the collection and processing of the data to minimize its influence because non-sampling errors cannot be accurately calculated.

CTA designed this study in its entirety and is responsible for all content contained in this report. CTA is a member of the Insights Association and adheres to the research and analysis guidelines set forth in the Insights Association Code of Standards and Ethics.

This study was conducted among a U.S. audience with the following objectives:

## Objective 1

To understand the technology behaviors and preferences of the U.S. Gen Z population

## Objective 2

To confirm (or refute) the hypothesis that Gen Z has different behaviors and preferences around technology compared to other generational cohorts

For more information about methodology, please see the [appendix](#)



# Background: The Generational Shift

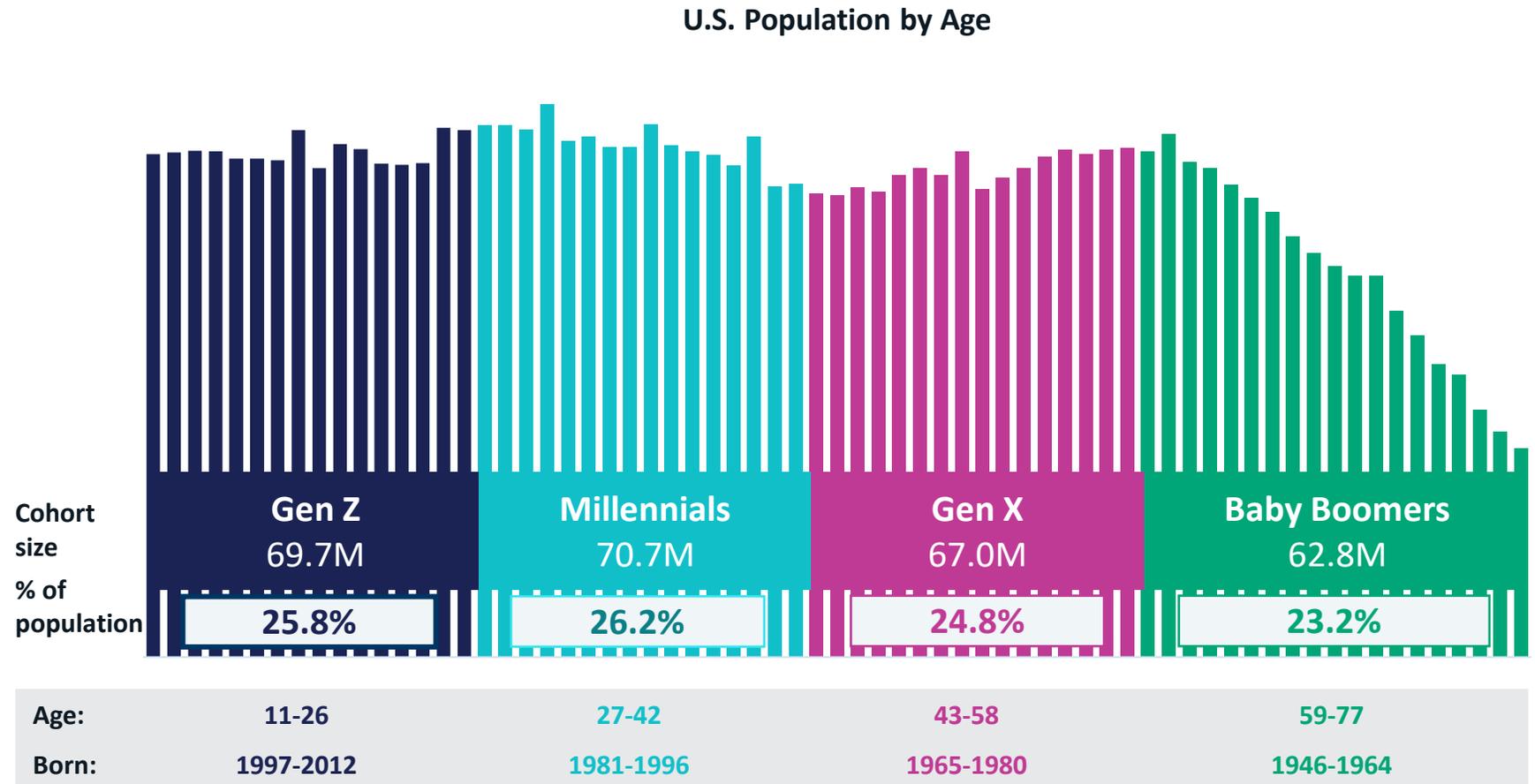


# Gen Z is a sizable group

It's important to understand the Gen Z audience — the future generation of technology decision makers.

The Gen Z population nearly matches that of Millennials and exceeds Gen X and Baby Boomers in size.

While Gen Z is currently aged 11 to 26, in the next 10 years, most will be moving through critical life stages: childhood into adulthood, students into the workforce and becoming their own household decision makers.



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates Public Use Microdata Sample 2021; <https://data.census.gov/mdat/#/>

# Key Shifts in Generational Research

As generational research evolves, so do its best practices. In May 2023, think tank Pew Research Center released new practices on how generational cohort research should be conducted and explored.<sup>1</sup> While research and strategies designed using cohorts can be informative in understanding age-related findings among consumers, there can also be drawbacks. Thus, generational research such as CTA's *Exploring Technology Preferences Among Gen Z* should be used with caution.

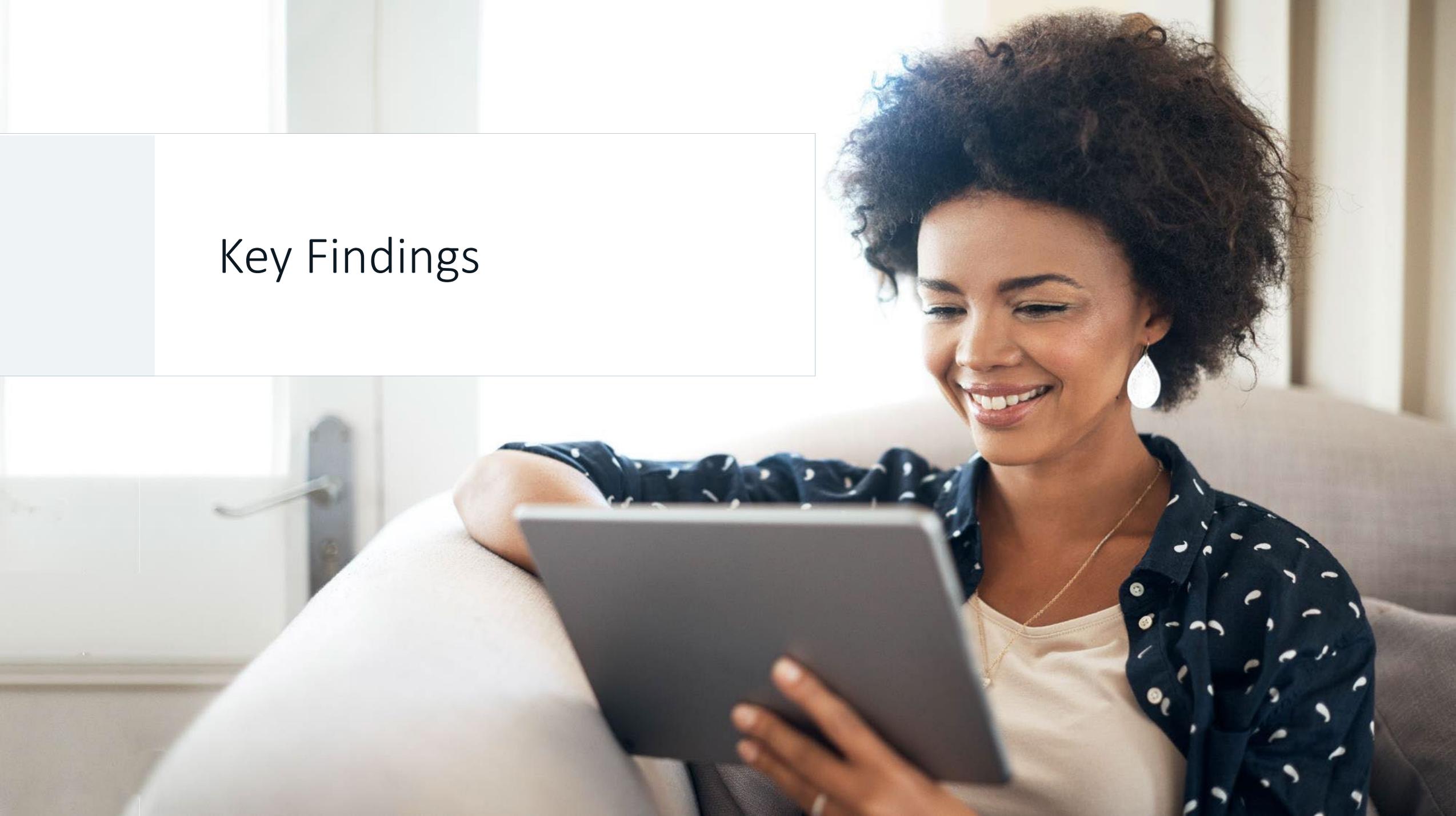
According to Pew Research Center, here are cautions that should be kept in mind when generations are referenced<sup>2</sup>:

- **Generational labels can be stereotypes and oversimplifications.** Not all Gen Zers, Millennials, Gen Xers or Boomers are the same. Shared experiences do not define individuality.
- **These labels can also prioritize differences, not similarities.** Many research papers and analyses focus on differences. While it's important to understand why differences may appear, we should also talk about similarities to ensure false narratives are not created.
- **People change over time.** The Millennials of today are not the Millennials we studied deeply a decade ago. They have grown up, married, had children, etc. Gen Zers will also evolve as they age in their career and adulthood.

While caution should be used when interpreting results, the best research practices have been utilized while designing this study, and only statistically significant opportunities (and similarities) are noted within the report.

<sup>1</sup> [Pew Research Center 2023](#); <sup>2</sup> [Pew Research Center 2023](#)

# Key Findings



# Key Findings



## DIFFERENT MINDSETS

- Gen Z approaches technology differently from older generations
- For Gen Z, technology is more **essential** to their daily lives, it makes them **feel good**, and it's an **outlet for self-expression**.
- Gen Z **takes pride** in being **early adopters**, which they are more likely to be than all other cohorts.



## TECH BEHAVIORS

- Gen Zers are **more often sharing tech products** with others in their household.
- Gen Zers are more likely (along with Millennials) to **use their products for multiple purposes** (both personal *and* for work or school).
- Gen Zers anticipate **faster replacement cycles** and report they are **more likely to splurge** on future tech purchases.



## AWARENESS & MOTIVATIONS

- **Social media** plays a big role in learning about new products for Gen Z.
- **Quality, durability, price and features** are most impactful for influencing purchase decisions among Gen Zers, as well as other generations.



## TECH PRODUCTS OVERVIEW

- **Smartphones and gaming consoles** are the top products Gen Zers want to buy in the next year.
- **Earbuds and headphones** fall next on the list of desired products to buy, **wireless** being more appealing than wired for both.



## THOUGHT STARTER

- Appeal to Gen Zers through connection with their identity.
- Consider how to optimize tech products for different profiles (when shared with others in the household) or for multi-purpose use (personal and work/school).
- Leverage social media to drive awareness and interest, highlighting key aspects (quality, durability, price and features) to help drive purchase behavior.

# Key Findings



## VIDEO PRODUCTS

- Gen Z differs from other cohorts when it comes to **TV viewing habits** — spending less time in front of their sets and preferring them less for a range of viewing occasions.



## AUDIO PRODUCTS

- **Wireless earbuds** are popular among Gen Z — **current usage is high** and purchase intent is high within the next year.
- **Bluetooth or wireless headphones** and **smart speakers** are other top audio products that Gen Zers want to buy in the next year (behind wireless earbuds).



## CONTENT

- Gen Z prefers **smartphones or TV** for watching most types of content; smartphones are the clear winner for short-form or lower quality content moments.
- A **wide variety of high-quality content**, and a platform that's **easy to use**, are top priorities when signing up for a new subscription streaming service.
- **Video on demand subscriptions** are most popular overall; **Spotify** is the most popular audio platform, and **PlayStation** and **Xbox** are top for gaming.



## THOUGHT STARTER

- Smartphones are key — consider compatibility with apps and other connected devices.
- Also consider optimizing sound for wireless earbuds (and other headphones).
- If promoting a subscription service, highlight the content offerings and the favorable user experience (UX) of the platform.

# General Technology Perceptions & Behaviors



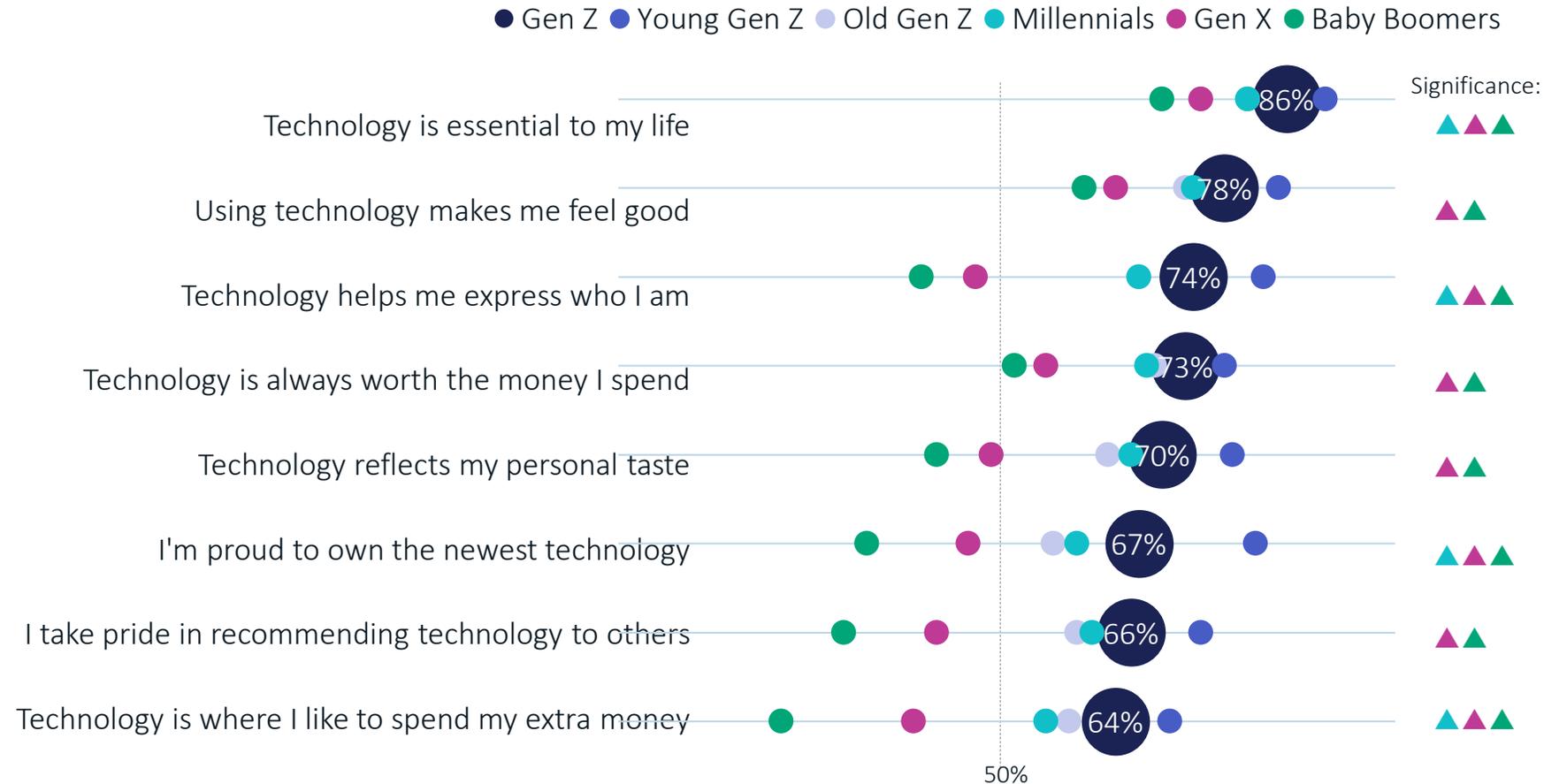
*Technology is essential for Gen Z — they're likely to be early adopters, driven by pride in owning the latest technology and in making recommendations to others.*



# Technology is essential for Gen Z

- Gen Z report greater agreement with statements on tech's value than other cohorts do, particularly Baby Boomers.
- Gen Z are more likely to find technology "essential to [their] life" than other cohorts are.
- Gen Z are also more likely to agree with statements related to identity (tech expressing who they are + pride in ownership).

Technology Values (% Agree)

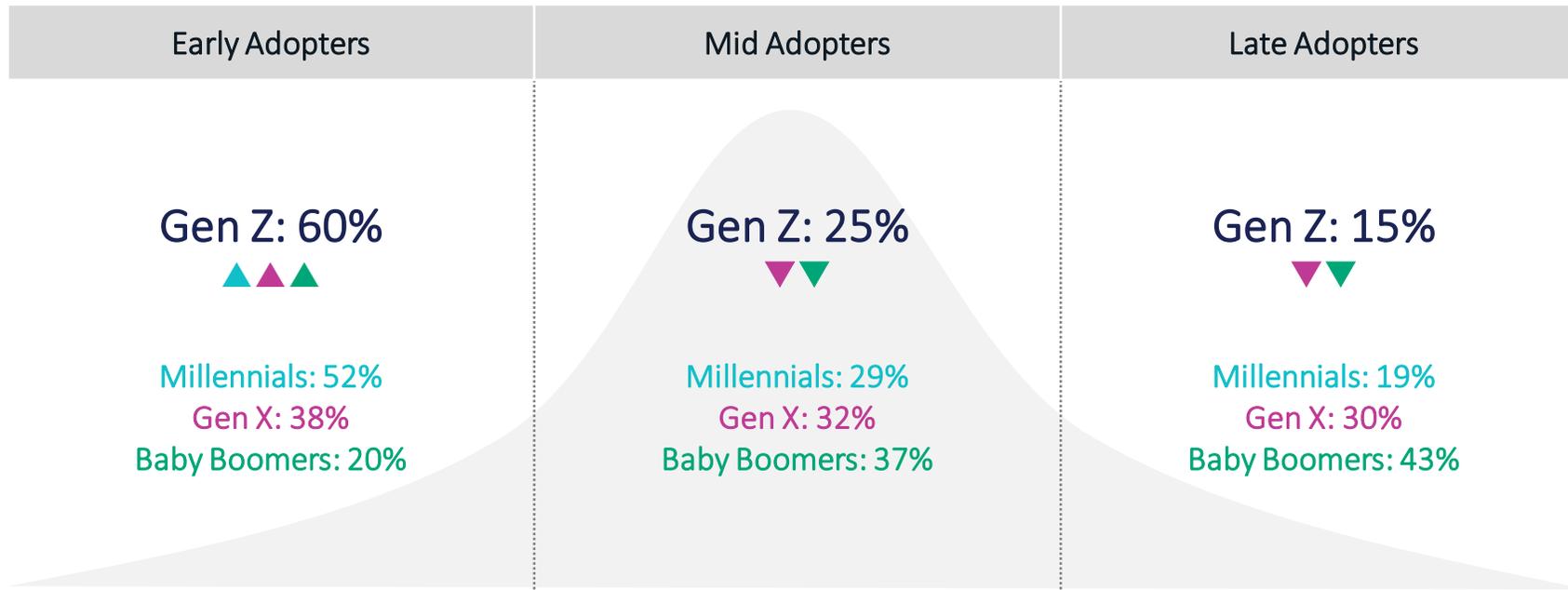


*Younger Gen Z are even more likely to agree with these value statements on what tech can provide.*

Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998), Younger Gen Z (n=498), Older Gen Z (n=500), Millennials (n=401), Gen X (n=401), Baby Boomers (n=402) Q: Agree (% rated 4-5 on a scale of 1-5) - How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following? ▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI; ▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

# Gen Z are also more likely to be early adopters of new technology than their older counterparts

Q. Which of the following best describe your technology purchasing habits?



# Pride (self-esteem, self-image, etc.) plays a bigger part of early adoption for Gen Z

- Pride in owning the latest technology is the top driver of early adoption for all cohorts.
- Gen Z (and, to a lesser extent, Millennials) also place more emphasis on pride in recommending tech to others.
- Getting value from technology (where I like to spend, always worth what I spend) is also a driver for Gen Z.

## Which benefits drive early adoption?

*Interpretation:* Agreeing with “I’m proud to own the newest technology” is the top predictor of early adoption for all cohorts. Scores are calibrated such that this predictor gets a score of 100 and all others within each cohort are scaled 0-100 relative to that (i.e., answer option with a score of 50 is half as strong).

### Importance in Driving Early Adoption

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers
<b>I'm proud to own the newest technology</b>	<b>100</b>	100	100	100
<b>I take pride in recommending technology to others</b>	<b>79</b>	61	42	45
Technology is where I like to spend my extra money	<b>60</b>	45	84	60
Technology is always worth the money I spend	<b>59</b>	24	23	35
Technology reflects my personal taste	<b>39</b>	32	32	34
Technology helps me express who I am	<b>35</b>	43	22	29
Technology is essential to my life	<b>30</b>	24	17	24
Using technology makes me feel good	<b>28</b>	32	16	36



Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998), Millennials (n=401), Gen X (n=401), Baby Boomers (n=402); Q: Which of the following best describes your technology purchasing habits?; Q: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following? NOTE: Importance scores derived from gradient boost modeling (GBM) analysis.

*Gen Z (and Millennials) have access to more tech products and tend to spend more time with them, but Gen Z (especially Younger Gen Z) are more likely to share products with others in their household.*



# Gen Zers' positive perceptions align with the variety of technology products owned

Gen Z and Millennials are similar in terms of the number of products in their households and time spent on devices; Gen X and Baby Boomers tend to have and use fewer products.

Average...	 Number of Products in Household <i>(out of 32)</i>	 Number of Products Used Daily	 Hours Spent on Products in a Typical Day
Gen Z	13 	6 	12 
Millennials	12	6	12
Gen X	10	4	10
Baby Boomers	8	4	9

*Desktops and TVs are owned & used more by older cohorts.*

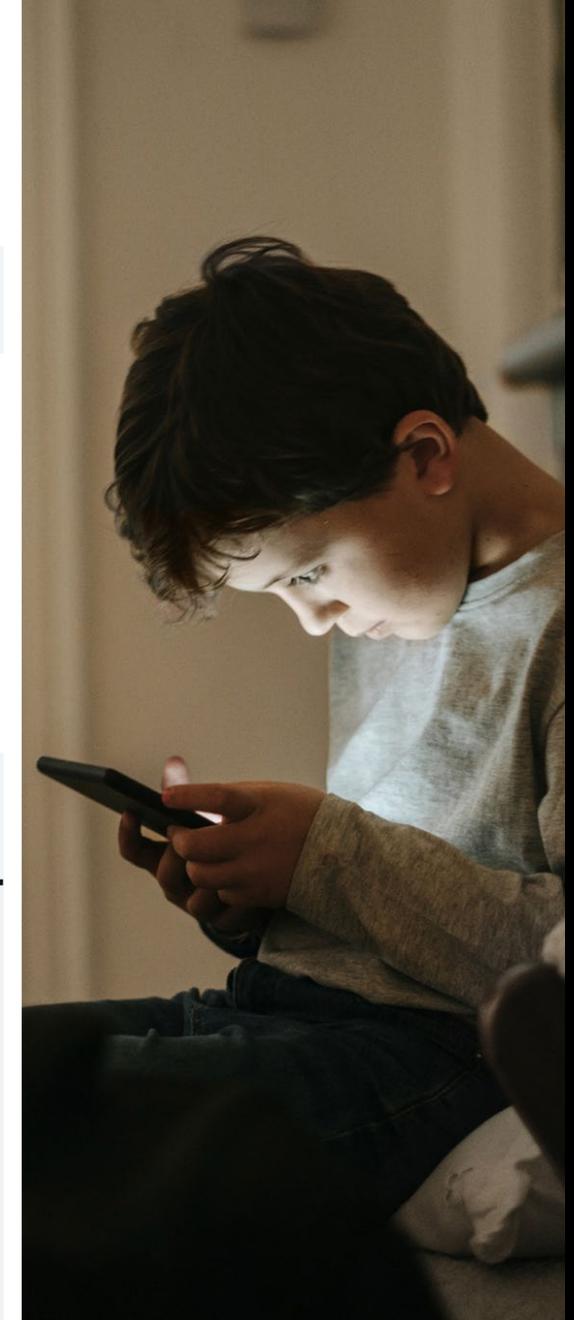
Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998), Millennials (n=401), Gen X (n=401), Baby Boomers (n=402); Q: Which of the following products are currently in your home? Q: Which best describes how often you use each of the following? Q: About how much time do you spend using each device in a "typical" day? ▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI; ▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

*Many Gen Z have smartphones, but regardless of current ownership, they are most interested in purchasing a smartphone in the next year.*



# Gen Z - in line with their preferences — are on their smartphones daily

Among All Gen Z....	NET: Smartphone	Android smartphone	iOS smartphone
<b>IN HOUSEHOLD</b> <i>% with product in household</i>	97% ▲	45% ▼▼▲	74% ▲▲▲
<b>+ OWNERSHIP</b> <i>% who own product in household &amp; product is theirs personally (not shared)</i>	94%	37% ▼▼▲	68% ▲▲▲
<b>++ USE DAILY</b> <i>% who own product in household &amp; product is theirs personally (not shared) &amp; use the product at least daily</i>	89%	33% ▼▼▲	65% ▲▲▲
<b>Number of tech products Gen Z households own and use daily (# millions)</b>	62.1M	23.1M	45.3M
<i>Among Gen Z users...</i>			
<b>MULTI-PURPOSE</b> <i>% who use product for both work/ homework &amp; personal reasons (for products used at least a few times/mo)</i>	42% ▲▲	36% ▲	42% ▲
<b>HOURS SPENT</b> <i>% who spend more than 3 hours on product in a typical day (for product used daily)</i>	50% ▲▲	43% ▲	52% ▲▲
<b>YEARS OWNED</b> <i>Avg. number of years product has been owned (for personal product)</i>	2.2 ▼	2.0 ▼	1.9 ▼▼



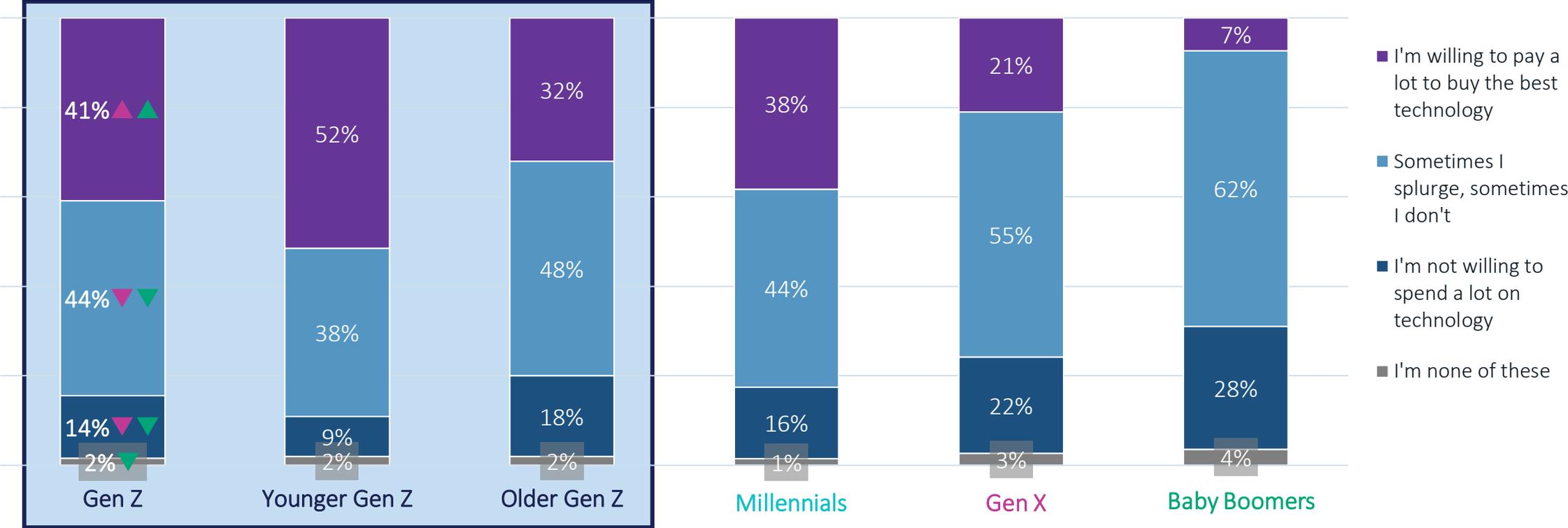
*Many Gen Z report they are willing to pay (more) for the best technology, but an equal share say it depends (sometimes they splurge; sometimes they don't).*



# Gen Z stand out on their willingness to splurge when it comes to buying tech

Though Gen Z — more notably, Younger Gen Z — are more likely to report they splurge on/pay more for tech products, a notable portion across cohorts say sometimes they splurge and sometimes they don't.

