

June 2026

# Future Partners

Sponsored by Miles Partnership



# The State of the American Traveler: Tech Edition

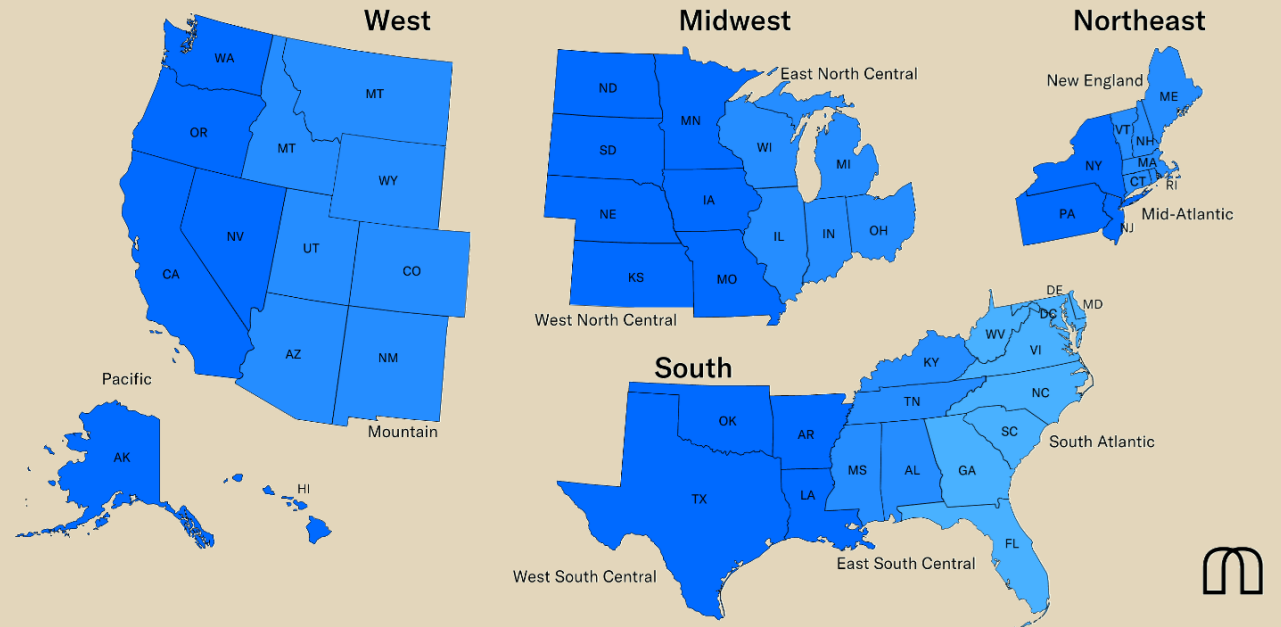
*Bringing the future of travel  
within reach*

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# The State of the American Traveler

- Monthly tracking survey
- Representative sample of adult American travelers in each of four U.S. regions
- Tracks traveler sentiment to generate insights into domestic travel trends
- 4,000+ fully completed surveys collected each wave.
- Surveys collected thru [May 2026](#)
- Confidence interval of +/- 1.55%
- Data is weighted to reflect the actual population of each region

United States Census Regions and Divisions



# Tune into our Monthly Webinar Series for the Latest on American Travel Sentiment & Behaviors



Livestream Calendar

# A Look Back:

# 2016

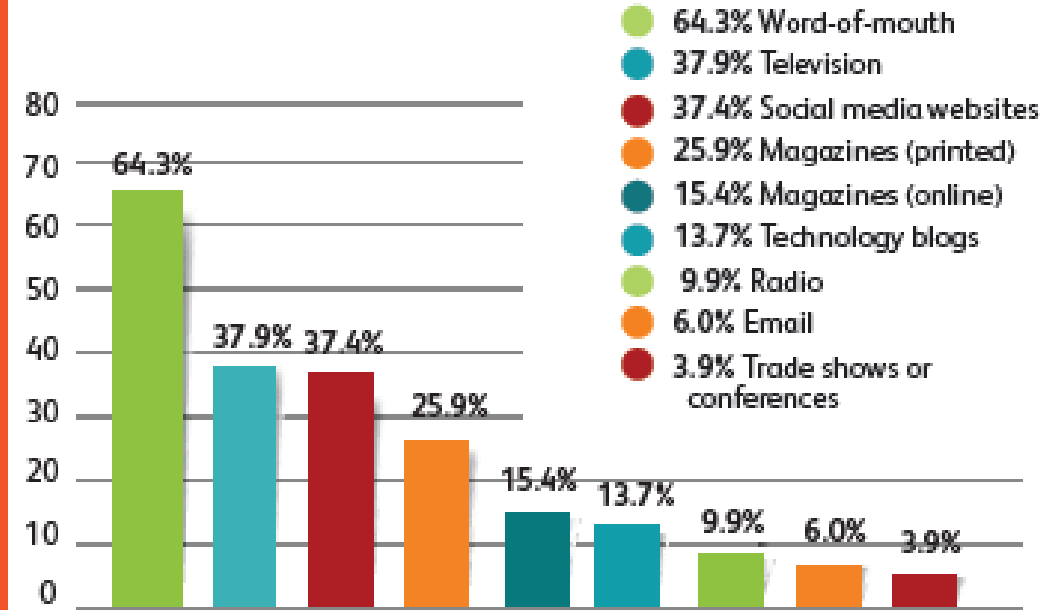
## Keeping Up-To-Date With New Technology