Perception on Tech Spend

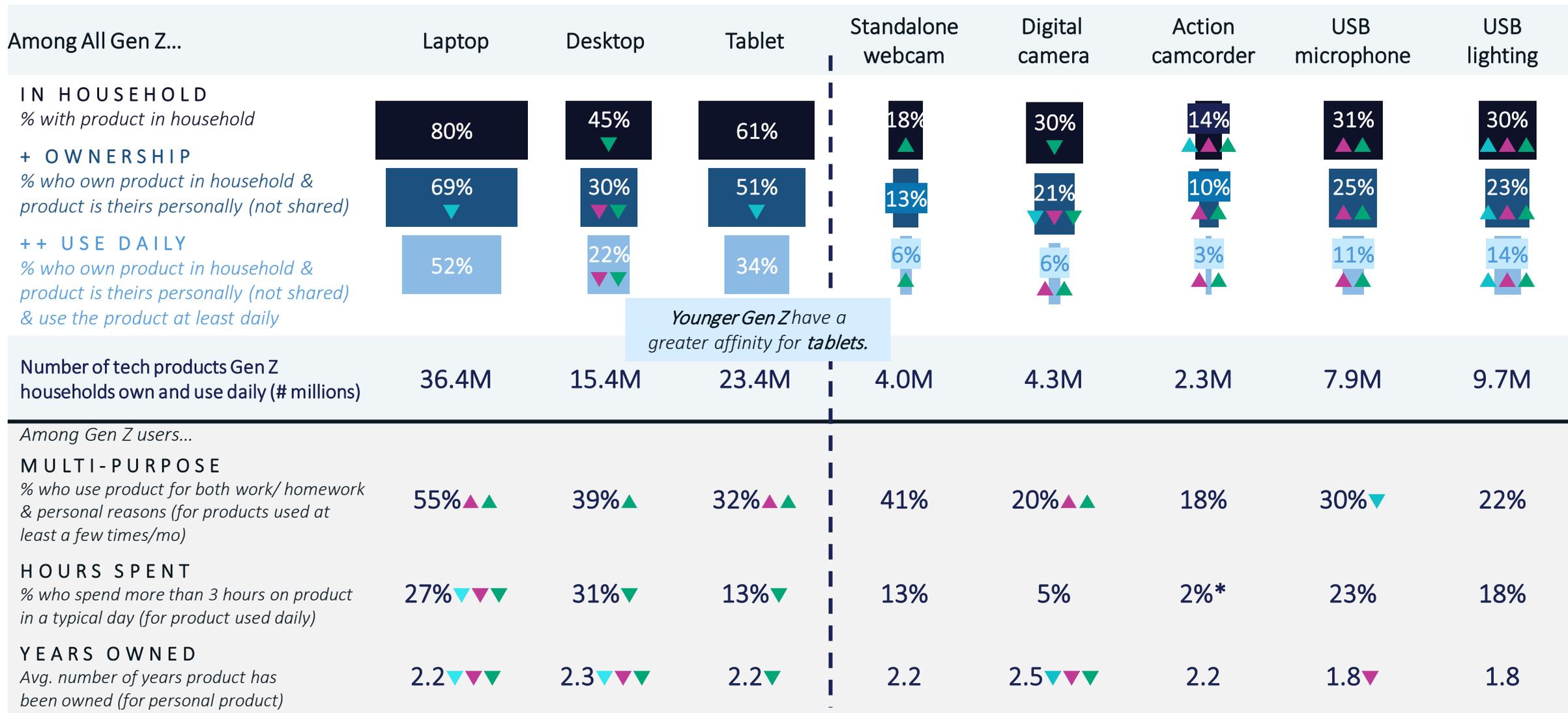


Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998), Younger Gen Z (n=498), Older Gen Z (n=500), Millennials (n=401), Gen X (n=401), Baby Boomers (n=402); Q: When it comes to technology... ▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI. ▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

*Around half of Gen Z report using a laptop daily for around two hours, followed by tablets. However, Gen Z and Millennials have similar tech product preferences — laptops for email or work/homework and smartphones for other tasks, such as banking, shopping and socializing.*



# Gen Z are less likely to own and use desktops, but more likely to own and use cameras and webcams



Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998). Projections based on an estimated 69.7 million Gen Z in the U.S., according to U.S. census data. \*Indicates low sample size (n<50), interpret with caution. ▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI; ▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

# Gen Z and Millennials have similar tech preferences, which differ depending on the task

Gen Z and Millennials prefer laptops for things that are likely work- or school-related (writing emails, doing work/homework) and smartphones for other types of tasks.

Preferred devices when...	 Writing an email		 Doing work or homework		 Online shopping		 Online banking*		 Communicating with friends		 Reading (books, news, etc.)	
Gen Z	 Laptop (51%▲▲)		 Laptop (67%▲▲▲)		 Smartphone (52%▲▲)		 Smartphone (73%▲▲)		 Smartphone (83%▲)		 Tablet (36%▲)	 Smartphone (32%▲▲)
Millennials	Laptop (47%)	Smartphone (36%)	Laptop (58%)		Smartphone (57%)		Smartphone (68%)		Smartphone (83%)		Tablet (37%)	Smartphone (28%)
Gen X	Laptop (44%)	Smartphone (28%)	Laptop (50%)		Smartphone (37%)	Laptop (32%)	Smartphone (48%)	Laptop (24%)	Smartphone (80%)		Tablet (34%)	Smartphone (22%)
Baby Boomers	Laptop (43%)	Desktop (35%)	Laptop (36%)	Desktop (29%)	Laptop (36%)	Desktop (34%)	Desktop (33%)	Laptop (32%)	Smartphone (68%)		Tablet (29%)	Other (28%)

Blue shading indicates tasks where laptops are preferred; Light blue shading indicates smartphone preferred.

Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998), Millennials (n=401), Gen X (n=401), Baby Boomers (n=402); Q: Which product do you most prefer to use when doing the following? Showing top device only if >50%, otherwise showing top two devices. \*Item asked of those 18+ only. ▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI; ▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

# Gen Z tend to perform both fun and functional tasks on their smartphones

This is similar to Millennials and Gen X. Baby Boomers, on the other hand, do less on their smartphones and more on computers.

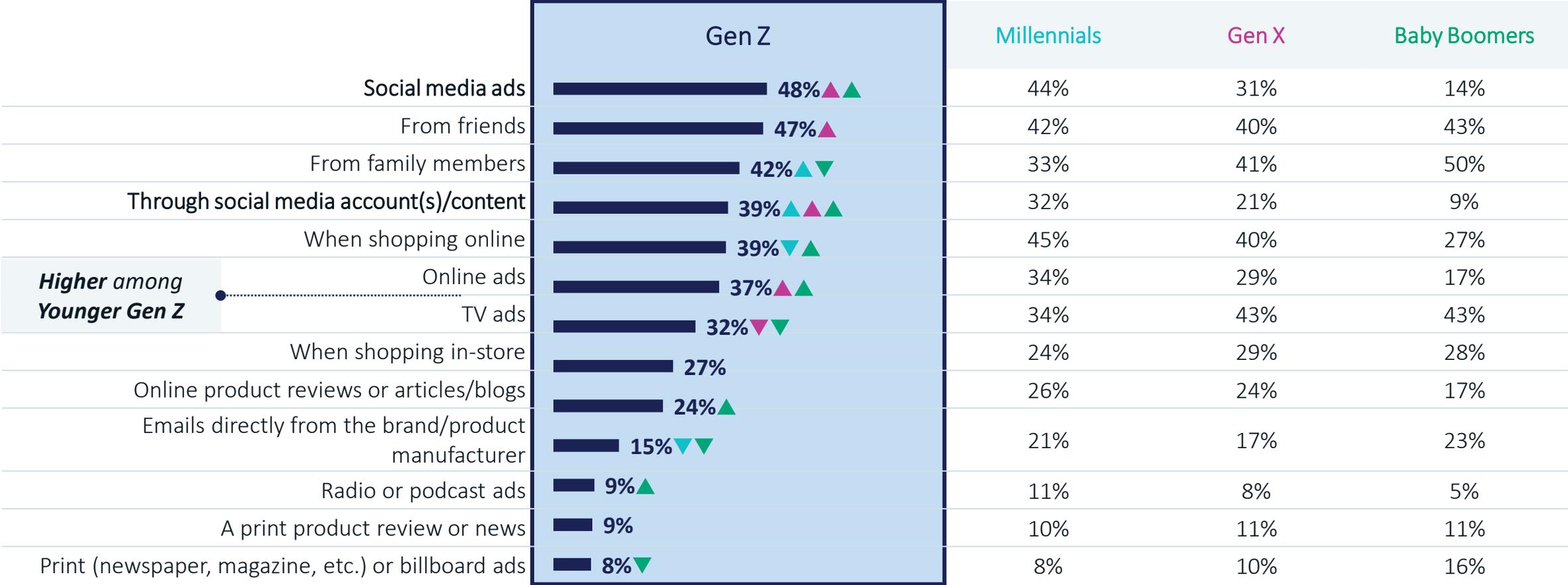
Things typically watched/done on...	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers
Smartphones	Short-form content (15 sec – 5 min) Free content (social media) Online shopping Online banking* Communicating with friends	Short-form content (15 sec – 5 min) Free content (social media) Online shopping Online banking* Communicating with friends	Short-form content (15 sec – 5 min) Free content (social media) Online shopping Online banking* Communicating with friends	Communicating with friends
Computers	Email (laptop) Homework/work (laptop)	Email (laptop) Homework/work (laptop)	Email (laptop) Homework/work (laptop) Online shopping (laptop)	Short-form content (15 sec – 5 min) Free content (social media) Email (laptop/desktop) Homework/work (laptop/desktop) Online shopping Online banking
TVs	Paid content (Netflix, cable) Live content (sports, news) Medium- or long-form content (30 min+) Higher quality content (HD, Ultra HD)		Same as Gen Z	
Tablets	Reading		Same as Gen Z	

*Social media — ads in particular — are top channels for discovering new products for Gen Z (and Millennials).*



# Social media plays a bigger role for Gen Z (and Millennials) in discovering new products

Sources of Hearing about New Tech



**Higher among Younger Gen Z**

Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998), Millennials (n=401), Gen X (n=401), Baby Boomers (n=402); Q: How do you typically first hear about new tech products/devices? For this question, please consider social media (e.g., TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat) to be separate from general "online" sources. ▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI.  
 ▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

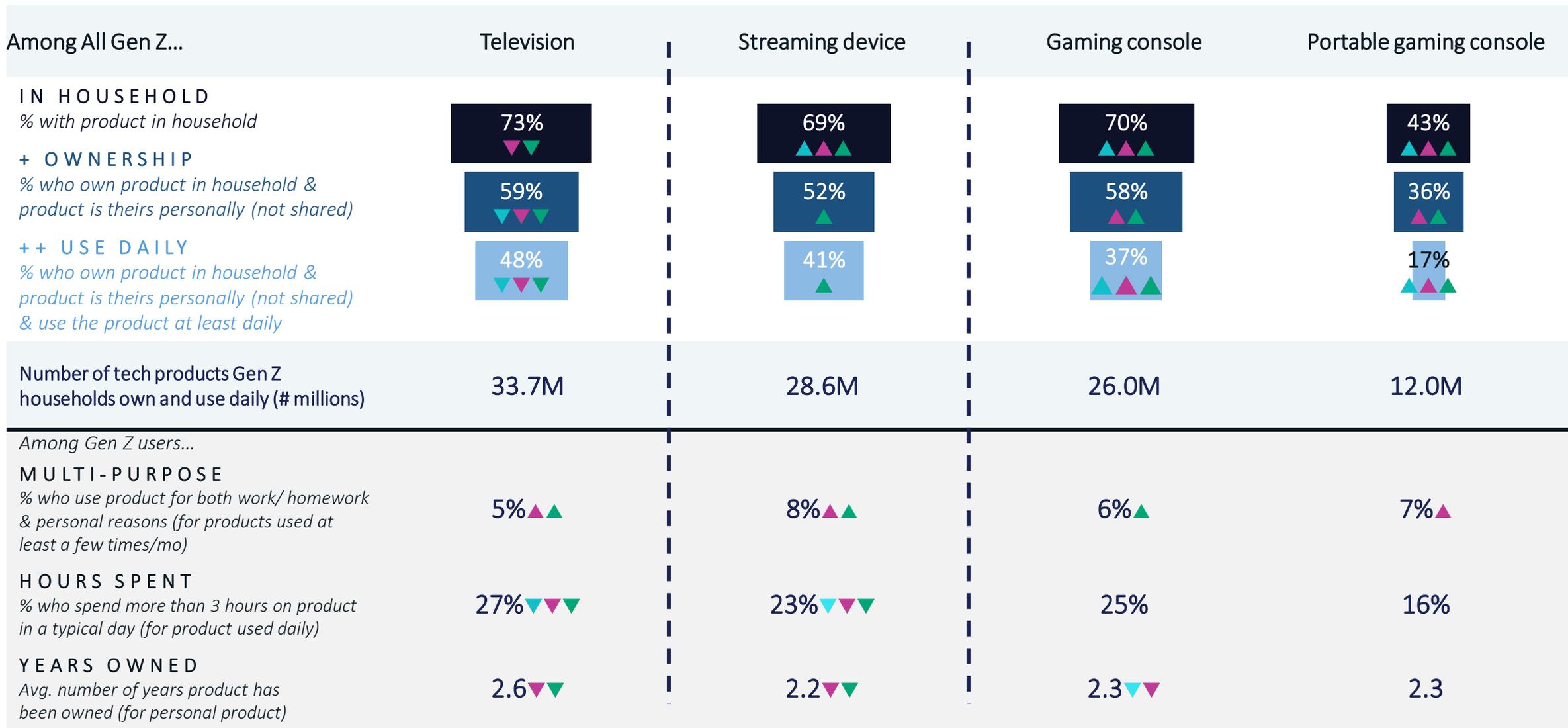
# Video Deep Dive



*Gen Z differs from other cohorts when it comes to TV viewing habits — spending less time in front of their sets and preferring them less for a range of viewing occasions.*



# Gen Z is using TVs less than other cohorts, but is more likely to own and use gaming products



*Quality, price and durability are the top three most important factors for all generations when it comes to buying new video products.*



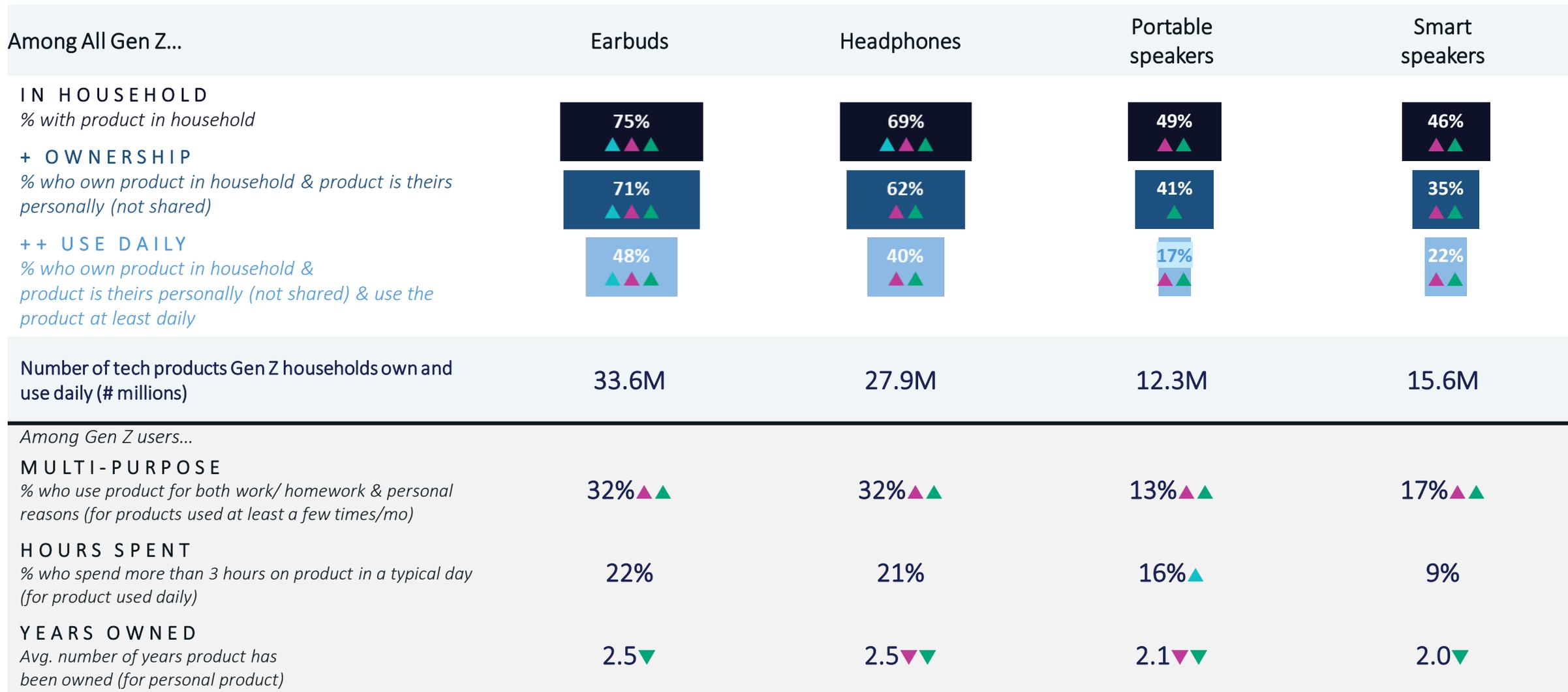
# Audio Deep Dive



*Wireless earbuds are popular with Gen Z — current usage is high, and they're the top audio product to purchase or refresh in the next year.*



# Earbuds and headphones are important audio products for Gen Z — many have and use them daily

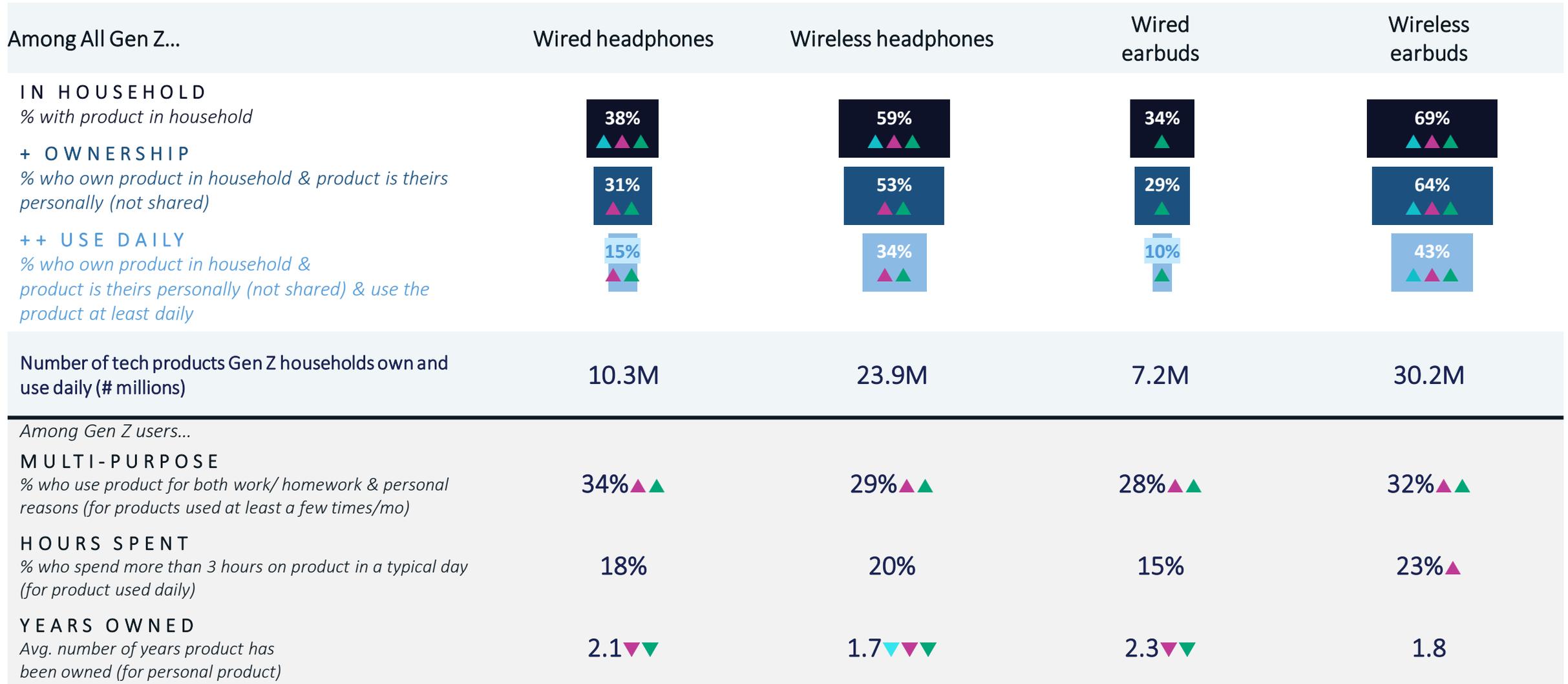


Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998). Projections based on an estimated 69.7 million Gen Z in the U.S., according to U.S. census data.

▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI;

▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

# Wireless earbuds are an important audio product for Gen Z — many have them and use them daily

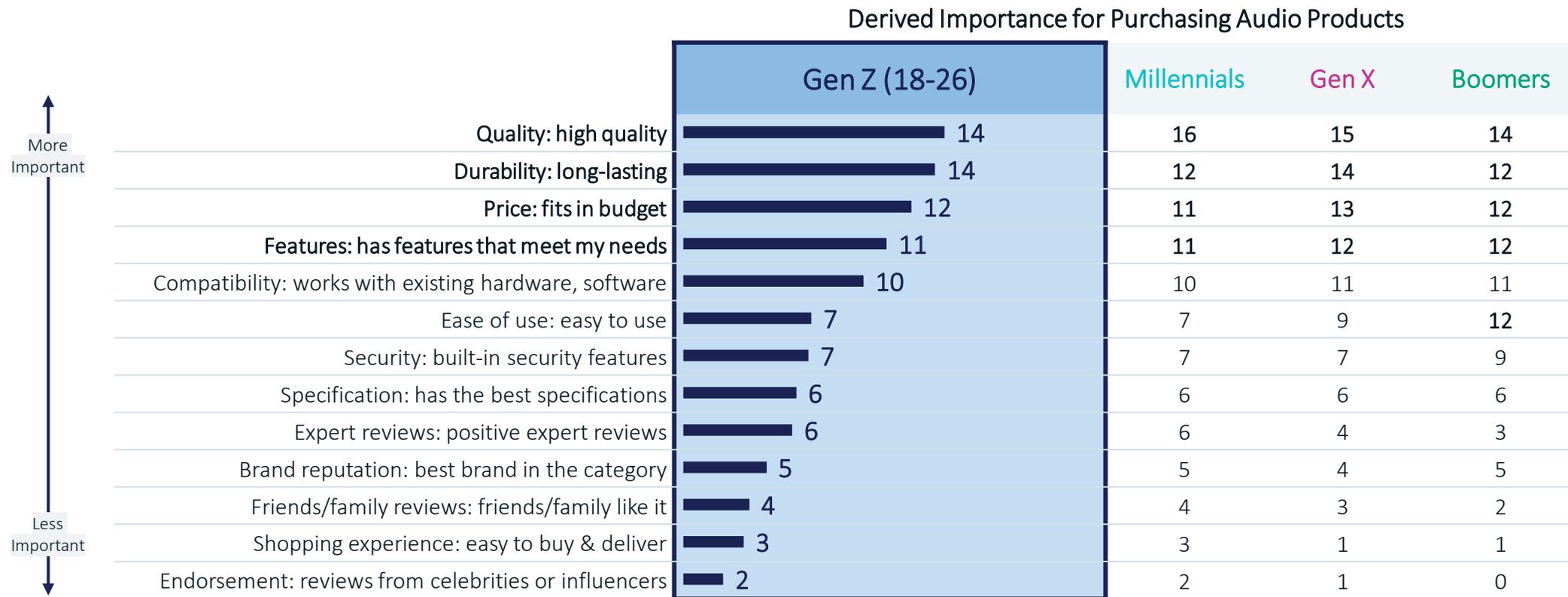


*Quality, durability, price and features are the most important factors across cohorts when it comes to buying new audio products.*



# Motivations for buying new audio products are similar – Quality, Durability, and Price – across cohorts

Interpretation: Importance scores derived using MaxDiff analysis. Scores (within age cohorts) sum to 100, with 13 attributes. The average score is ~8; therefore, attributes >8 have above-average importance and <8 lower than average importance.



*Younger Gen Z (11-17) were asked the same question in a different format, but identified the same top items (features being #2 for them)*

# Content Deep Dive

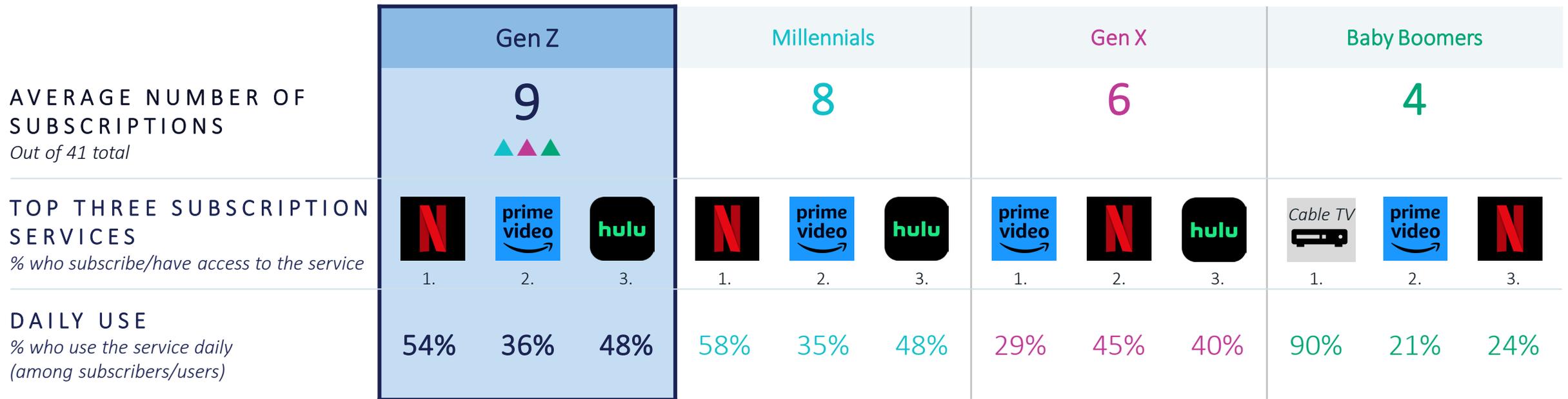


*Gen Z tends to have more subscriptions than Gen X and Baby Boomers; streaming services are popular across generations.*



# As with tech products, Gen Z tend to have access to a wider variety of subscription services

Streaming video service subscriptions are most popular across generations (vs. other categories of subscription types), though Baby Boomers are much more into cable than other generations.



*Though not a top-three subscription for any cohort, YouTube TV generates a lot of daily use for those who do subscribe (66% who subscribe/have access use daily).*

Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998), Millennials (n=401), Gen X (n=401), Baby Boomers (n=402); Q: Now, we'd like to ask you about streaming and other subscription services you may use. Which of the following do you currently subscribe to/have access to? Select all that apply. Base: Have access to each service (base sizes vary); Q: Which best describes how often you use each of the following? (Base: Subscribe/access to service, n sizes vary)

# Among Gen Z, Spotify is the most popular audio platform and PlayStation & Xbox are top for gaming

Gen Z % Who Subscribe/Have Access To Each Platform

Streaming Platforms		Audio Platforms		Gaming Platforms		TV Platforms	
Netflix	77%▲▲	Spotify	56%▲▲▲	PlayStation Plus	33%▲▲▲	Cable TV	43%▼
Amazon Prime Video	63%▲	Apple Music	34%▲▲▲	Xbox Game Pass	32%▲▲▲	Other TV platform	14%
Hulu	63%▲▲▲	YouTube Music	34%▲▲	Nintendo Switch Online	27%▲▲▲	Antennae broadcast TV	12%▼▼
Disney+	61%▲▲▲	Amazon Music Unlimited	19%▲▲	Google Play Pass	13%▲▲		
Peacock	34%▲	SiriusXM	14%▼▼	EA Play	12%▲▲▲	Fitness Platforms	
Paramount Plus	32%▲	Audible	10%▲▲	Apple Arcade	12%▲▲	Apple Fitness	25%▲▲▲
Max	29%▲▲	Calm	5%▲▲	Amazon Luna/Prime Gaming	8%▲▲	Peloton	12%▲▲
YouTube TV	28%▲▲			Ubisoft+	8%▲▲		
Tubi	25%▲						
Apple TV+	24%▲▲						
ESPN+	21%▲▲						
Showtime	11%▲▲						
FuboTV	5%▲						
Plex	5%▲						

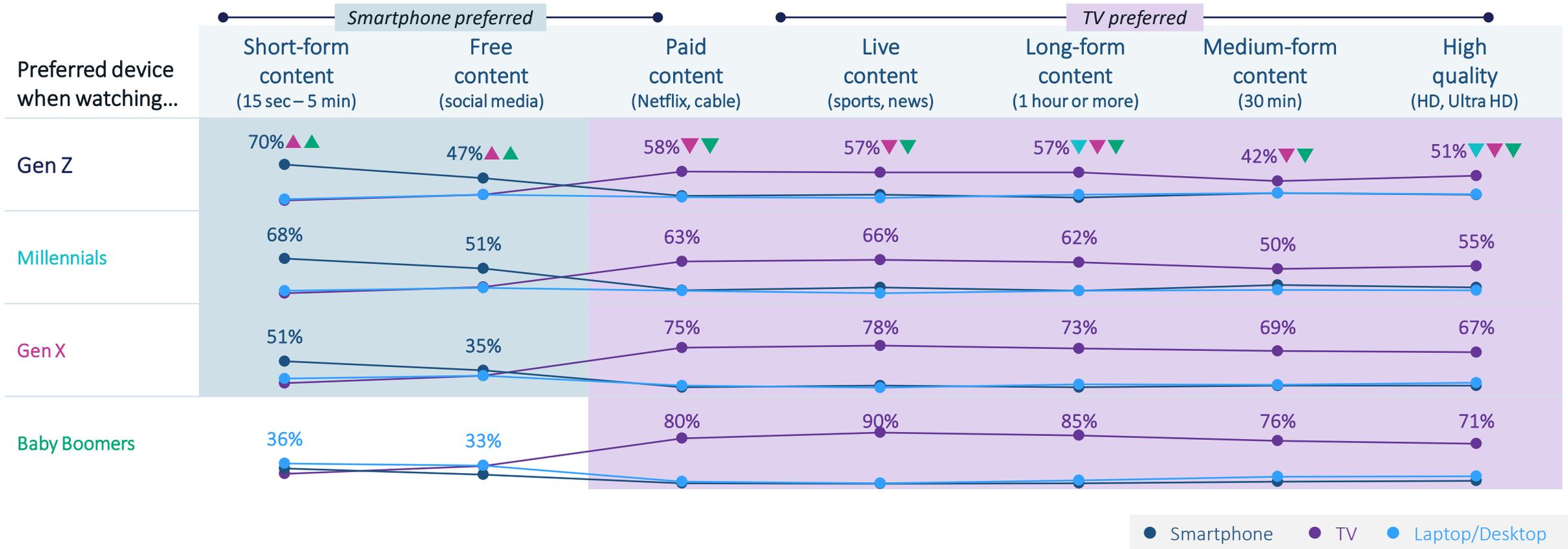
Base: U.S. Gen Z (n=998); Q: Now, we'd like to ask you about streaming and other subscription services you may use. Which of the following do you currently subscribe to/have access to? Select all that apply. Showing subscriptions selected 5%+. Green shading indicates top three, among categories with more than three platforms shown. ▲/▼ indicates Gen Z is significantly higher/lower than the corresponding age cohort at 95% CI; ▲/▼ Millennial; ▲/▼ Gen X; ▲/▼ Boomer

*Gen Z prefers smartphones or TV for watching most types of content, although TV preference is softer than for other generations.*



# Gen Z (and Millennials/Gen X) prefer smartphones or TV for watching most types of content

While TV is the most preferred tech product for Gen Z across several content types, it stands out less strongly; Baby Boomers, in line with their current ownership and usage, are more likely to use computers and TVs.

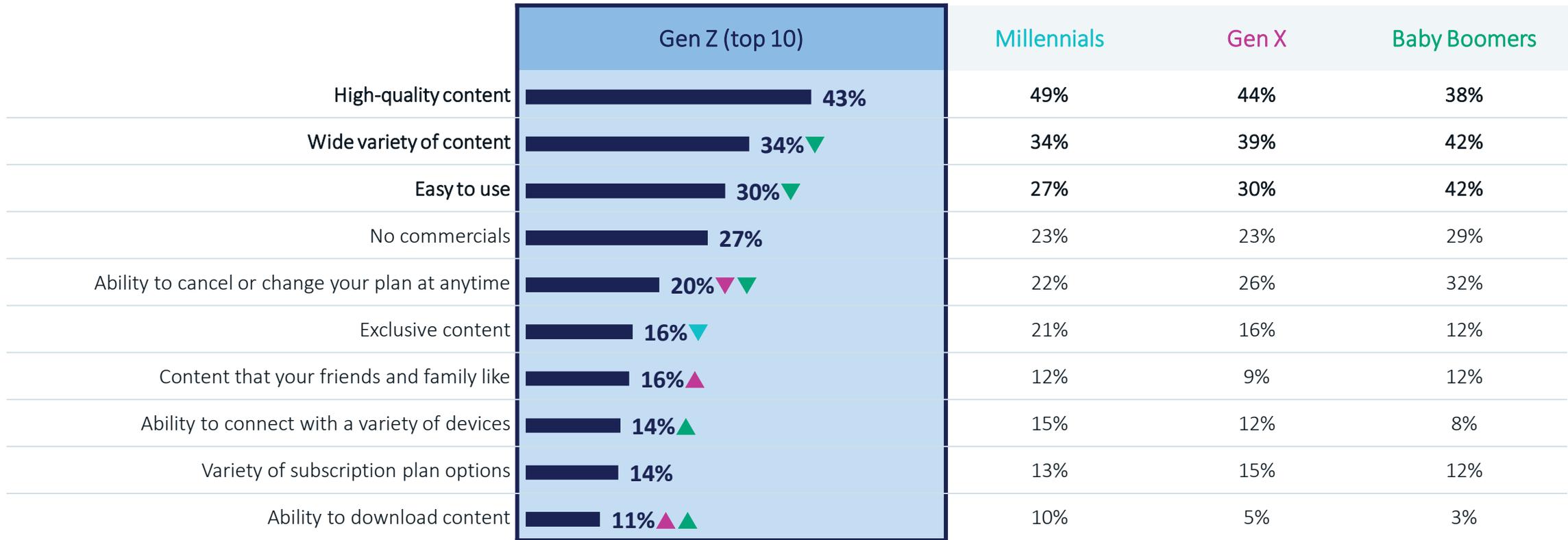


*Consumers want a wide variety of high-quality content when they sign up for a new streaming service, as well as an easy-to-use platform UX.*



# A wide variety of high-quality content and a platform that's easy to use are top priorities across cohorts

Most Important Factors When Signing Up For a New Streaming Subscription (*pick your top three*)  
Showing top 10 out of 18



# Closing Thoughts



# In Sum...



- Gen Z represents substantial buying power in the coming years as they transition through several critical life stages.
- This research shows how different they are in their technology ownership, usage, and purchase considerations from older cohorts like Gen X and Boomers.
- Gen Z has some similarities to Millennials in technology ownership, usage, and purchase consideration, while standing out in a few specific areas:

## Gen Z & Millennial Similarities:

- **Product preferences and usage**
- **Willingness to splurge** on future tech purchases
- **Top drivers** for purchasing audio products, as well as signing up for new subscriptions
- **Subscription usage**

## Gen Z & Millennial Differences:

- Gen Z are even more likely consider themselves **early adopters**
- Gen Z are more likely to **share products** with others in their household (particularly Younger Gen Z)
- Gen Z tend to have **more subscriptions** on average, particularly for **gaming** platforms

- It will be important to keep a pulse on these tech trends over time as Gen Z continue to evolve into adulthood.

# Appendix



# Background & Methodology

## Research Objectives:

- To understand the technology behaviors and preferences of the U.S. Gen Z population:
  - Understand the Gen Z tech landscape and how to market to/reach Gen Z
- Specifically:
  - Technology product ownership, usage and preferences across multiple categories — video, audio, mobile, accessories:
    - What do they own? Use? Prefer? Why?
  - Purchase intent in next 12 months and drivers:
    - What features/benefits drive purchases — cost, personalization?
  - Service subscribers and usage

## Methodology

- **Audience:** 2202 total respondents who have at least some influence on tech decisions in their household:
  - Gen Z ages 11-17 n=498
  - Gen Z ages 18-26 n=500
  - Millennials ages 27-34 n=200
  - Millennials ages 35-42 n=201
  - Gen X ages 43-50 n=201
  - Gen X ages 51-58 n=200
  - Baby Boomers ages 59-67 n=202
  - Baby Boomers ages 68-77 n=200
- **Markets:** U.S. only
- **Dates:** Administered online October 4 to 18, 2023
- **Data:** Click balanced to age, gender, income, region (18+)

# Methodology (Notes Throughout the Report)

Generations are defined by the following age breaks and using these colors:

GENERATIONAL COHORTS	
<b>Gen Z (born 1997-2012)</b>	
• Younger Gen Z: Age 11-17	• Older Gen Z: Age 18-26
<b>Millennials (born 1981-1996)</b>	
• Younger Millennials: Age 27-34	• Older Millennials: Age 35-42
<b>Gen X (born 1965-1980)</b>	
• Younger Gen X: Age 43-50	• Older Gen X: Age 51-58
<b>Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964)</b>	
• Younger Boomers: Age 59-67	• Older Boomers: Age 68-77

Statistical significance testing is included throughout the report.

- **Up** arrows indicate **Gen Z** is significantly **higher** than the corresponding age cohort at a 95% confidence interval (CI):
  - ▲ Gen Z is significantly *higher* than **Millennials**
  - ▲ Significantly *higher* than **Gen X**
  - ▲ Significantly *higher* than **Baby Boomers**
- **Down** arrows indicate **Gen Z** is significantly **lower** than the corresponding age cohort at a 95% CI:
  - ▼ Gen Z is significantly *lower* than **Millennials**
  - ▼ Significantly *lower* than **Gen X**
  - ▼ Significantly *lower* than **Baby Boomers**

# Product List

List of **products** included in the study (*italics indicates item was carried forward to subsequent questions if in household*):

## Computers

*Laptop*

*Desktop*

*Tablet (e.g., iPad, Kindle, Fire, Galaxy Tab)*

*Standalone webcam that is not built into laptop or computer monitor*

## Smartphones

*Smartphone - Android (e.g., Google, Samsung)*

*Smartphone - iOS (e.g., Apple)*

## Home Entertainment/Video

*Television*

*Streaming media device (e.g., Apple TV, Roku, Amazon Fire TV or Chromecast)*

*Action camcorder (e.g., GoPro or Gear Pro)*

*Digital camera (e.g., DSLR/digital single-lens reflex, mirrorless or point-and-shoot)*

## Visual and Video Accessories

*USB-connected computer microphone*

*USB-connected computer lighting accessories*

## Audio and Audio Accessories

*Wired headphones (e.g., Bose noise cancellation)*

*Bluetooth or wireless headphones*

*Wired earbuds*

*Wireless earbuds (e.g., Apple AirPods, Bose QuietComfort Earbuds)*

*Portable wireless speakers - portable speakers that pair with your smartphone via Bluetooth*

*Smart speakers - portable speakers that connect to your Wi-Fi network and operate via voice commands (e.g., Echo Dot, Sonos One, Bose Home)*

## Smart Home

Smart display - portable display/screen that connects to your Wi-Fi network and operates via voice commands (e.g., Amazon Echo Show, Google Nest Hub, Portal)

Smart locks or doorbells - lock or doorbell technology connected to your Wi-Fi network and operated via app or web (e.g., Ring, Yale Lock, SimpliSafe)

Smart thermostats - thermostats connected to your Wi-Fi network that operate via app and web (e.g., Google Nest)

## Wearables

Smartwatch able to make and receive calls (e.g., Apple Watch, Galaxy Watch)

Augmented reality (AR) glasses/headset (e.g., Amazon Echo Frames, Snap Spectacles)

Wearable activity fitness tracker that is not a smartwatch, such as fitness tracker, smart ring (e.g., Fitbit, Whoop, Oura, Garmin Vivo)

## Gaming

*Gaming console (e.g., Xbox, PlayStation)*

*Portable gaming console (e.g., Nintendo Switch, Steam Deck, Asus ROG Ally)*

Virtual reality (VR) headset (e.g., PlayStation VR, Quest 2)

Retro gaming console (e.g., Nintendo, Sega)

PC designed for gaming

Any type of video game console accessory (e.g., steering wheel, joystick, musical instrument)

## Other Technology

Electric bike (e.g., Specialized Turbo, Trek E-Caliber, Lectric, Aventon, Ride1)

Connected fitness equipment - fitness products that connect to your Wi-Fi network and provide access to fitness programming (e.g., Peloton, Hydrow)

# Subscription List

List of **subscriptions** included in the study:

## Streaming Platforms

- Netflix
- Hulu
- Disney+
- Apple TV+
- Paramount Plus
- Amazon Prime Video
- Peacock
- YouTube TV
- ESPN+
- Max
- Showtime
- Plex
- Tubi
- FuboTV
- Other streaming platform

## Audio Platforms

- Spotify
- Apple Music
- YouTube Music
- Tidal
- Amazon Music Unlimited
- Audible
- Libby
- Calm
- SiriusXM
- Other audio platform

## TV Platforms

- Cable TV
- Antennae broadcast TV
- Other TV platform

## Gaming Platforms

- Xbox Game Pass
- PlayStation Plus
- Nintendo Switch Online
- Apple Arcade
- EA Play
- Ubisoft+
- Google Play Pass
- Amazon Luna/Amazon Prime Gaming
- Other gaming service

## Fitness Platforms

- Noom
- Peloton
- Apple Fitness

# MaxDiff Overview

MaxDiff is a form of trade-off analysis used to **prioritize**.

You'll see MaxDiff importance scores on the next slide — showing what's most important when selecting a new tech product (by cohort).

## What it is:

- It pits sets of items against each other to determine importance.
- Within each set of items, respondents are asked to choose the most and least important.

## Why we do it:

- Simple and easy for respondents
- More accurate because it derives the preferences of respondents rather than asks it
- Eliminates scale use bias

## Interpretation:

- Higher scores mean greater importance — scores sum to 100, so in this exercise with 12 items, the average score would be ~8; therefore, items >8 have above-average importance.

# Additional CTA Resources



# About CTA Research

- CTA Research provides a valuable benefit to the technology industry by researching and reporting on **consumer behavior and technology purchasing trends**, which are available to member companies for free.
- CTA Research also releases comprehensive **forecast reports** that discuss the health and growth of specific technology product categories.
  - Forecasts and reports are available at [CTA.tech/research](https://cta.tech/research).
  - For general inquiries or specific requests, please contact [info@cta.tech](mailto:info@cta.tech).



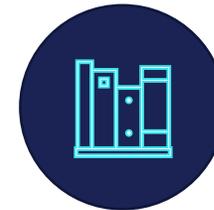
## Sales & Forecasts

CTA quantifies the size and momentum of the industry through a variety of reports, tracking shipment volume and revenues for hundreds of tech products. Our reports include five-year forecasts, sector analyses and eight-quarter outlooks.



## Research Studies

CTA Research publishes B2C and B2B studies addressing the U.S. and international markets using the full spectrum of quantitative and qualitative techniques. Topics range from emerging technologies to in-depth examinations of consumer behavior related to tech.



## Research Library

CTA's dedicated staff of experienced, professional librarians is one of the premier sources for industry information. The Research Library works with members on the most challenging requests and fields questions on every imaginable topic in the industry.

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 **CTA** | Research

The Authoritative Source for Consumer  
Technology Market Research

[Research@CTA.tech](mailto:Research@CTA.tech) | 703-907-7600



# Exploring the Creator Economy: *How Creators Earn, Engage and Evolve*

The Authoritative Source for Consumer  
Technology Market Research

Research@CTA.tech | 703-907-7600



## About Consumer Technology Association:

As North America's largest technology trade association, CTA is the tech sector. Our members are the world's leading innovators — from startups to global brands — helping support more than 18 million American jobs. CTA members enjoy benefits including policy advocacy, market research, technical education, industry promotion, standards development and the fostering of business and strategic relationships. CTA also owns and produces CES® — the most powerful tech event in the world. Find us at [CTA.tech](https://cta.tech). Follow us [@CTAtech](https://twitter.com/CTAtech).

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CES® is the most powerful tech event in the world — the proving ground for breakthrough technologies and global innovators. This is where the world's biggest brands do business and meet new partners, and the sharpest innovators hit the stage. Owned and produced by the Consumer Technology Association (CTA)®, CES features every aspect of the tech sector. CES 2026 will take place on Jan. 6-9, 2026. Learn more at [CES.tech](https://ces.tech) and follow [@CES](https://twitter.com/CES) on [social](#).

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# Research Objectives & Methodology



# Study Background

The creator economy is a significant force in the global economy, **with projected revenue nearing half a trillion dollars (\$480 billion) by 2027.**<sup>1</sup> The impact of the creator economy can be felt in a multitude of industries, including retail, content, entertainment, technology and beyond. And creators who monetize their platforms through brand partnerships, sponsored content and direct audience support play a pivotal role in shaping purchasing behavior, brand perception and market trends. In fact, **3 in 4 shoppers report they've purchased a product or service because an influencer recommended it.**<sup>2</sup> Refreshed<sup>3</sup> and expanded insights on the background, behaviors and business opportunities of and for creators are critical to equip potential partners and third parties in these industries with important data to foster mutually beneficial relationships in the evolving creator economy.

Please note data from this slide includes some secondary data: 1 [Goldman Sachs](#) 2 [BusinessWire](#)  
3 In 2021, CTA published [Exploring the Creator Economy](#).



# Research Objectives

The goal of this research is to understand the attitudes and behaviors of creators that monetize their online content.

Specifically, the report aims to:

- Determine the **size and landscape of the creator economy**, including full-time and part-time creators
- Identify **what motivates creators** to monetize their content, how they **measure success** and how they **generate revenue** from their content
- Reveal the **challenges experienced** by creators and the **role of third-party companies** and **technology** in overcoming the challenges
- Explore the role of **product influencers**, specifically how creators serve/collaborate as brand ambassadors



# Methodology

CTA's *Exploring the Creator Economy 2025* study was administered as an online survey among 1547 U.S. monetizing creators (ages 13-plus) from July 24 to August 19, 2025. Teens (ages 13 to 17) were invited to the survey via their parents.

Respondents that completed the survey were qualified as “monetizing creator”, meaning they create and are paid for or monetize online user-created content. Throughout this report, results are reported among U.S. monetizing creators, unless otherwise noted.

CTA previously published research on the creator economy in 2021, titled [Exploring the Creator Economy](#). The quantitative study was administered to an online sample of 2084 respondents (aged 13-plus). The goal of that research was to understand the attitudes and behaviors of both **creators and consumers** of online user-created content. Results may be referenced or compared within CTA's *Exploring the Creator Economy 2025* study.

The Consumer Technology Association (CTA)<sup>®</sup> designed this study in its entirety and is responsible for all content contained in this report. CTA is a member of the Insights Association and adheres to the research and analysis guidelines set forth in the Insights Association Code of Standards and Ethics.



## Sampling Details

The margin of sampling error at 95% confidence for aggregate results among the total sample is +/-2%. Sampling error is larger for subgroups of data, such as for the segments and products throughout the report. As with any survey, sampling error is only one source of possible error. While non-sampling error cannot be accurately calculated, precautionary steps were taken in all phases of the survey design, fieldwork, and data collection and analysis to minimize its influence.

The data was weighted to reflect the demographics of the U.S. population based on gender, age, race/ethnicity, income, geographic region and education.

As a result, **data can be generalized to 288.9 million U.S. teens and adults** (ages 13-plus), per the [U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Single Year of Age and Sex](#) as of July 1, 2024 (published June 2025).

# Glossary of Terms

**Monetizing Content Creator**

- Creates and monetizes online content in at least 1 of 12 surveyed categories (below)
- **Creates** — generates any form of content (images, videos, text and audio) that is posted by the creator on online platforms, such as YouTube, Instagram, Pinterest or SoundCloud
- **Monetizes** — makes money/generates revenue or receives free or discounted products/services from their content

**Full-Time Monetizing Creator**

- Monetizing content creator that spends 20 or more hours in a typical week monetizing their content, and
- Self-identifies as a full-time creator

**Part-Time Monetizing Creator**

- Monetizing content creator that spends less than 20 hours in a typical week monetizing their content, and
- Does not self-identify as a full-time creator

**Non-Monetizing Creator**

- Creates content in at least 1 of 12 surveyed categories
- Is not paid for or monetizing content full- or part-time

**Product Influencer**

- Monetizing content creator that monetizes their content through creator-generated advertising, brand sponsorships or ambassadorships, affiliate links or selling merchandise on behalf of another brand
- Self-identifies as an influencer

Content Creator Categories (Surveyed):	
Gaming	DIY/how-to
Fashion	Automotive
Cosmetics/beauty/skincare	Comedy/skit
Music	Lifestyle
Podcasting	Personal life updates
Review (TV shows, movies, music, unboxings, etc.)	Current affairs/trending topics

# Key Findings



## Key Findings:

**More than 17 million Americans ages 13 or older create and monetize their content online.**

**While monetization is not the key motivator for creating, generating revenue is among the top challenges.**



## Content Creator Economy Landscape

- Creators report an average monthly revenue of \$861 overall, with full-time creators earning twice as much as part-time creators (\$1,221 versus \$684).
  - Two-thirds (66%) are using platform-generated advertising, which accounts for the greatest share of monthly revenue.
  - More than 3 in 4 (77%) are creating and monetizing content for more than one platform; ease of use, comfort and access to needed tools keep creators on their preferred platforms.
  - Most creators (80%) have paid to promote themselves or grow; platforms offering routes to self-promotion can capitalize on this.
- 
- While full-time creators are more likely to say they “do it just for the money” (68% versus 55% overall), they’re also strongly motivated by the opportunity to turn their passions into a job (91%).
  - Content creation is rarely a sole source of income; 71% of monetizing creators have employment outside of their content.
  - Consistency, revenue and content discovery are creators’ top challenges, though experiencing burnout is nearly universal (90%).
  - Two in three (68%) have at least some ideas about eventually ending their content creation. Among content creators with an exit plan (or some ideas), the top reason they expect to stop is fatigue/loss of interest.

## Key Findings:

**Nearly half (49%) of monetizing content creators are product influencers.**

**More than 1 in 3 creators (37%) anticipate AI-generated content will be the next big thing.**



## Influencers and Opportunities

- Product influencers view their role as more than just encouraging people to buy new products (43%). More often, they help their audience discover new items (52%), give honest reviews (50%) and build trust or loyalty for a brand (47%).
- Most product influencers (67%) have a clear return on investment (ROI) strategy when deciding to work with a brand.
- Product influencers expressed disfavor for certain requirements when working with brands, such as having to use specific words or phrases (41%), promoting products they don't use (40%) or feeling pressured to say only positive things (40%).

- 85% of monetizing creators are already using at least some artificial intelligence (AI) tools, most often to answer questions or help generate ideas.
- Nearly half of creators (46%) wish AI could help predict what types of content will go viral.
- AI is seen as a tradeoff between speed/efficiency and authenticity/standing out.
- Most (84%) expect to purchase equipment for content creation in the next year.
- 57% expect to purchase software/apps (such as video editing software, AI software or audio/video apps) to help their content creation in the next year, including 28% who expect to buy AI tools/software.

# Access More of CTA's Recently Published Research



View all research reports here: [CTA.tech/research](https://CTA.tech/research)

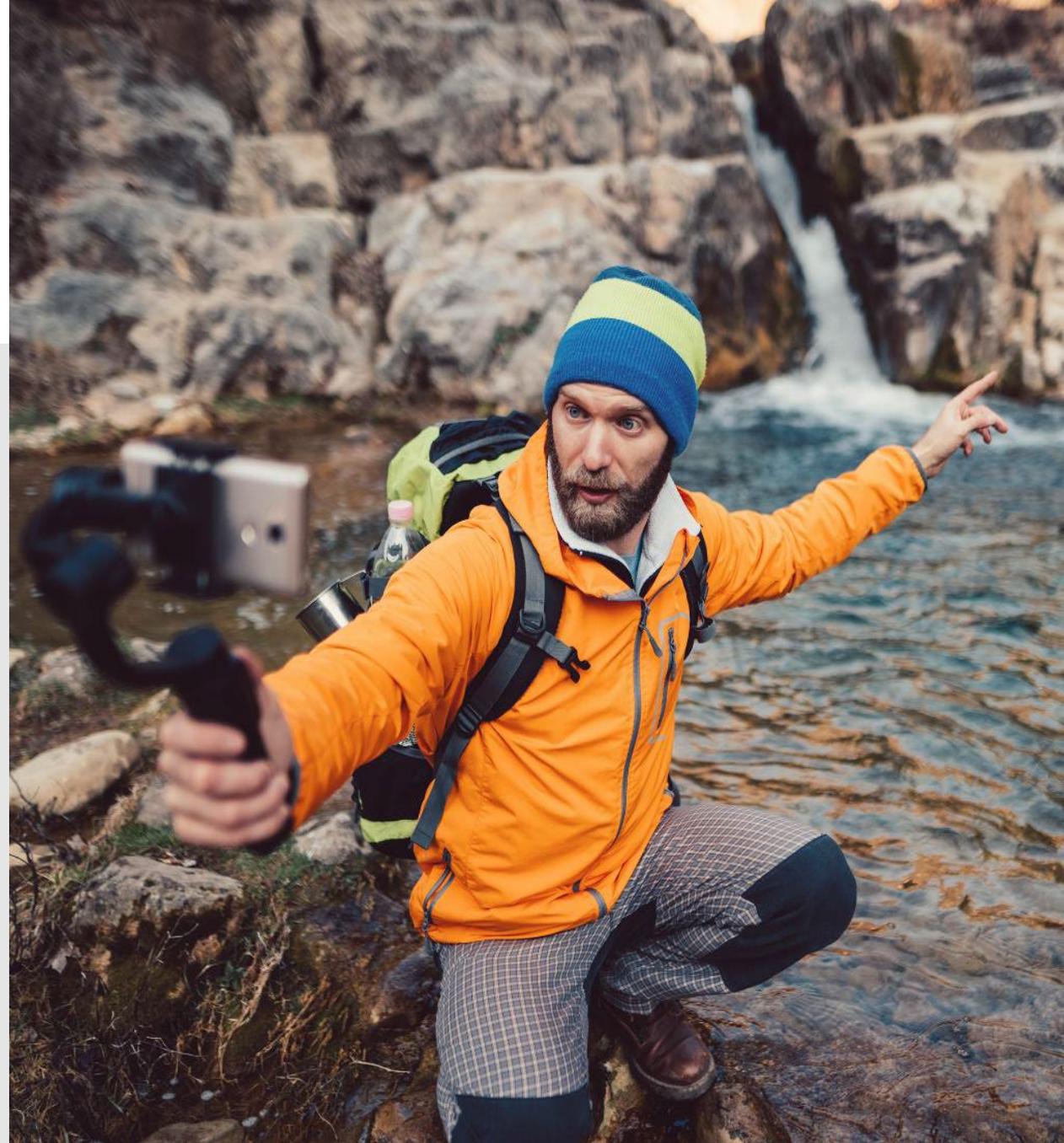
# Detailed Findings



# 1

## Defining the Creator Market

- Sizing the monetizing creator landscape
- Understanding revenue sources and how creators monetize their content
- Examining motivators and success metrics for monetizing content



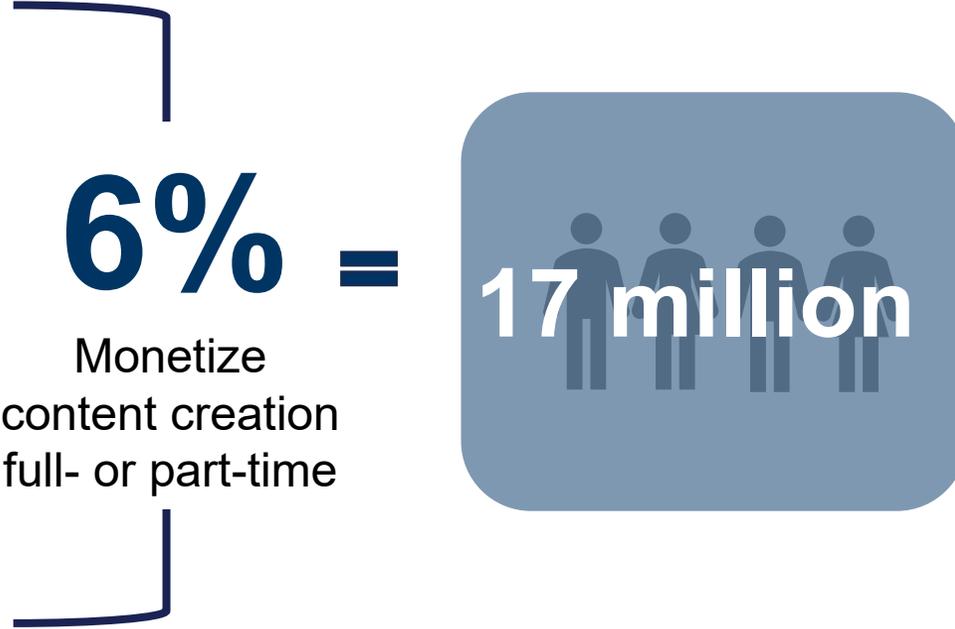
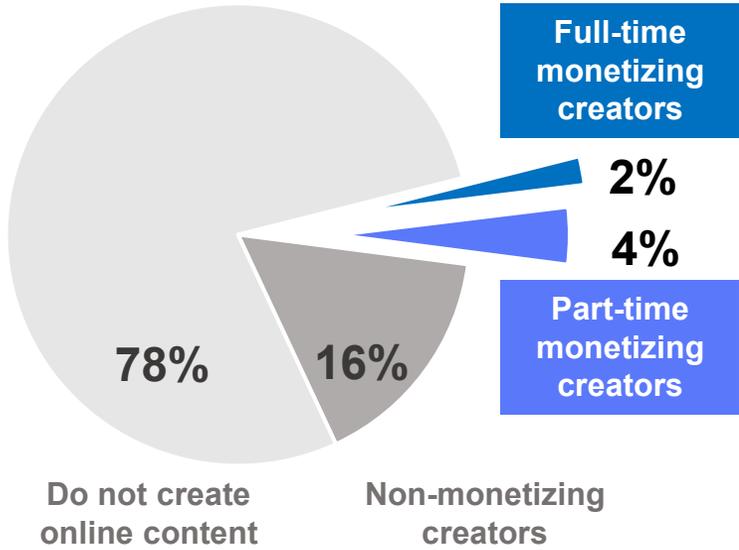
# More than 17 million Americans aged 13 or older create and monetize their content online

Total U.S. Teen & Adult Population Estimate  
Ages 13 years and older



*\*Total population estimate from U.S. Census Bureau 2024 Current Population Survey*

## Online Monetizing Content Creator Landscape



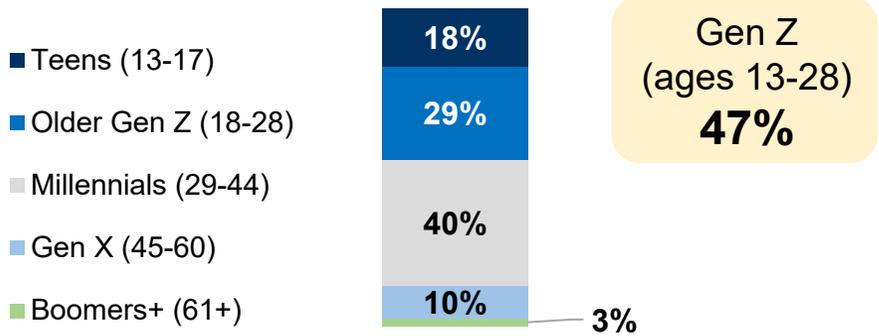
*% of U.S. adults and teens who indicated they create and monetize online user-created content extrapolated to the larger population of U.S. adults and teens (ages 13 or older)*

Q. Do you ever watch/view, or listen to any type of user-created online content or create and post that content yourself? Q. You mentioned that you create online user-created content. Which of these types of content do you create? Please select all that apply. Q. You mentioned that you create online user-created content in the following areas. Which content areas, if any, do you monetize (i.e., make money/generate revenue from or receive free or discounted products/services)? Please select all that apply. Q. How many hours do you spend in a typical week creating online user-generated content? Please think about all of the areas of content that you create, and all the steps required to create your final product like editing, etc. Q. And of the <#> hours you spend in a typical week creating online user-generated content, how many hours are typically spent creating content that is monetized?  
Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

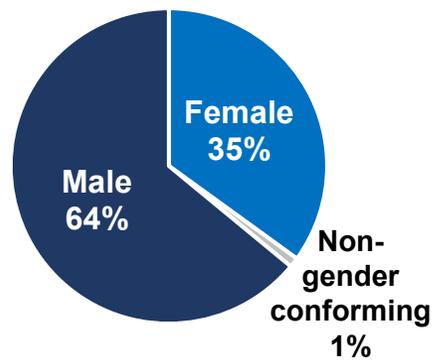
# The monetizing creator landscape is diverse in age, gender and experience

- Gen Z (ages 13 to 28) accounts for nearly half (47%) of "monetizing content creators," and those under age 45 account for 87% of that population.
- The market consists of just as many newcomers (with two years or less experience monetizing content, 48%) as experienced creators (52%).

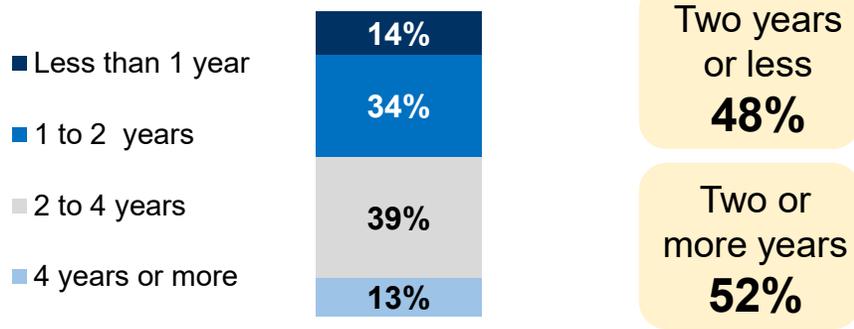
### Age Cohort



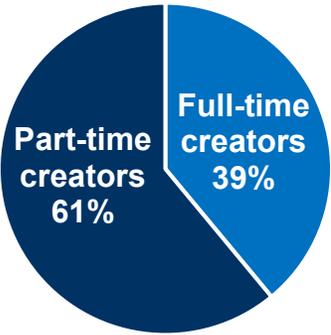
### Gender



### Years Monetizing Content

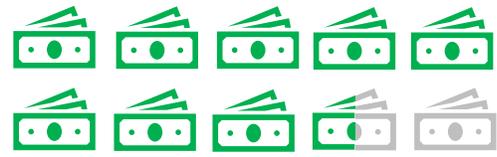


### Full-Time Versus Part-Time Monetizing Creator

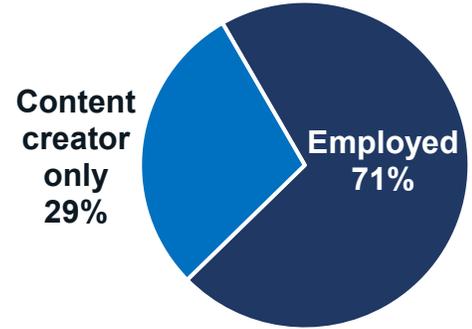


### Median Household Income

Median incomes for monetizing content creators outpace the average US household (approx. \$85,000 versus \$80,000)



### Any Outside Employment

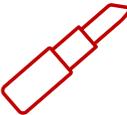


Q. To begin, how old are you? Q. Do you identify as...? Please select one answer below. Q. Approximately how long have you been monetizing your online user-created content? Q. And of the [#] hours you spend in a typical week creating online user-generated content, how many hours are typically spent creating content that is monetized? Q. Into which of these categories did your total annual household income fall last year before taxes? Q. Other than your content creation, do you have any additional, current employment status? Please select one answer below. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Gaming content is the category that is most often monetized

- Beyond gaming content, review content (i.e., TV shows, movies, music, unboxings, etc.) and fashion content are also more popular to monetize for teens than other age cohorts.
- Male respondents over-index in more than half of the content creating categories (surveyed), while female respondents over-index in the fashion and beauty categories.

Content Categories Monetized  
(and over-indexing populations within each content category)

 <p><b>51% Gaming content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teens (13-17)</li> <li>Male</li> </ul>	 <p><b>41% Review content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teens (13-17)</li> <li>Male</li> </ul>	 <p><b>39% Personal life updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millennials (29-44)</li> </ul>	 <p><b>35% Lifestyle content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millennials (29-44)</li> </ul>	 <p><b>34% Music content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Male</li> </ul>	 <p><b>25% Fashion content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teens (13-17)</li> <li>Female</li> </ul>
 <p><b>23% DIY/how-to content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millennials (29-44)</li> </ul>	 <p><b>23% Comedy/skit content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millennials (29-44)</li> <li>Male</li> </ul>	 <p><b>23% Current affairs/ trending topics</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millennials (29-44)</li> <li>Male</li> </ul>	 <p><b>23% Cosmetics/beauty/ skincare content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Female</li> </ul>	 <p><b>22% Podcasting content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Male</li> </ul>	 <p><b>14% Automotive content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Millennials (29-44)</li> <li>Male</li> </ul>

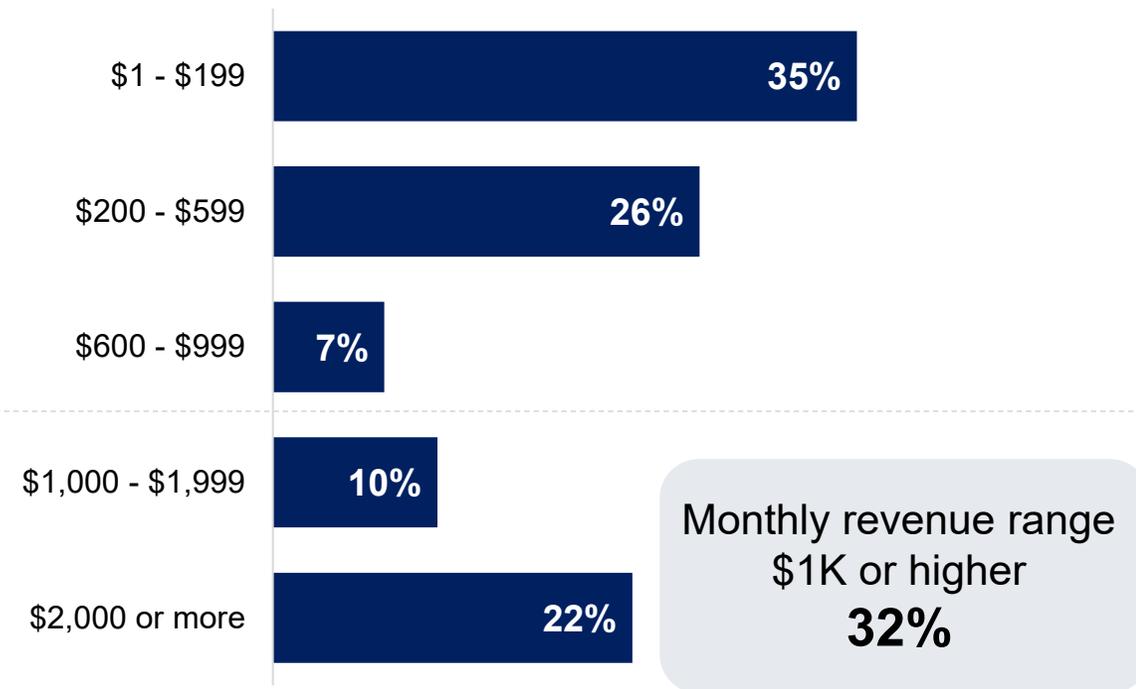
Q. You mentioned that you create online user-created content in the following areas. Which content areas, if any, have you been paid for or monetized (i.e., make money/generate revenue from or receive free or discounted products/services)? Please think about any payment, regardless of amount. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# On average, monetizing creators report generating more than \$10K annually from their content

- Average monthly monetizing revenue for full-time creators is nearly double that of part-time creators (\$1,221 versus \$684).
- A third (32%) report generating \$1,000 or more monthly from monetizing content, and more than 1 in 5 report generating \$2,000 or more (annualized to \$24,000 or more) from their content.

		Average* Revenue Generated		
		Population	Monthly	Annualized
<b>Overall</b>			<b>\$861</b>	<b>\$10,332</b>
Part Time versus Full Time	Full Time (20+ hours)		\$1,221	\$14,652
	Part Time (<20 hours)		\$684	\$8,208
Gender	Male		\$883	\$10,596
	Female		\$840	\$10,080
Age Cohort	Teens (13-17)		\$848	\$10,176
	Older Gen Z (18-28)		\$837	\$10,044
	Millennials (29-44)		\$921	\$11,052
	Gen X (45-60)		\$823	\$9,876
	Boomers+ (61 or older)		\$470	\$5,640
Product Influencer versus Not	Product Influencer		\$1,212	\$14,544
	Not Product Influencer		\$526	\$6,312

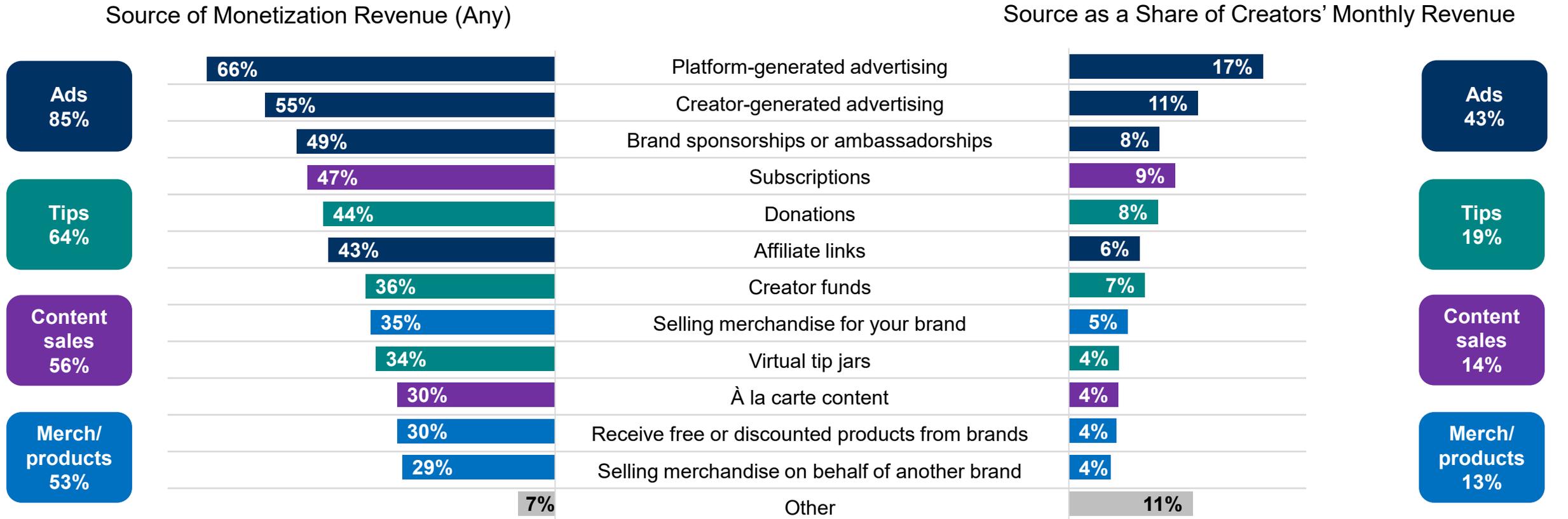
Average\* Monthly Revenue — Range



\*When calculating average revenue, outliers were capped. For this study, outliers are defined as any response outside of the 3rd Quartile + 1.5x the Interquartile Range. Any response above that range was capped from calculation.  
 Q. How much revenue do you typically generate per month from your online content? Please think of all sources of revenue (e.g., advertising, donations, merchandise sales, etc.) and all platforms. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Ad revenue leads as the top source of content monetization revenue

- More than 8 in 10 monetizing creators earn ad revenue for their content, and on average, it accounts for nearly half of their monthly revenue (43%).
- While ad revenue is critical, tips and donations represent the second-highest source of content monetization revenue. Tips as a monetization source is higher for those monetizing in the automotive (80%), cosmetics/beauty/skincare (79%) and gaming (77%) content categories.
- In general, content sales account for 14% of monthly revenue share and merch (selling and receiving) accounts for 13%, though Boomers+ (ages 61 or older) report higher shares for both categories (20% and 17%, respectively).



Q. You mentioned that you monetize your online user-created content (i.e., make money/generate revenue from or receive free products/services for) in the following area. How do you monetize this content?  
 Q. What percent of your monthly revenue comes from each of the following sources? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# For monetizing creators, self-expression and community are often more important than monetization, though income is still an important motivator

Motivations for Creating and Monetizing Content  
 % = "describes me completely" + "describes me very well"



## Specific to sub-populations...

**Full-time creators** are especially likely to say content creation allows them to turn passions into a job (91%), promote their business (86%) and that they like being able to influence people (86%). They are also most likely to say they “do it just to make money” (68%).

**Teens** (13 to 17) seek to connect with like-minded people (95%) and are more likely building their personal brand (91%).

**Millennials** also seek to connect with like-minded people (89%) and are also likely looking for something to do when bored (89%).

Q. Why do you, personally, create and monetize your online user-created content? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=787

# Creators define success nearly equally by the amount of personal fulfillment/enjoyment as by the revenue and views generated

- Full-time creators more often reported satisfaction with their content (74%) and monetization (70%) than part-time creators (54% and 43%, respectively).
- While important to both, part-time creators are more likely than full-time creators to measure success through average number of views.

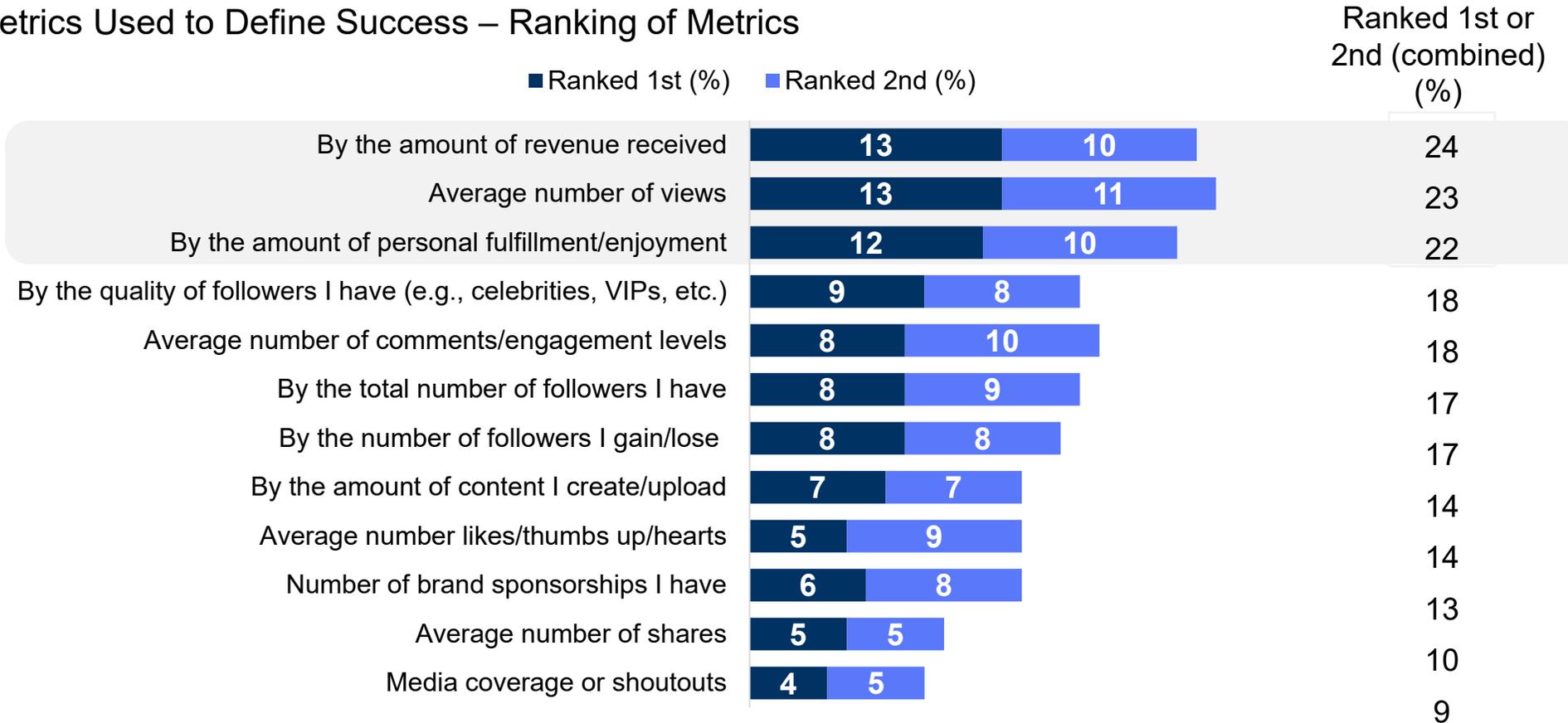
**97%**

"very" (62%) or "somewhat" (35%) satisfied with their content

**91%**

"very" (54%) or "somewhat" (37%) satisfied with monetizing their content

Metrics Used to Define Success – Ranking of Metrics



Q. In general, how satisfied are you with your user-created content? Q. In general, how satisfied are you with monetizing your online user-created content? Q. As an online creator, how do you measure success? Please rank up to 3 from the list below. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# 2

## Engaging With Tech for Success

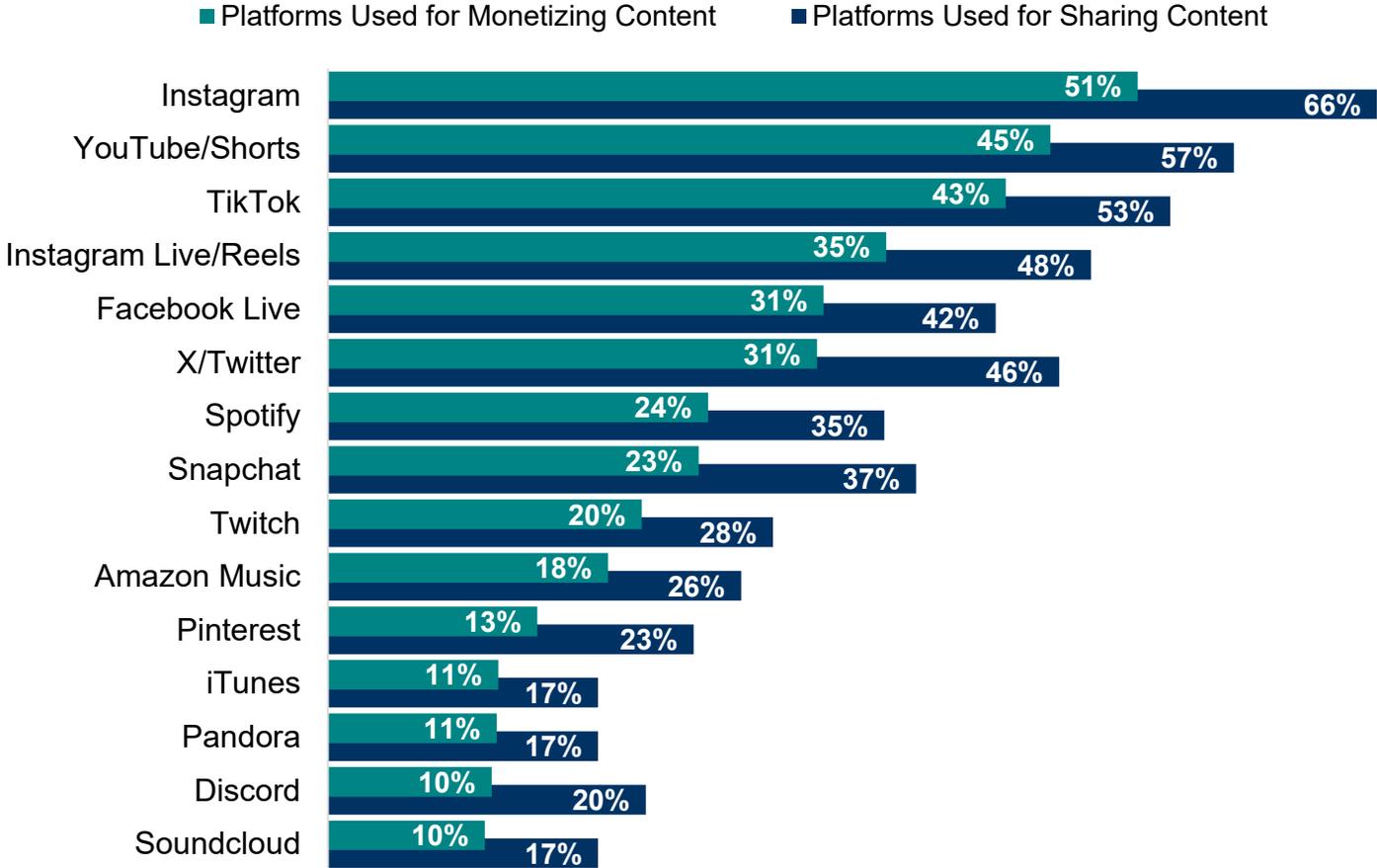
- Top platforms used for monetizing content and why creators use those platforms
- Creator fan bases and impacts to size
- Self-promotion and investing in personal success
- Technologies purchased for content creation and ROI



# Content creators are monetizing their content across several platforms

## Top Monetizing Platforms

(platforms with 10% or greater monetizing use shown; 16 of 28 platforms surveyed about)



## Specific to sub-populations...

**Male creators** more often indicated monetizing on YouTube/Shorts, X/Twitter and Twitch, while **female creators** more often noted monetizing their content on TikTok, Instagram Live/Reels and Pinterest.

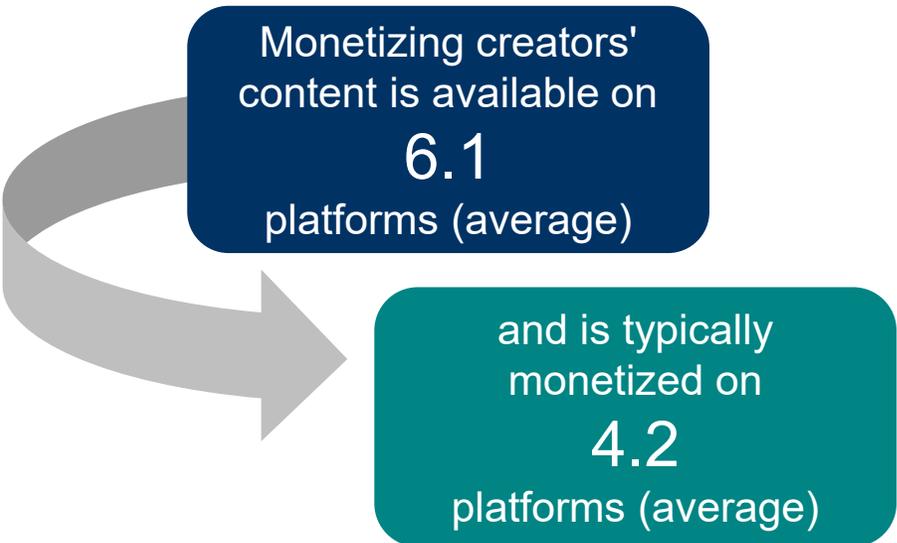
Six in ten (60%) **teens** (13 to 17) say they monetize their content on YouTube/Shorts, a significantly higher proportion than any other age cohort.

**Full-time creators** and **product influencers** are especially likely to monetize on all platforms compared to their counterparts.

Q. You mentioned earlier that you 'monetized' or made money/generated revenue from online content. On which of the following platforms can consumers watch, listen, or view the online content you monetize?  
 Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

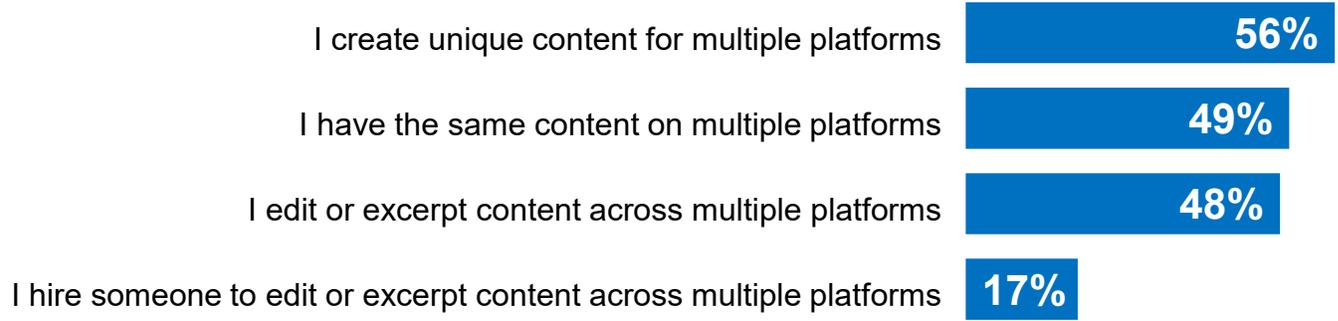
# More than 3 in 4 are creating and monetizing content for more than one platform

## Number of Platforms Used and Monetized On



## How Creators Distribute Content Across Platforms

**77%** are monetizing across multiple platforms



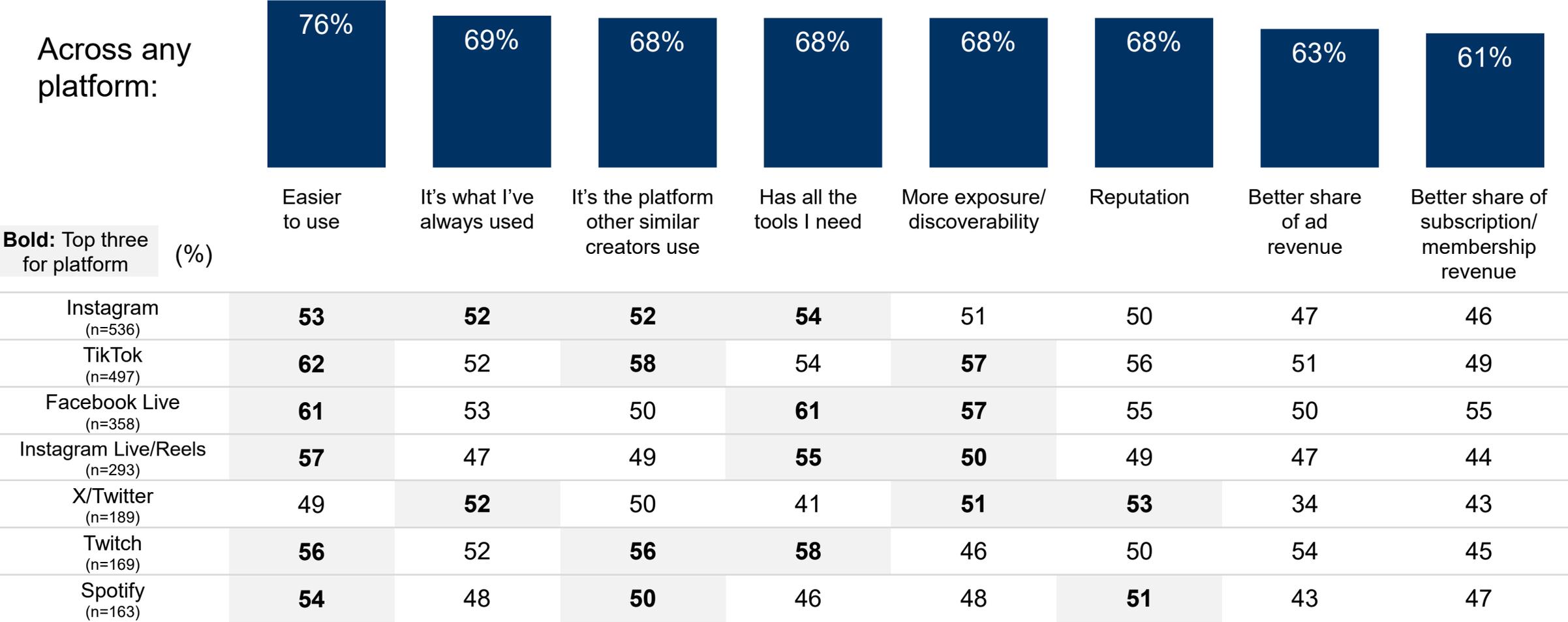
### Specific to sub-populations...

- **Full-time creators** monetize on more platforms (6.7 versus 5.7 for **part-timers**).
- **Teens (13 to 17)** use the most (typically 7.3 platforms).
- **Male creators** are more likely to edit/excerpt content for use across multiple platforms (50% versus 45% of female creators).
- One in five **female creators** (20%) reported hiring for editing/excerpting help.
- **Gen X (45 to 60)** and **Boomer+ creators (61-plus)** most often have the same content across multiple platforms (54% and 68%, respectively).

Q. On which of the following platforms can consumers watch, listen, or view the online content you create? Q. You mentioned earlier that you 'monetized' or made money/generated revenue from online content. On which of the following platforms can consumers watch, listen, or view the online content you monetize? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547  
 Q. How is your content created for consumption across multiple platforms? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content on multiple platforms, n=1175

# Ease of use keeps creators on their primarily used monetization platforms; other use drivers vary by platform

Reasons for Using Platforms



Q. Thinking about the platform(s) for user generated-content that you primarily use for monetization, why are you using those platforms? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Full-time creators report twice as many followers as part-time creators

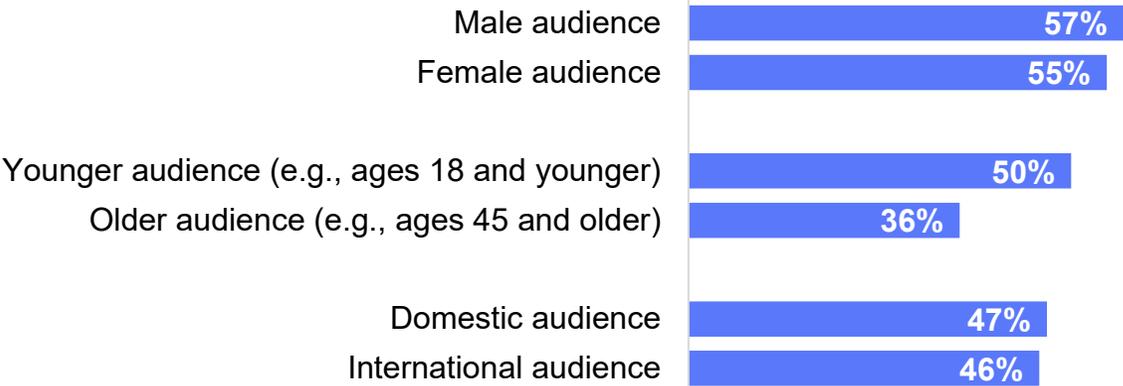
- Creators over-index in the target demographic they identify with (e.g., 81% of teens say their target audience is 18 or under, 68% of female creators say their target audience is female, and 69% of male creators are targeting a male audience).
- Nearly 3 in 4 creators (74%) have experienced some type of event that impacted their success (either positively or negatively). Creators who have experienced a controversy are more likely to say that it boosted their success rather than limited it.

## Fanbase

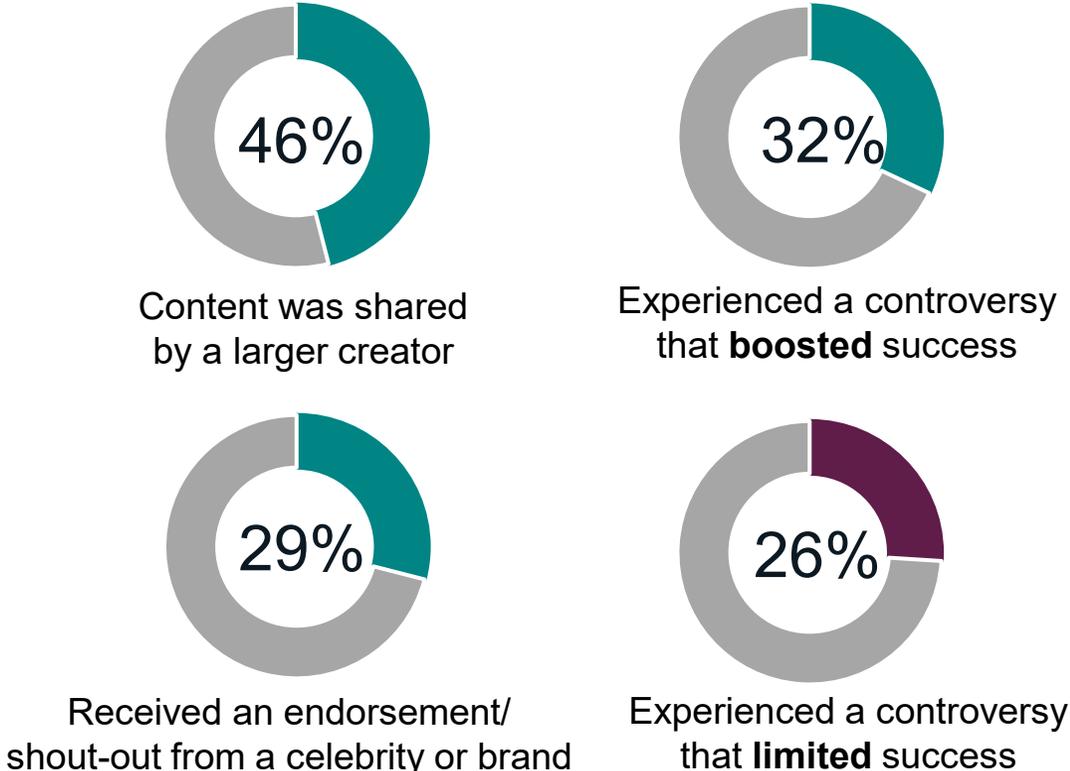
Monetizing creators have a median  
**7,076**  
fans or followers

Full-Time Creators: 10,000  
Part-Time Creators: 5,531

## Target Audiences



## Events That Impacted Success



Q. How many fans or followers do you have? Please think about all platforms where your content is available. Your best estimate is fine. Q. Has there been an event or events that have greatly impacted your success creating content either positively or negatively?  
Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

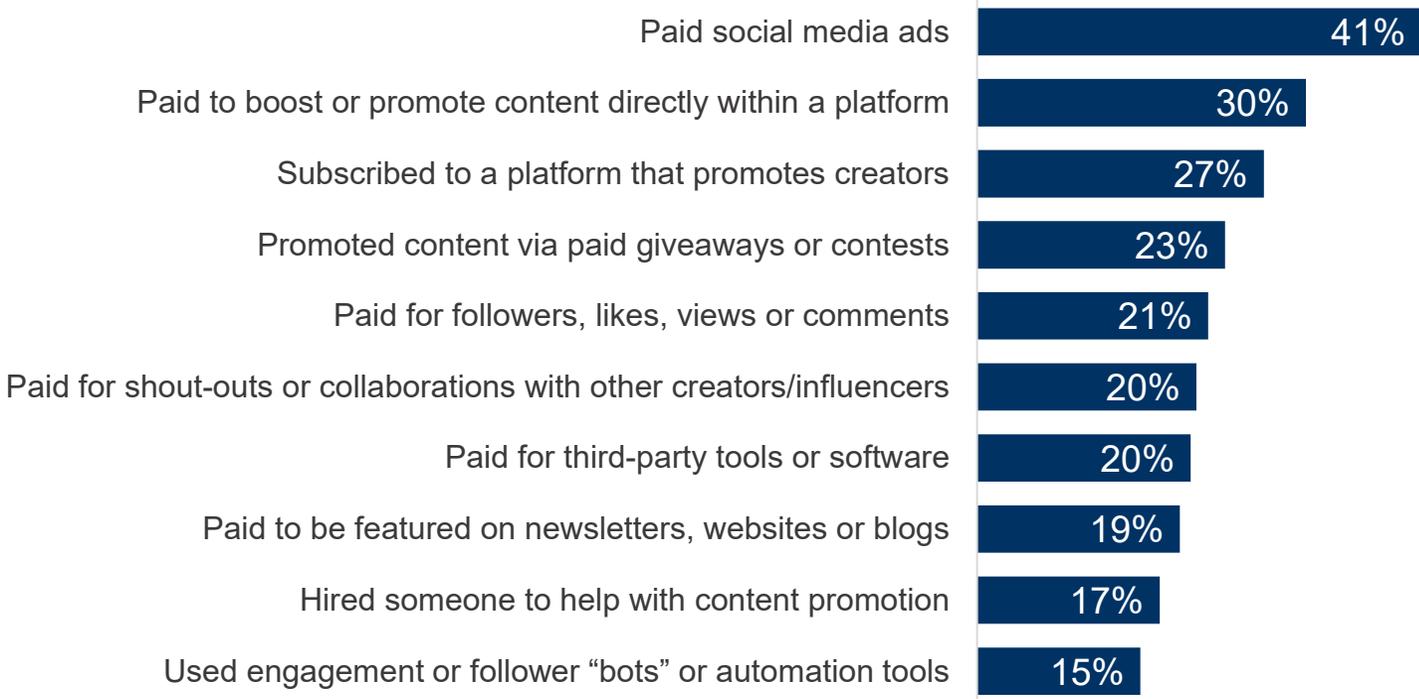
# Most creators have paid to promote themselves or grow, though only 1 in 5 have paid directly for followers, likes, views or comments

- More full-time creators have invested in their success (89%) than part-timers (76%).
- Teens (87%) and Millennials (82%) more often reported paying for promotion and growth than other age cohorts.
- Boomers+ are the least likely age cohort to report paying to promote themselves.

Creators who have ever paid to promote or grow (NET) **80%**

Full time	86%
Part time	76%
Teens (13-17)	87%
Older Gen Z (18-28)	76%
Millennials (29-44)	82%
Gen X (45-60)	73%
Boomers+ (61+)	65%

## Ways Creators Have Paid for Self-Promotion and Growth



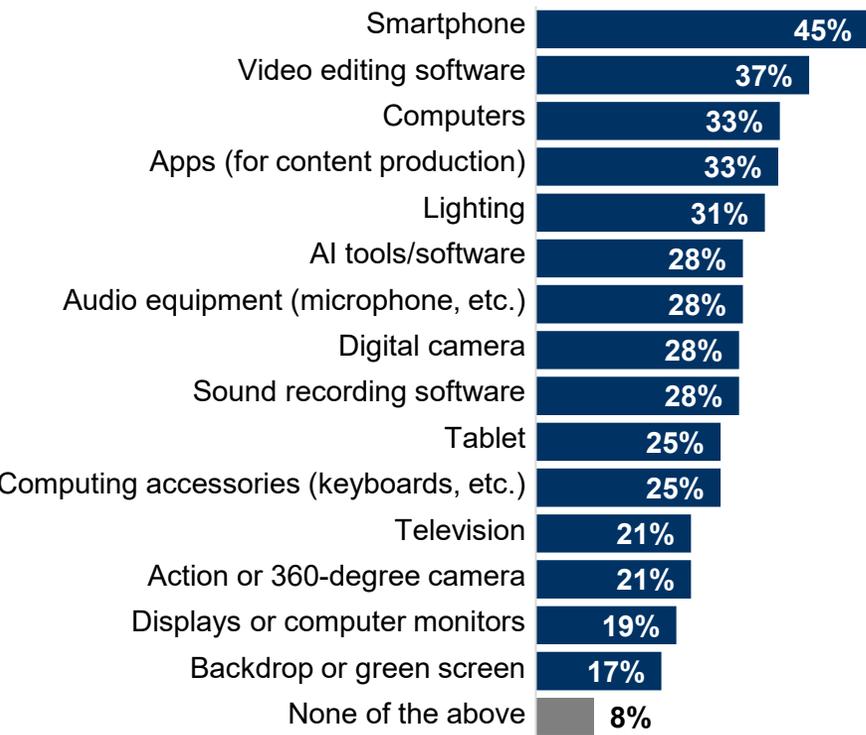
Q. In which of the following ways have you ever paid to promote or grow your user-created content or platform?  
 Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

Note: Bold indicates the top score (full-time/part-time) or top scores (age cohorts) in each demographic

# Nine in ten (92%) monetizing creators have made tech investments specifically for creating content

- Additionally, at least 4 in 5 (82%) monetizing creators use third-party platforms to create content or manage their content creation business.
- Nearly all creators (94%) assess the ROI for their tech investment; increases in views and revenue are equally likely to be evaluated (38% and (37%).

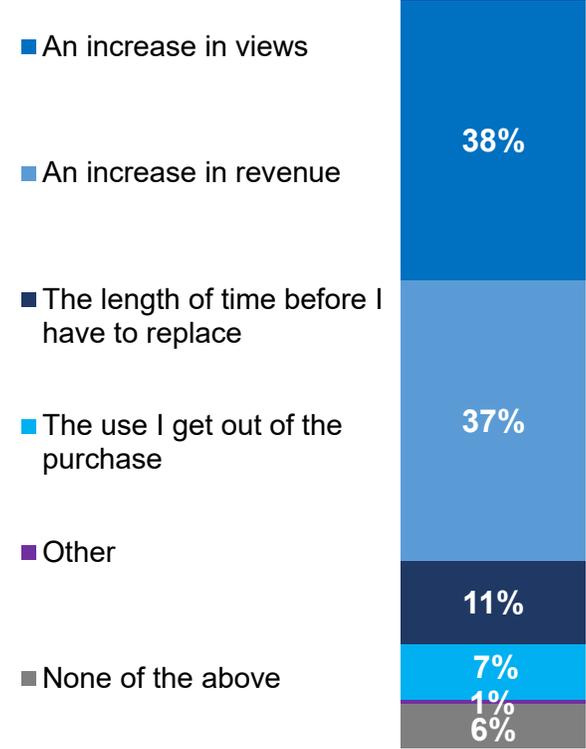
## Technology Purchased Specifically for Content Creation



## Tasks That Creators Use Third-Party Companies For



## Determining ROI on Tech Purchase



Q. Have you purchased any of the following technologies specifically for creating your online content? Please select all that apply.  
 Q. When choosing to invest in your online content creation, how do you determine the return-on-investment for your purchase? Base: U.S. adults (18-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=610

# 3

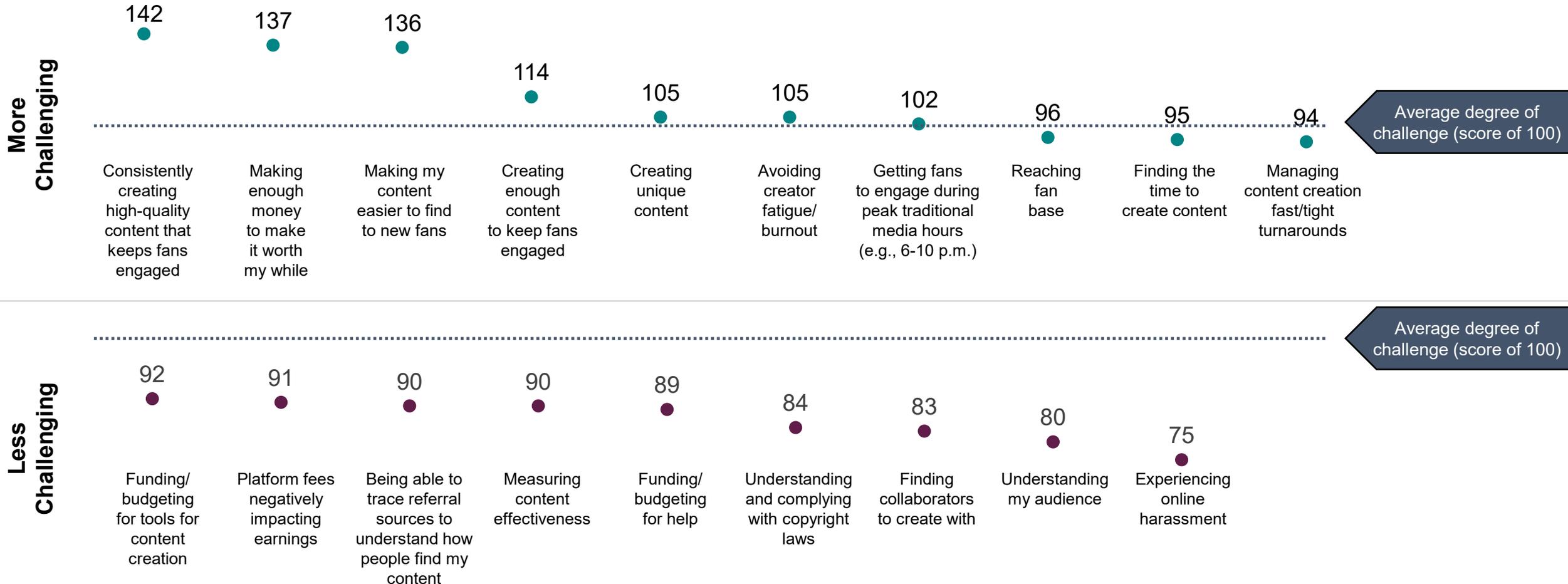
## Challenges in Content Creation

- Challenges experienced with creating content
- Experiencing and addressing creator burnout
- Experiencing and addressing challenges meeting timelines



# Consistency, revenue and content discovery are creators' top challenges

Challenges to Content Creation Indexed degree of challenge (100=average)



## MAXDIFF CHOICE EXERCISE

- 10 scenarios were evaluated, with five challenges each.
- Creators indicated which of the five were **most** and **least** challenging to them.

## MAXDIFF RESULTS

- Best/worst (MaxDiff) results converted to **index scores** for easier interpretation. The average claim receives a score of 100.
- Index scores are best compared in terms of their corresponding odds ratio, e.g., 142 versus 114 = 1.25.
- Scores for total are significantly different (95% confidence) if the ratio is 1.08 or greater.

Q. Which of these 5 is most challenging to you when creating online content, and which is least challenging to you?  
 Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# The top challenges are largely consistent across creator groups, with a few differences

Avoiding fatigue/burnout ranked high among all monetizing creators but was a "top-four" challenge for full-time creators and older Gen Z (18 to 28).

## Challenges to Content Creation

	Total	Full time	Part time	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomers+ (61+)
Consistently creating high-quality content that keeps fans engaged	142	133	148	146	139	140	144	154
Making enough money to make it worth my while	137	133	140	133	135	136	148	167
Making my content more discoverable or easier to find to new fans or followers	136	127	142	144	128	135	145	147
Creating enough content to keep fans engaged	114	110	117	116	110	114	121	125
Creating unique content	105	104	106	113	102	106	98	105
Avoiding creator fatigue/burnout	105	111	101	97	114	105	95	100
Getting fans to engage during peak traditional media hours (e.g., 6-10 p.m.)	102	98	104	108	106	98	99	79
Reaching fan base	96	97	95	98	94	96	96	92
Finding the time to create content	95	94	96	90	95	96	104	96
Managing content creation timelines, fast/tight turnarounds	94	95	94	94	95	93	94	97
Funding/budgeting for tools for content creation	92	96	90	88	94	93	94	86
Fees charged by platforms negatively impacting my earnings	91	97	87	89	90	92	92	93
Being able to trace referral sources to understand how people get to your content	90	91	90	94	88	91	87	95
Being able to measure content effectiveness	90	93	87	92	90	90	85	83
Funding/budgeting for staff/employees/editors/assistants	89	90	88	86	90	91	90	82
Understanding and complying with copyright laws	84	87	82	82	83	85	86	85
Finding collaborators to create with	83	82	84	81	87	83	81	71
Understanding my audience	80	82	78	82	80	80	75	69
Experiencing online harassment	75	81	71	69	79	76	66	76

(Indexed scores)

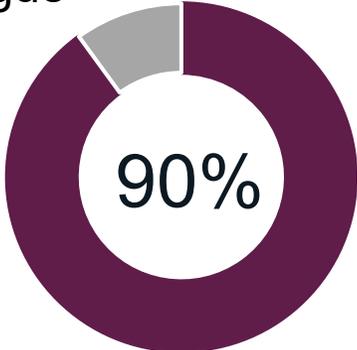
Q. Which of these 5 is most challenging to you when creating online content, and which is least challenging to you?  
 Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

 Top four ranked challenges
  Challenges high/low within subgroup

# Fatigue/burnout is nearly universal among monetizing creators

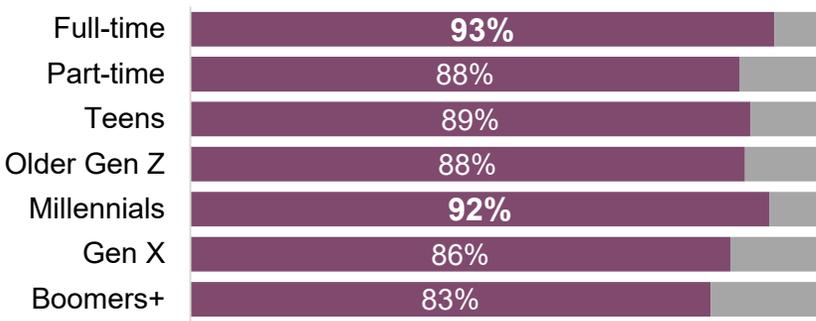
- Part-time and full-time creators report experiencing creator fatigue at nearly similar rates despite the varying number of hours spent creating content.

## Creator Fatigue



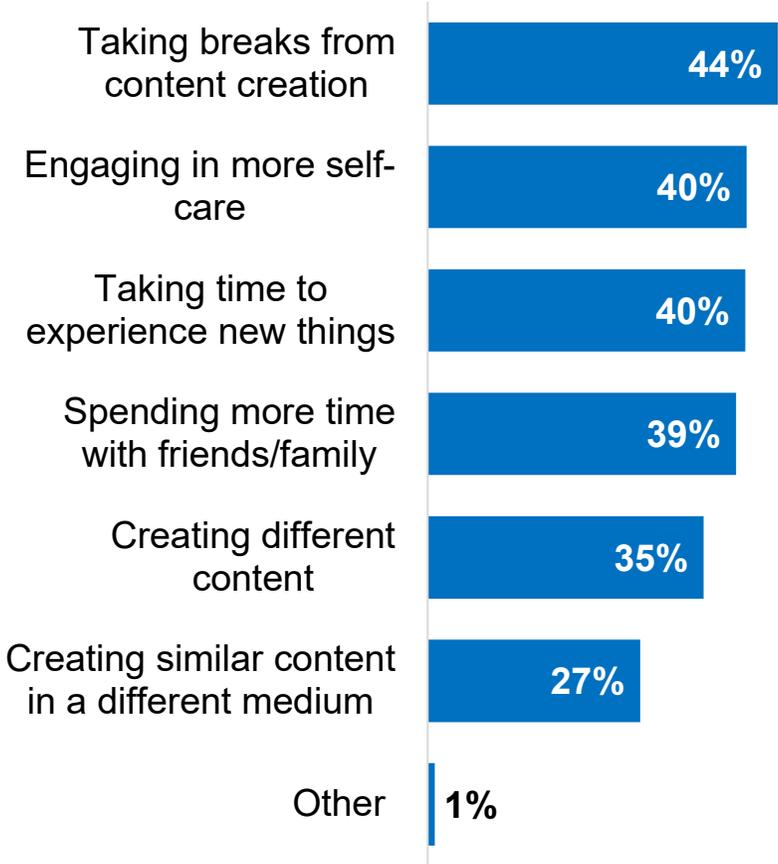
of creators have experienced fatigue/burnout

Experienced Creator Fatigue (by population)



Note: bold font indicates highest report of fatigue experienced per subgroup

## Addressing Burnout



## Specific to sub-populations...

**Teens** (13 to 17) are most likely to address feelings of burnout and fatigue by taking time to experience new things (51%).

**Female creators** are slightly more likely to engage in more self-care (42%) and spend more times with loved ones (42%) to combat fatigue/burnout than **male creators** (38 and 37%, respectively).

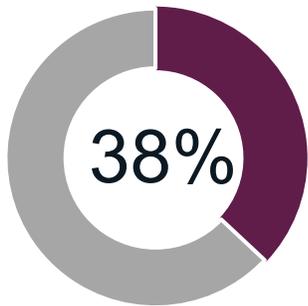
**Product influencers** are especially likely to address burnout by creating different content (42%) or using different mediums for their content (32%).

Q. How, if at all, are you addressing creator fatigue/burnout? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

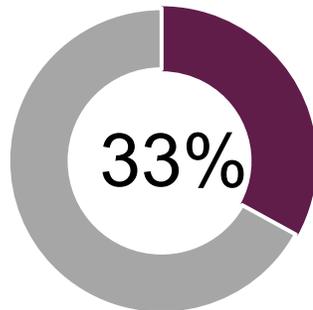
# For challenges experienced meeting or managing timelines, tech is more the issue than timeline

To meet timelines, tech is both the problem (37% cite tech operational issues — i.e., getting their equipment to work) and the solution (38% say equipment is needed but they don't have access to it). Improving access to tech (e.g., through affordability, supply chains and distribution) is just as important as troubleshooting existing tech.

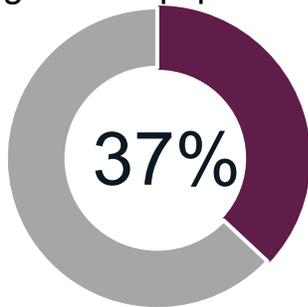
## Roadblocks to Meeting Timelines and Tight Turnarounds



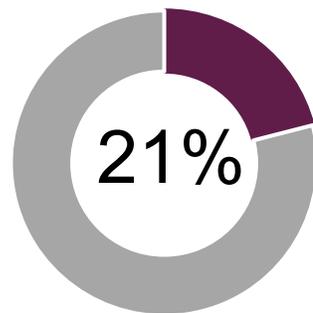
I've encountered tech **availability** issues — I couldn't get the equipment I needed



Unrealistic deadlines (from self or others)



I've encountered tech **operation** issues — equipment would not work when needed



Staff/editors not available

### Specific to sub-populations...

**Full-time creators** see similar levels for tech availability (41%) and tech operation issues (42%) and are also more likely to cite staffing availability issues (29%).

**Gen X** (45 to 60) are most likely to say they *don't* encounter challenges (tech-related or otherwise) managing timelines (31%).

Q. When you encounter challenges managing your content creation timelines or with fast/tight turnarounds, which specific roadblocks are you encountering? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# 4

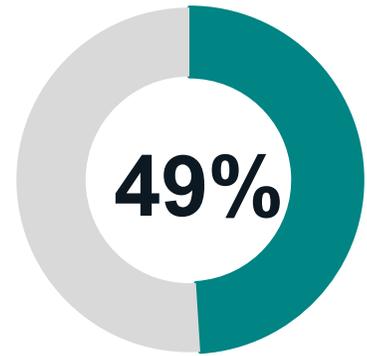
## Product Influencers

- Sizing the product influencer landscape among monetizing creators
- Role and value-add in the retail landscape
- Decision-making: the brand engagement decision and ROI strategy
- Barriers to authenticity and balancing authenticity with brand expectations



# More than 8 million U.S. teens and adults identify as product influencers

- The product influencer landscape skews slightly younger and “male” than overall monetizing creators.
- While more product influencers spend 20-plus hours monetizing content than overall monetizing creators, less are exclusively content creators.

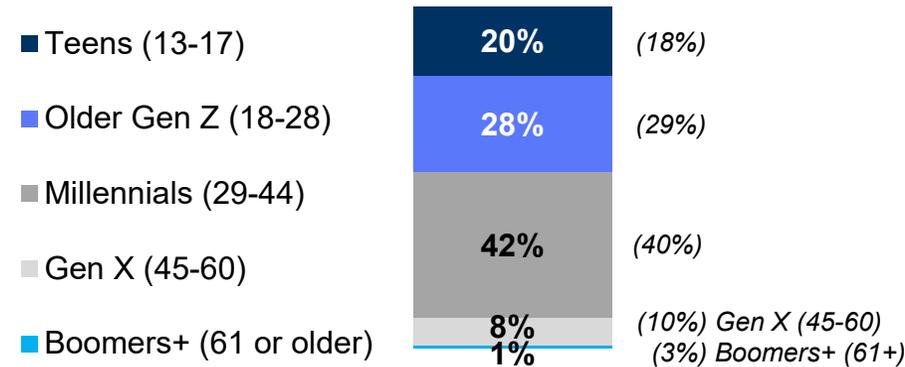


of monetizing creators are product influencers\*

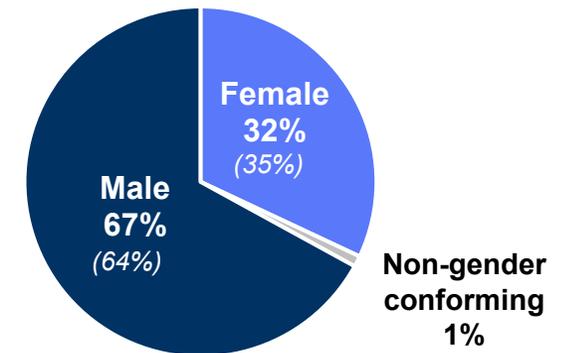
(equating to 8 million Americans aged 13-plus and 3% of U.S. teen and adult population)

( ) Parentheses indicate percentages for overall monetizing creators

## Age – Generational Cohorts

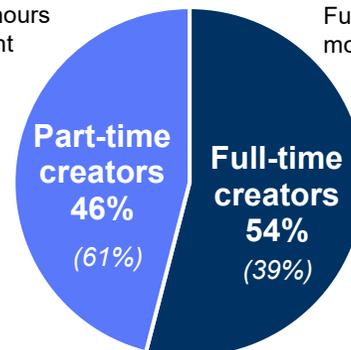


## Gender

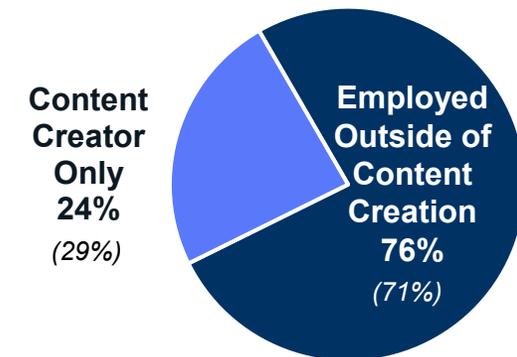


## Full-Time Versus Part-Time

Part Time = <20 hours monetizing content | Full Time = 20 or more hours monetizing content



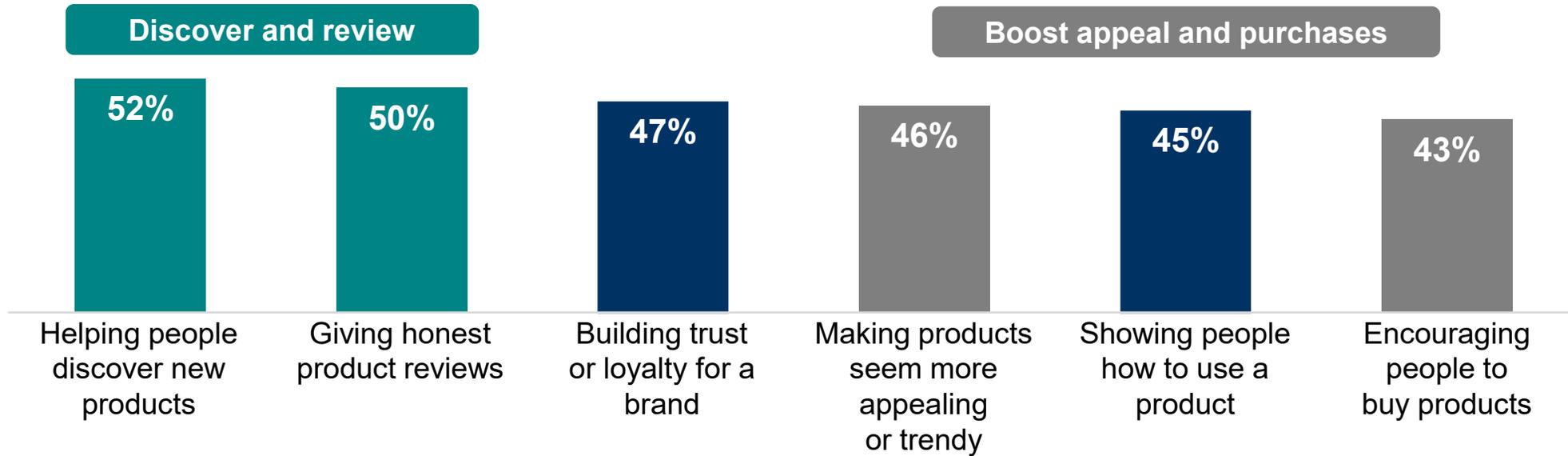
## Outside Employment



\*For this study, product influencer is defined as a monetizing content creator that monetizes their content through creator-generated advertising, brand sponsorships or ambassadorships, affiliate links or selling merchandise on behalf of another brand  
Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content and identified as a product influencer, n=724

# Product influencers view their role as more than just encouraging people to buy new products

How Product Influencers Believe They Add Value



Product influencers may see their value-add for brand partners differently based on the content category they monetize in.

*Among product influencers who see their role as...*

"Building trust or loyalty for a brand":

- 53% monetize review content

"Making products seem more appealing or trendy":

- 53% monetize automotive content
- 49% monetize DIY/how-to content

"Encouraging people to buy products":

- 47% monetize gaming content
- 49% monetize cosmetics/beauty/skincare content

Q. In your opinion, where do you add value as a product influencer? Please select all that apply Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content and identified as a product influencer, n=724

# Product quality and brand reputation are critical considerations in product influencers' brand deal decision-making

Two in three product influencers (67%) have a clear ROI strategy when deciding to work with a brand, especially those who do it full-time. Nearly all product influencers (94%) have at least some idea to determine whether the brand deal was worth the time and work they put in.

## Before Working With a Brand...

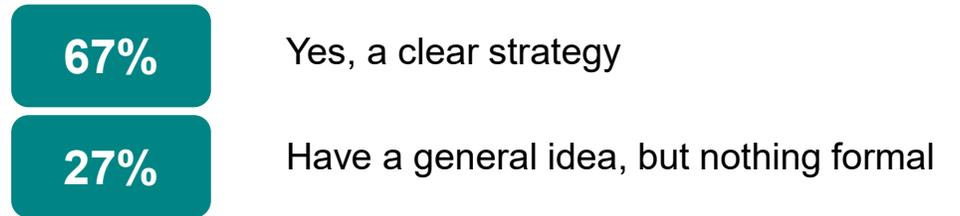
### Factors of Importance When Deciding to Work With a Brand

% = "extremely important" rating

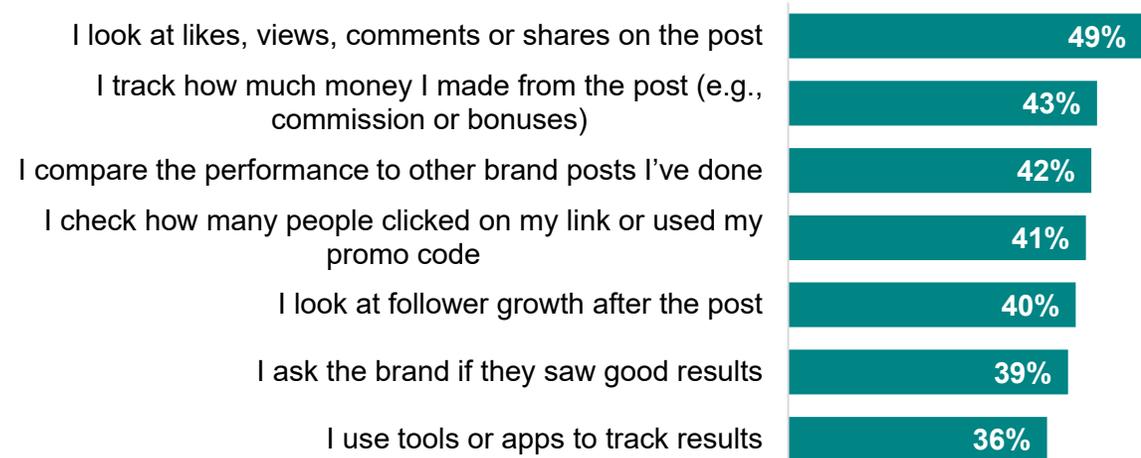


## After Working With a Brand...

### Do Product Influencers Have an ROI Strategy?



### ROI Strategy



Q. How important are the following to you when deciding to work with a brand? Q. When working on a brand deal, do you have a strategy to make sure it's worth the time and work you put in? This is sometimes called an ROI or Return on Investment strategy. Q. What do you usually do as part of your ROI (Return on Investment) strategy for brand deals to check if they are performing well? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content and identified as a product influencer, n=724

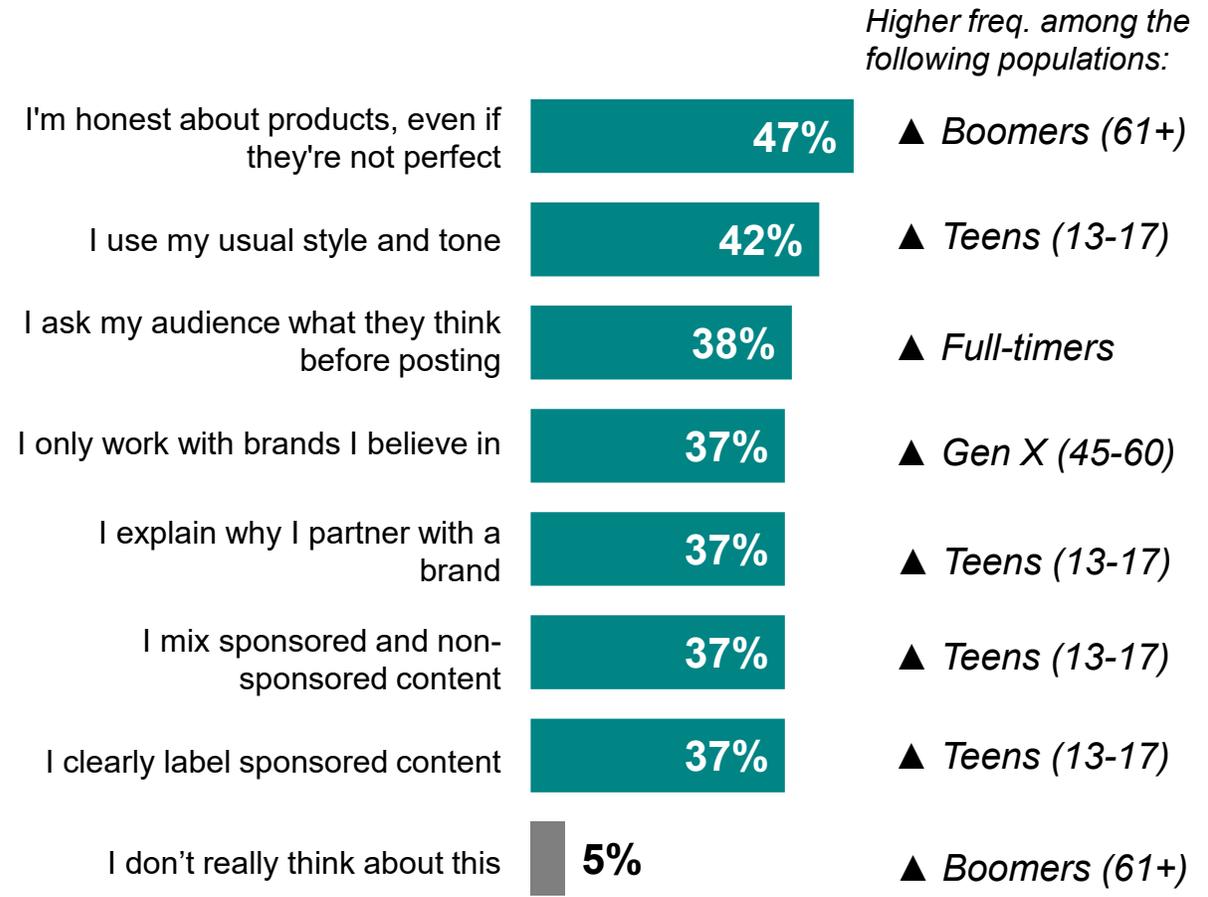
# Some influencers may feel pressured by brand requirements but also lean into honesty and authenticity with their audience, especially teens

## Challenges to Maintaining Authenticity

4 in 10 monetizing creators note at least one of the following as 'making it hard to stay authentic'



## Balancing Brand and Audience Expectations



Q. What makes it harder to stay authentic when working with brands? Q. How do you balance brand expectations while staying true to your audience?  
 Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content and identified as a product influencer, n=724

▲ = signify statistically significant differences compared to other cohorts

# 5

## Future Opportunities & AI

- Future plans for content creation, including expansion and exit
- Technologies purchases being considered
- AI in content creation: comfort level using, prior use and desired future use cases
- Content creation evolution



# Most monetizing creators are planning to expand their business

- Beyond growing their audience, at least a third are planning to work with bigger brands and try new platforms, formats or content.
- Full-time creators are more likely to focus on building a team than any other cohort, while part-timers are most focused on growing their audience.
- Teens (13 to 17) are more likely planning to expand (94%), especially by growing their audience (64%), working with bigger/more brands (50%) and trying new platforms/formats (47%).
- Boomers+ (61-plus) are least likely to be planning to expand right now (78%).

## Growth/Expansion Plans for Monetizing Creators

	Monetizing content creators	Full time	Part time	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomer+ (61+)
Growing my audience	<b>56%</b>	52%	<b>58%</b>	<b>64%</b>	50%	59%	51%	50%
Working with bigger or more brands	<b>39%</b>	41%	37%	<b>50%</b>	34%	40%	36%	16%
Trying new platforms or formats	<b>38%</b>	38%	37%	<b>47%</b>	31%	38%	38%	<b>44%</b>
Focusing on a different type of content	<b>36%</b>	<b>40%</b>	34%	<b>40%</b>	33%	39%	33%	21%
Starting a business or launching a product	<b>29%</b>	<b>32%</b>	27%	30%	28%	31%	23%	13%
Building a team or hiring help	<b>28%</b>	<b>35%</b>	23%	30%	28%	29%	20%	11%
Not planning to expand right now	<b>9%</b>	7%	11%	6%	10%	8%	15%	<b>22%</b>

**91%**

plan to  
expand their  
content work

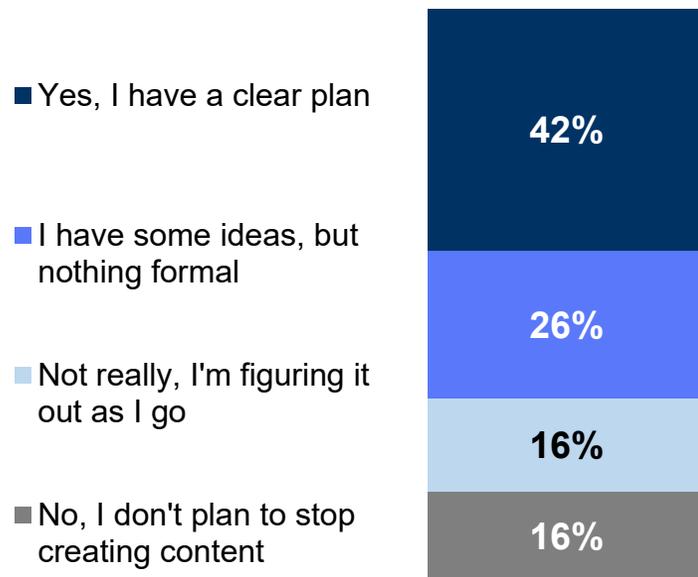
Q. How are you planning to expand your content creation work? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

Top values per category per cohort bolded

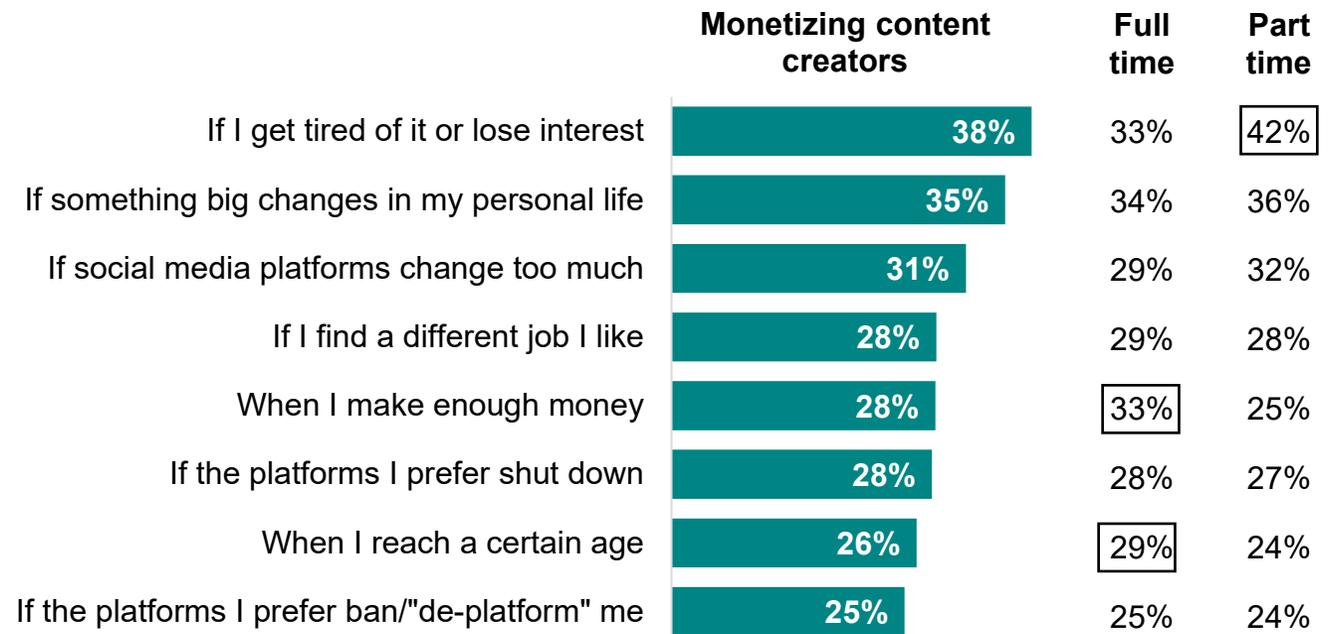
# 2 in 3 have at least some ideas about eventually moving on from content creation

- 60% of full-time creators have a clear plan for ending content creation, doubling the 31% of part-time creators with a plan.
- Among creators with an exit plan (or at least some idea), the top reason they expect to stop creating content is fatigue/loss of interest, which might further emphasize a need to address creator burnout. Fatigue/loss of interest is an even stronger expected exit reason among part-timers (42%).
- Of note, teens (ages 13 to 17) are more likely to consider exiting if they find a different job they like (33%), while Millennials (29 to 44) are the most concerned that the platforms they prefer might shut down (33%).

## Plan to Exit Content Creation



## Exit Triggers



Q. Do you have a plan to eventually stop creating content? Q. What might make you decide to stop creating content?  
 Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

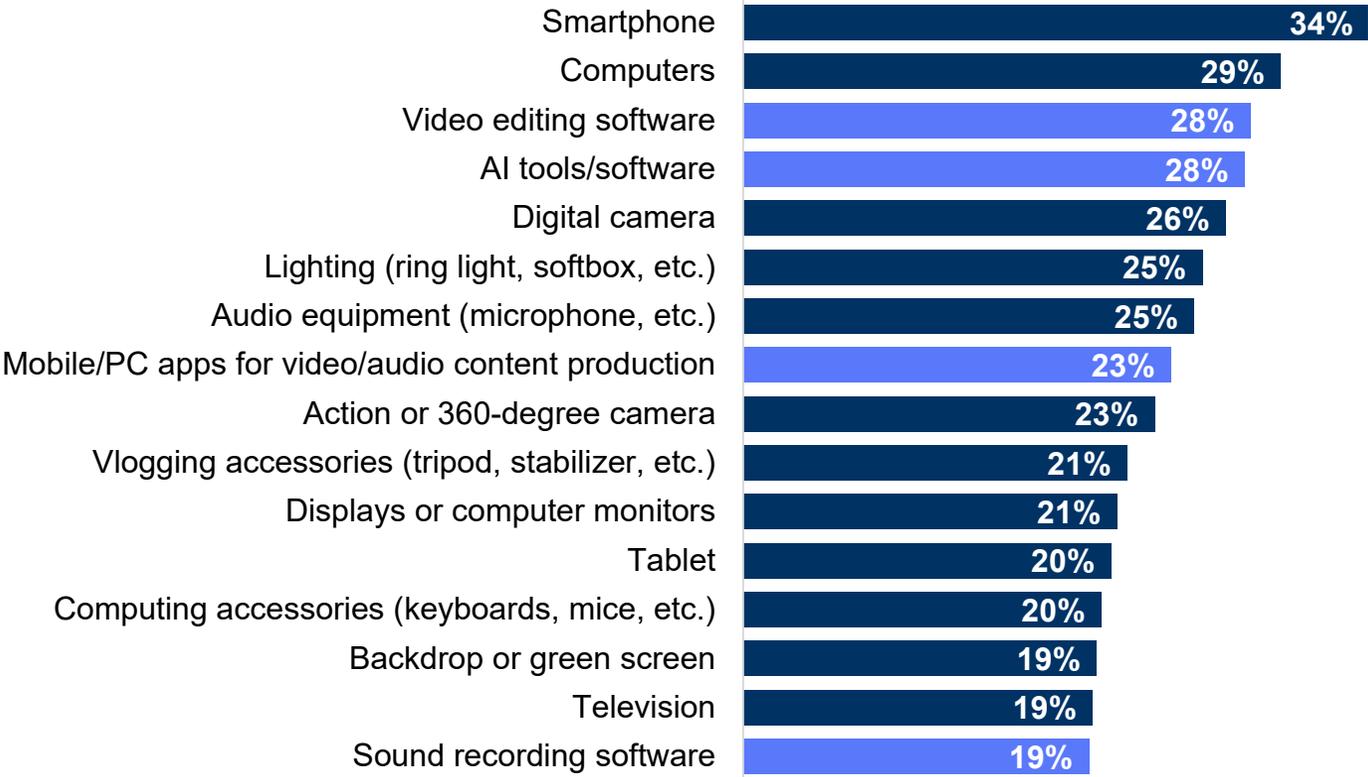
Box around value indicates value is statistically greater than value for the other segment (p<0.05).

# Looking at the next year, investment in tech is a strong consideration for 9 in 10 monetizing creators

More than half of monetizing creators are considering software/app purchases. Certain software/app considerations are age-driven: 35% of Millennials (29 to 44) expressed interest in AI tools/software, 30% of Older Gen Z (18 to 28) are considering video/audio content production apps (30%), and a fifth (21%) of Gen X (45 to 60) are considering sound recording software.

## Content Creation Technologies Purchase Considerations

**90%**  
of monetizing creators are considering investing in tech specifically for their content creation in the next year



**84%**  
are considering hardware and equipment purchases

**57%**  
are considering software and app purchases

Q. Which technologies specifically for creating your online content are you considering purchasing in the next year? Base: U.S. adults (18-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=610

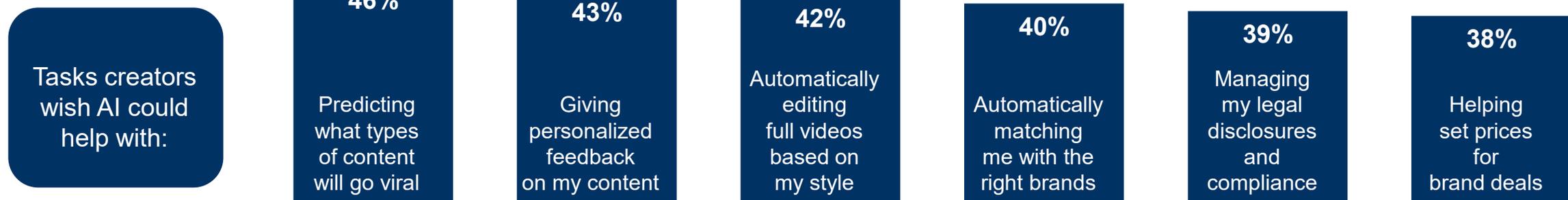
# Most creators are currently using or comfortable using at least some AI tools

- AI tool use and comfort is highest among full-time creators (91%), teens (13 to 17) and product influencers (both 93%).
- Product influencers would be especially interested in AI helping with administrative tasks such as legal and pricing in the future (both 43%).
- Full-time creators are less interested in predicting viral content (40%) than part-timers (49%) but are interested in price-setting assistance (41%).

## AI Tool Use and Comfort Level

	<i>Currently use an AI tool to...</i>	<i>Would be "very" or "somewhat" comfortable using an AI tool to...</i>	
<div style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 15px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>85%</b></p> <p>currently use tools with AI functions</p> </div>	Answer questions I have when creating content	41%	90%
	Generate ideas for content	40%	88%
	Summarize information	38%	91%
	Manage social media/community	38%	89%
	Search engine optimization	37%	91%
	Assist with technical functions	36%	89%
			<div style="background-color: #4a7ebb; color: white; padding: 10px; border-radius: 15px; text-align: center;"> <p><b>9 in 10</b></p> <p>would be comfortable using tools with AI functions</p> </div>

## Task Wish List

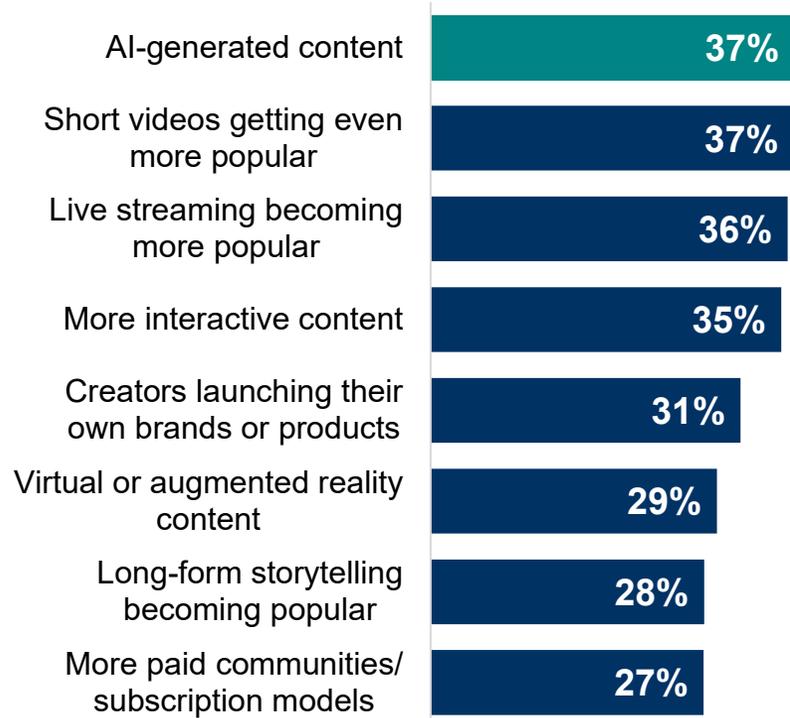


Q. How, if at all, are you currently using tools with AI functions? Please select all that apply. Q. How comfortable would you be with using AI technology for the following tasks? Q. What tasks do you wish AI could help you with? Please select all that apply. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

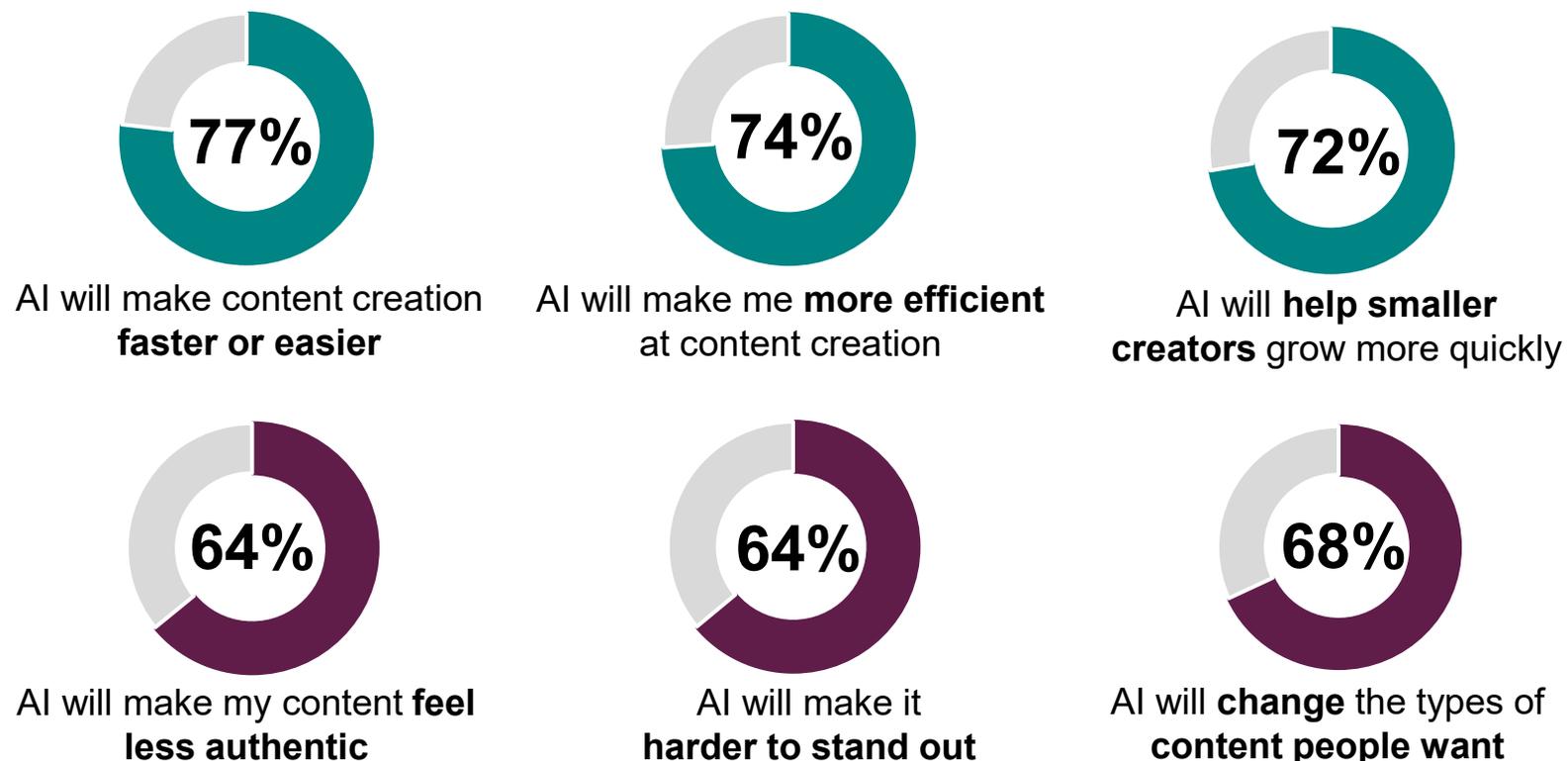
# A third or more anticipate AI-generated content will be the next big thing

- After teens, Boomers+ (61-plus) are most strongly expecting AI-generated content (45%) to be the next “big thing,” despite being the least comfortable using AI.
- Additionally, at least two-thirds of creators believe AI will impact consumers’ content preferences, which may positively and negatively affect creators.
- Overall, creators see AI as a tradeoff between speed/efficiency and authenticity/standing out, as the majority agree AI will impact both.

## The "Next Big Thing" in Content Creation



## Agreement With Statements About AI Technology



Q. What do you think is the next big thing in content creation? Q. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about AI technology? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Recommendations



# Recommendations for content platforms and tools supporting content creation



## Focus on deepening creator loyalty by enhancing ease of use and integrating AI.

More than 3 in 4 creators are creating and monetizing content across multiple platforms, but ease of use is the top driver for using their *preferred* platform. Differentiation through frictionless experiences (such as easier and intuitive user interfaces and streamlined content management tools) may keep the creators' focus from drifting.

Additionally, with at least 8 in 10 either using AI tools or comfortable using them, and a quarter considering purchasing AI software within the year, platforms and software companies incorporating AI tools that optimize creators' workflows will be welcomed. That may include predicting content trends, assisting their creative process or helping with business management and compliance, all tasks creators noted interest in AI assisting with.



## Prioritize offerings that enable creators' interests in self-investment.

For creators, self-promotion is an investment in their success. Making content easier to find for new fans ranks among the top three challenges faced by monetizing creators. So, it's no surprise that 80% indicated they've paid to promote themselves or grow, and this emphasizes their understanding of the power of self-promotion. Platforms and third-party resources that offer easy access to self-advertising options and avenues to boost and promote creators' content may attract higher adoption or increased use.

# Recommendations for companies hiring creators and influencers



## Keep authenticity collaboration top-of-mind when choosing influencer partners.

For influencers, authenticity is currency. They more often noted their value-add as a product influencer is helping their audience discover and see their review of products rather than simply encouraging purchase and boosting appeal.

Factors like unrealistic ad copy or reviews for products they don't believe in put the influencer at risk of alienating their audience. Empowering the influencer by sharing the product, giving them enough time with the product and allowing them to develop content in their unique voice and style help maintain authenticity that translates to their audience.

Additionally, burnout is near-universal for monetizing creators. Partnering with influencers by offering access to the tools needed to generate high-quality content or potentially generate new ideas for content may help alleviate burnout.



## Offer creative partnerships that emphasize audience engagement opportunities.

Monetizing content creators aren't just in it for the money. Self-expression and connecting with others are often equally or more important than monetization for content creators. And product influencers view themselves as more than just salespeople, believing they add more value in their role helping their audience discover and review new products rather than just "selling" them.

When approaching potential brand ambassadors, offering them content opportunities that are fun and engaging or new for their audience can be just as important as the pay.

# Appendix: Additional Analysis & Detailed Subgroup Results



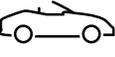
# Respondent Demographics

	Monetizing content creators (n=1547)	Full time (n=576) (A)	Part time (n=971) (B)
<b>Overall (%)</b>	100%	39%	61%
Mean age (years)	30.6	30.9	30.4
Female (%)	35%	34%	35%
Married (%)	64%	65%	64%
Parent (%)	37%	42% <b>B</b>	34%
Employment (%):			
Solely content creation	9%	13% <b>B</b>	7%
Self-employed	12%	14%	11%
Full-time employee (30+ hours per week)	49%	58% <b>B</b>	43%
Part-time employee (<30 hours per week)	10%	6%	12% <b>A</b>
College graduate or above (%)	28%	32% <b>B</b>	26%
Mean household income (annual)	\$101,785	\$110,049 <b>B</b>	\$96,499
Early tech adopter (%)	78%	88% <b>B</b>	72%
Region (%):			
Northeast	21%	22%	20%
Midwest	16%	16%	16%
South	41%	43%	40%
West	22%	19%	24% <b>A</b>
Area (%):			
Urban	54%	60% <b>B</b>	50%
Suburban	37%	32%	40% <b>A</b>
Rural	10%	9%	10%

Note: Letters shown (i.e., "A," "B") next to value indicate value for that segment is statistically greater than value for segment referenced (p<0.05).

Q. You mentioned that you create online user-created content in the following areas. Which content areas, if any, have you been paid for or monetized (i.e., make money/generate revenue from or receive free or discounted products/services)? Please think about any payment, regardless of amount. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Demographics by Content Categories Monetized

	Monetizing content creators	Gaming content	Review content	Personal life updates	Lifestyle content	Music content	Fashion content	DIY/how-to content	Comedy/skit content	Current affairs/trending topics	Cosmetics/beauty/skincare content	Podcasting content	Automotive content
Mean age (years)	30.6												
		27.6	29.5	29.9	30.0	29.7	28.8	30.7	29.5	31.5	28.9	30.3	31.1
Teens (13-17)	18%	25% ↑	21% ↑	19%	18%	20%	23% ↑	15%	17%	17%	19%	18%	17%
Older Gen Z (18-28)	29%	30%	28%	27%	27%	29%	29%	27%	29%	24% ↓	33%	28%	22% ↓
Millennials (29-44)	40%	39%	41%	44% ↑	44% ↑	40%	38%	46% ↑	45% ↑	46% ↑	38%	42%	48% ↑
Gen X (45-60)	10%	6% ↓	9%	9%	8% ↓	9%	8%	10%	7% ↓	12%	8%	11%	11%
Boomers+ (61+)	3%	0% ↓	1% ↓	1% ↓	2%	2%	1% ↓	1% ↓	1% ↓	2%	1% ↓	2%	2%
Male	64%	74% ↑	68% ↑	63%	65%	69% ↑	54% ↓	61%	72% ↑	69% ↑	40% ↓	71% ↑	75% ↑
Female	35%	25% ↓	32%	37%	34%	31% ↓	46% ↑	38%	28% ↓	30% ↓	59% ↑	28% ↓	25% ↓

Arrows shown (i.e., “↑,” “↓”) next to value indicate value for that segment is statistically greater/less than value for total monetizing creators referenced (p<0.05).

Q. You mentioned that you create online user-created content in the following areas. Which content areas, if any, have you been paid for or monetized (i.e., make money/generate revenue from or receive free or discounted products/services)? Please think about any payment, regardless of amount. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Monthly Revenue Ranges by Monetizing Creator Demographics

	Overall	Full Time versus Part Time		Age ranges					Gender		Employment outside of content	
		Full Time	Part Time	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomers+ (61+)	Male	Female	Not employed outside content creation	Employed outside content creation
\$1 - \$99	24%	17%	29%	14%	31%	23%	28%	31%	23%	26%	35%	20%
\$100 - \$499	29%	23%	33%	35%	26%	29%	26%	39%	30%	28%	25%	31%
\$500 - \$999	15%	15%	14%	18%	13%	14%	16%	15%	15%	15%	13%	15%
\$1,000 - \$4,999	22%	27%	19%	26%	19%	23%	23%	9%	23%	20%	17%	24%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	5%	9%	3%	7%	4%	5%	3%	0%	5%	4%	5%	5%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	2%	4%	1%	0%	3%	2%	3%	6%	2%	2%	2%	2%
\$15,000 or more	3%	6%	2%	1%	4%	4%	2%	0%	3%	4%	3%	3%

Q. How much revenue do you typically generate per month from your online content? Please think of all revenue sources (e.g., advertising, donations, merchandise sales, etc.) and all platforms. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Monthly Revenue by Content Category That Creators Monetize In

	Overall	Gaming content	Fashion content	Cosmetics/ beauty/ skincare content	Music content	Podcasting content	Review content	DIY/ how-to content	Automotive content	Comedy/ skit content	Lifestyle	Personal life updates	Current affairs/ trending topics
\$1 - \$99	24%	18%	18%	20%	21%	20%	17%	18%	19%	21%	19%	19%	21%
\$100 - \$499	29%	28%	23%	27%	29%	27%	27%	26%	28%	26%	28%	27%	27%
\$500 - \$999	15%	15%	15%	17%	16%	14%	18%	18%	18%	13%	16%	15%	15%
\$1,000 - \$4,999	22%	26%	28%	21%	21%	26%	25%	26%	25%	28%	24%	25%	23%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	5%	7%	9%	10%	6%	7%	6%	5%	4%	6%	6%	6%	6%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
\$15,000 or more	3%	4%	6%	3%	4%	3%	4%	5%	3%	4%	6%	6%	5%

Q. How much revenue do you typically generate per month from your online content? Please think of all revenue sources (e.g., advertising, donations, merchandise sales, etc.) and all platforms. Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Platforms Used Where Creators Monetize Content

	Overall	Male	Female	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomers+ (61+)	Full time	Part time	Product influencer	Not product influencer
<b>Video/streaming/gaming</b>												
YouTube/Shorts	45%	51%	35%	60%	39%	47%	39%	18%	46%	45%	52%	39%
TikTok	43%	39%	50%	49%	47%	40%	35%	10%	45%	41%	51%	35%
Instagram Live/Reels	35%	34%	38%	49%	30%	35%	31%	18%	38%	33%	45%	26%
Facebook Live	31%	32%	30%	44%	20%	34%	34%	16%	35%	29%	40%	23%
Twitch	20%	22%	15%	22%	23%	20%	12%	1%	24%	17%	25%	14%
YouNow	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	0%	3%	4%	2%	4%	1%
<b>Photography/graphic design</b>												
Instagram	51%	51%	52%	62%	53%	48%	44%	21%	54%	49%	62%	41%
Snapchat	23%	23%	24%	30%	24%	23%	13%	8%	31%	19%	32%	15%
Pinterest	13%	11%	17%	18%	9%	13%	16%	12%	17%	11%	17%	10%
VSCO	2%	1%	4%	1%	3%	2%	2%	0%	3%	1%	3%	1%
<b>Music/podcast/audio</b>												
Spotify	24%	26%	20%	27%	26%	22%	22%	12%	30%	20%	30%	18%
Amazon Music	18%	19%	15%	21%	15%	19%	14%	21%	25%	13%	22%	13%
iTunes	11%	12%	8%	11%	10%	10%	12%	10%	15%	8%	14%	7%
Pandora	11%	11%	10%	13%	9%	10%	13%	13%	13%	9%	14%	8%
Discord	10%	12%	6%	11%	9%	11%	10%	3%	13%	9%	13%	7%
SoundCloud	10%	12%	6%	7%	10%	11%	13%	8%	14%	8%	15%	5%
Clubhouse	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	0%	4%	1%	3%	1%
<b>Writing/education</b>												
X/Twitter	31%	35%	24%	33%	31%	32%	26%	9%	40%	25%	39%	23%
Patreon	10%	12%	8%	10%	11%	11%	9%	1%	13%	9%	14%	7%
Bluesky	6%	6%	4%	6%	4%	7%	7%	8%	8%	4%	8%	3%
Quora	5%	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%	7%	2%	8%	3%	7%	3%
Medium	5%	5%	5%	9%	2%	5%	6%	9%	7%	4%	5%	4%
Substack	4%	4%	4%	7%	3%	4%	6%	5%	6%	4%	6%	3%
Udemy	3%	3%	2%	5%	1%	3%	6%	0%	4%	2%	4%	2%
Other	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	4%	11%	1%	2%	0%	3%
Base Size (N)	1547	935	590	284	299	666	234	64	576	971	724	823

Q. You mentioned earlier that you 'monetized' or made money/generated revenue from online content. On which of the following platforms can consumers watch, listen, or view the online content you monetize?

Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Ad revenue leads as the top source of content monetization revenue

## Sources of Monetization

Ads  
85%

Tips  
64%

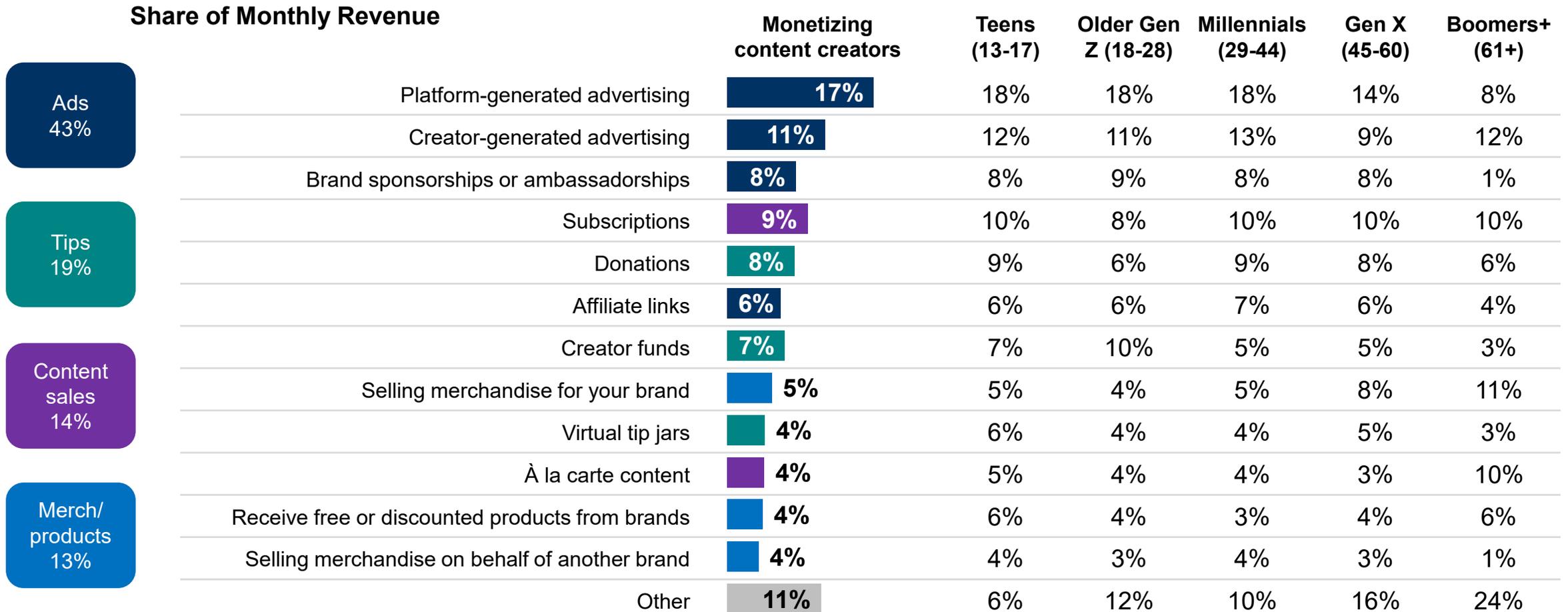
Content sales  
56%

Merch/  
products  
53%

	Monetizing content creators	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomers+ (61+)
Platform-generated advertising	66%	76%	66%	67%	52%	25%
Creator-generated advertising	55%	63%	53%	56%	43%	33%
Brand sponsorships or ambassadorships	49%	54%	53%	49%	40%	9%
Subscriptions	47%	48%	40%	45%	41%	12%
Donations	44%	53%	42%	47%	33%	19%
Affiliate links	43%	44%	29%	35%	28%	16%
Creator funds	36%	39%	32%	36%	35%	36%
Selling merchandise for your brand	35%	41%	26%	30%	20%	10%
Virtual tip jars	34%	57%	46%	47%	38%	24%
À la carte content	30%	40%	25%	30%	22%	26%
Receive free or discounted products from brands	30%	45%	41%	32%	26%	12%
Selling merchandise on behalf of another brand	29%	44%	28%	26%	25%	26%
Other	7%	3%	7%	7%	13%	18%

Q. You mentioned that you monetize your online user-created content (i.e., make money/generate revenue from or receive free products/services for) in the following area. How do you monetize this content?  
Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Ad revenue also accounts for the biggest slice of monthly revenue generated



Q. You mentioned that you monetize your online user-created content (i.e., make money/generate revenue from or receive free products/services for) in the following area. How do you monetize this content?  
 Q. What percent of your monthly revenue comes from each of the following sources? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Self-expression and community rank high in motivations for creating and monetizing content

## Motivations for Creating Content

Describes me completely/very well

		Monetizing content creators	Full time	Part time	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomers+ (61+)
<b>Self-expression</b>	Allows me to express myself	88%	89%	88%	92%	84%	90%	86%	92%
	Allows me to turn my passions into a job	85%	91%	81%	91%	84%	84%	79%	83%
	Allows me to share my expertise with others	84%	90%	81%	90%	75%	88%	81%	88%
	Gives me something to do when I am bored	84%	84%	85%	89%	82%	89%	73%	65%
<b>Monetization</b>	I like to set my own schedule	87%	89%	86%	91%	82%	89%	87%	85%
	Provides a secondary source of income	77%	83%	74%	83%	75%	78%	72%	63%
	I don't want a traditional job	62%	71%	57%	63%	63%	61%	63%	73%
	Provides my main source of income	60%	78%	50%	71%	61%	59%	48%	33%
	I do it just to make money	55%	68%	47%	56%	59%	53%	50%	40%
<b>Community</b>	Connects me with like-minded people	86%	90%	84%	95%	79%	89%	83%	72%
	I like being able to influence other people	78%	86%	74%	88%	72%	79%	79%	60%
	I like being recognized or well known	73%	84%	67%	84%	68%	76%	68%	56%
<b>Self-promotion</b>	Allows me to build my personal brand or digital personality	82%	86%	80%	91%	79%	83%	75%	81%
	Allows me to build my business	77%	83%	74%	84%	71%	79%	72%	71%
	Allows me to promote my business	77%	86%	72%	83%	73%	80%	73%	69%



Motivations high-low within subgroup

Q. Why do you, personally, create and monetize your online user-created content?  
Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=787

# Top challenges also consistent for creators that “just do it to make money”

(Indexed Scores)

## Top Challenges to Content Creation ● Top challenges

	Total	“I just do it to make money”	
		Describes me completely/very well	Does not describe me very well/at all
Consistently creating high-quality content that keeps fans engaged	142 <span style="color: green;">●</span>	133 <span style="color: green;">●</span>	150 <span style="color: green;">●</span>
Making enough money to make it worth my while	137 <span style="color: green;">●</span>	130 <span style="color: green;">●</span>	146 <span style="color: green;">●</span>
Making my content more discoverable or easier to find to new fans or followers	136 <span style="color: green;">●</span>	126 <span style="color: green;">●</span>	146 <span style="color: green;">●</span>
Creating enough content to keep fans engaged	114 <span style="color: green;">●</span>	109	119 <span style="color: green;">●</span>
Creating unique content	105	105	104
Avoiding creator fatigue/burnout	105	103	107
Getting fans to engage during peak traditional media hours (e.g., 6-10 p.m.)	102	102	102
Reaching fan base	96	97	91
Finding the time to create content	95	93	95
Managing content creation timelines, fast/tight turnarounds	94	93	94
Funding/budgeting for tools for content creation	92	95	93
Fees charged by platforms negatively impacting my earnings	91	97	88
Being able to trace referral sources to understand how people get to your content	90	93	87
Being able to measure content effectiveness	90	93	85
Funding/budgeting for staff/employees/editors/assistants	89	93	89
Understanding and complying with copyright laws	84	88	81
Finding collaborators to create with	83	88	81
Understanding my audience	80	83	73
Experiencing online harassment	75	77	71

Q. Which of these 5 is most challenging to you when creating online content, and which is least challenging to you?  
 Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

 Challenges high-low within subgroup

# Many creators have invested in their success by paying for promotion and growth

## Self-Promotion & Paying for Success

	Monetizing creators	Full time	Part time	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomer+ (61+)
Paid social media ads	41%	43%	40%	49%	38%	43%	35%	28%
Paid to boost or promote content directly within a platform	30%	33%	29%	39%	28%	29%	28%	28%
Subscribed to a platform that promotes creators	27%	30%	24%	29%	25%	28%	23%	14%
Promoted content via paid giveaways or contests	23%	27%	20%	28%	20%	25%	20%	13%
Paid for followers, likes, views or comments	21%	22%	21%	28%	19%	22%	19%	6%
Paid for shout-outs or collaborations with other creators/influencers	20%	28%	15%	24%	19%	22%	14%	9%
Paid for third-party tools or software	20%	25%	16%	25%	17%	21%	17%	11%
Paid to be featured on newsletters, websites or blogs	19%	24%	15%	26%	13%	22%	12%	12%
Hired someone to help with content promotion	17%	23%	13%	18%	16%	18%	14%	11%
Used engagement or follower “bots” or automation tools	15%	17%	14%	17%	15%	15%	15%	7%
None of the above	20%	14%	24%	13%	24%	18%	27%	35%

Q. In which of the following ways have you ever paid to promote or grow your user-created content or platform? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Many creators plan to expand through audience growth and trying new content opportunities

## Content Expansion Plans

**91%** plan to expand their content work

	Monetizing content creators	Full time	Part time	Teens (13-17)	Older Gen Z (18-28)	Millennials (29-44)	Gen X (45-60)	Boomer+ (61+)
Growing my audience	<b>56%</b>	52%	58%	64%	50%	59%	51%	50%
Working with bigger or more brands	<b>39%</b>	41%	37%	50%	34%	40%	36%	16%
Trying new platforms or formats	<b>38%</b>	38%	37%	47%	31%	38%	38%	44%
Focusing on a different type of content	<b>36%</b>	40%	34%	40%	33%	39%	33%	21%
Starting a business or launching a product	<b>29%</b>	32%	27%	30%	28%	31%	23%	13%
Building a team or hiring help	<b>28%</b>	35%	23%	30%	28%	29%	20%	11%
Other	<b>1%</b>	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%
I'm not planning to expand right now	<b>9%</b>	7%	11%	6%	10%	8%	15%	22%

Q. How are you planning to expand your content creation work? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

# Personal life update and lifestyle creators are more likely to wish AI could help match them with the right brands; current affairs creators are interested in using AI to manage legal disclosures

## AI Task Wish List by Content Category Monetizing

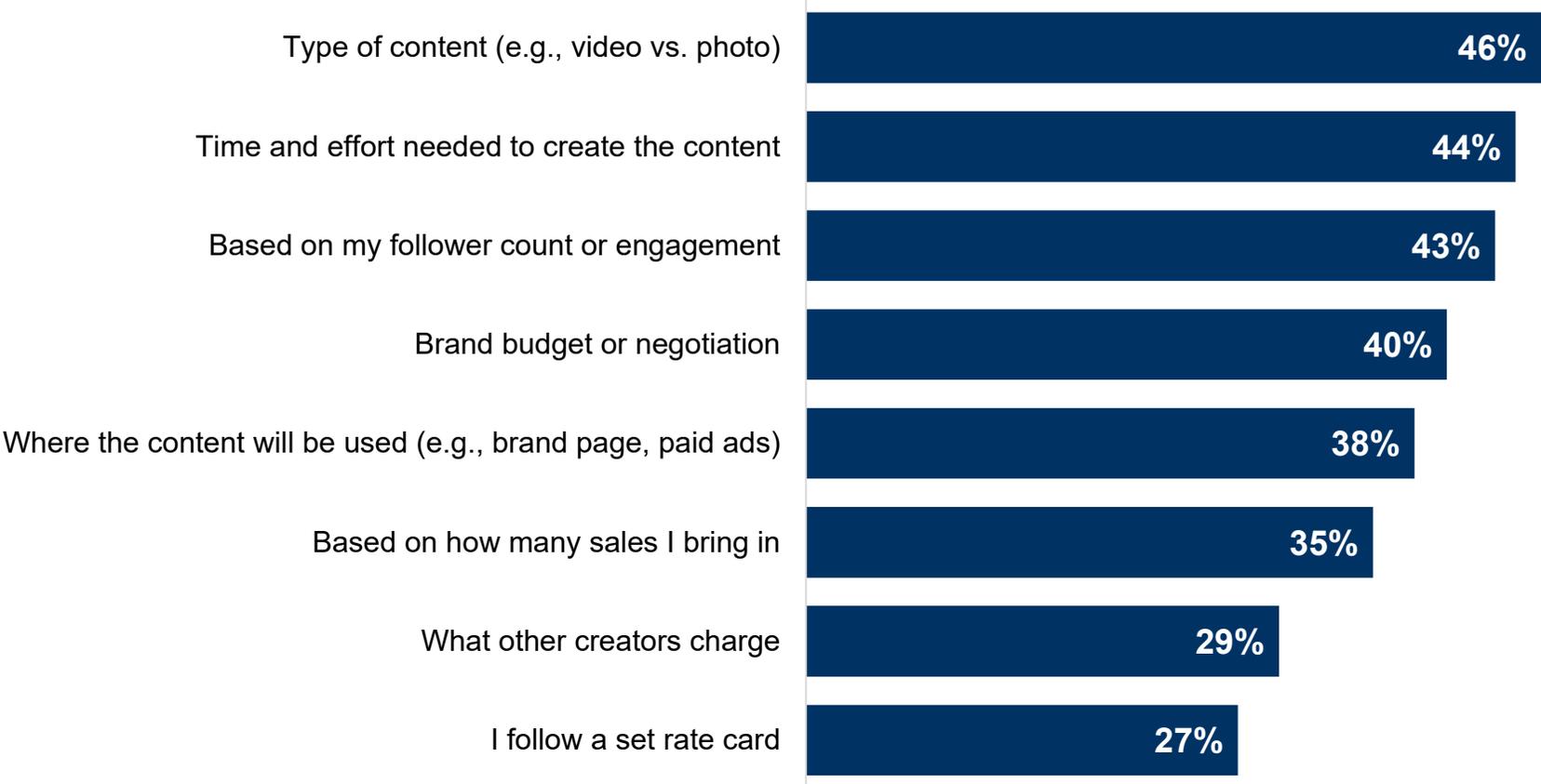
	Total monetizing creators	Content Category Monetizing											
		Personal life updates	Review	Gaming	Lifestyle	Music	DIY/ how-to	Comedy/ skit	Current affairs/ trending topics	Fashion	Podcasting	Cosmetics/ beauty/ skincare	Automotive
Predicting what types of content will go viral	46%	46%	48%	46%	43%	47%	46%	45%	49%	48%	46%	49%	46%
Giving personalized feedback on my content	43%	46%	46%	45%	45%	46%	46%	49%	50%	47%	48%	48%	54%
Automatically editing full videos based on my style	42%	42%	46%	45%	44%	43%	43%	45%	45%	48%	46%	46%	44%
Automatically matching me with the right brands	40%	47%	44%	44%	49%	43%	43%	41%	46%	42%	43%	43%	54%
Managing my legal disclosures and compliance	39%	41%	44%	41%	44%	45%	43%	44%	50%	49%	42%	47%	45%
Helping set prices for brand deals	38%	43%	43%	43%	47%	42%	43%	46%	42%	44%	44%	46%	50%

Q. What tasks do you wish AI could help you with? Base: U.S. adults and teens (13-plus) creating and monetizing online content, n=1547

  Box around value indicates value is statistically higher/lower than total (p<0.05).

# While a quarter follow a set rate card when considering rates for brand deals, more consider the type of content effort needed to create before pricing; less than 5% go with what's offered

Factors Considered for Brand/Product Deal Rates



**3%**  
of product influencers  
"go with  
what's  
offered"

# Nearly all monetizing creators follow some type of compliance guideline when sharing content for monetizing

## Compliance Measures



**96%**  
of product influencers  
follow some type of  
compliance guidelines  
for their content

# Additional CTA Resources



# About CTA Research



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CTA quantifies the size and momentum of the industry through a variety of reports, tracking sales volume and revenues for hundreds of tech products. Our reports include one- and five-year forecasts and monthly forecast reports for select hardware categories. For more information, contact CTA research: [research@CTA.tech](mailto:research@CTA.tech).



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