- 11.5% I'm totally up to date
- 25.2% I'm keeping up
- 35.4% I'm generally keeping up, but not completely
- 17.1% I'm falling behind
- 10.9% I'm not interested in new travel technology

Question: When it comes to the latest in travel planning technology, would you say you are keeping up or falling behind? (Select one)

## How Travelers Learn about New Technologies



Question: How do you generally learn about new technologies used in travel planning? (Select all that apply)

# A Look Back:

# 2016

## Trust: Google-Curated Content

11.2% Always trustworthy

44.8% Usually trustworthy

37.8% Sometimes trustworthy

4.8% Rarely trustworthy

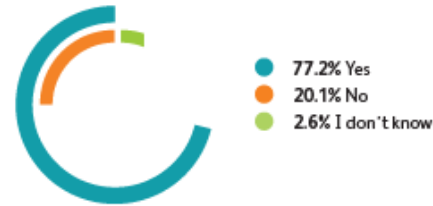
1.4% Never trustworthy

Question: How much would you trust the content, opinions and advice available in Google-Curated destination content?

## Google-Curated Content + Search Engines

Search engines are the centerpiece of how most travelers find DMO content, and they are widely used. Nearly 8 of 10 leisure travelers report having used a search engine to plan their trips in the past year. Recently, however, Google has expanded into providing its own curated destination content, with a layout that can make organic listings challenging to reach. Travelers appear to value, trust and use this content, validating industry concern that this content will become a serious competitor to DMO resources.

### Use of Search Engines in Travel Planning (All Travelers)



Question: In the past three (3) years, have you used an internet search engine (Google, Yahoo, Bing, etc.) to help you find travel information?

### Trust: Google-Curated Content

11.2% Always trustworthy

44.8% Usually trustworthy

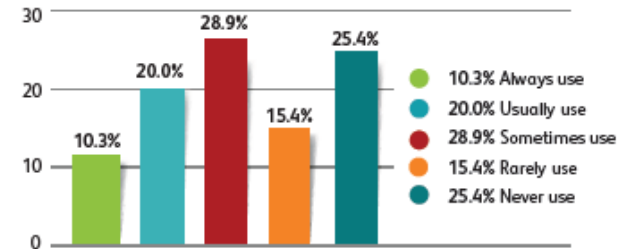
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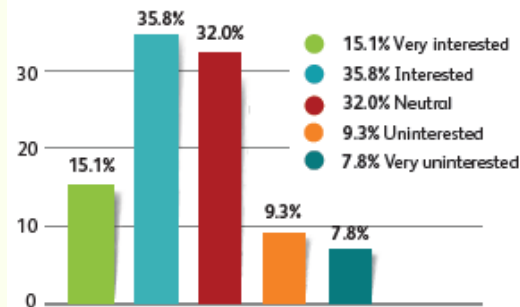
Question: How much would you trust the content, opinions and advice available in Google-Curated destination content?

### Use: Google-Curated Content



Question: How frequently do you use Google-Curated destination content to plan your leisure trips? (Select one)

### Interest in Use for Destination Research



Question: In general, how interested would you be in using Google-Curated Content to research leisure destinations you are considering visiting? (Select one)

### Importance: Google-Curated Content

10.9% Extremely important

21.7% Important

34.9% Of some importance

19.2% Of little importance

13.3% Of no importance

Question: In general, how important is Google-Curated destination content in how you pick the leisure destinations you visit?

**Fast Forward to Today:**

2026

Whats New  
in Search



# Today's Agenda

- *Contextualizing Tech Trends in Travel:  
Current Travel Sentiment*
- *The Changing Landscape of Tech Trends  
in an AI-First World*
- *The Evolution of Short Form Video*

# Travel Sentiment



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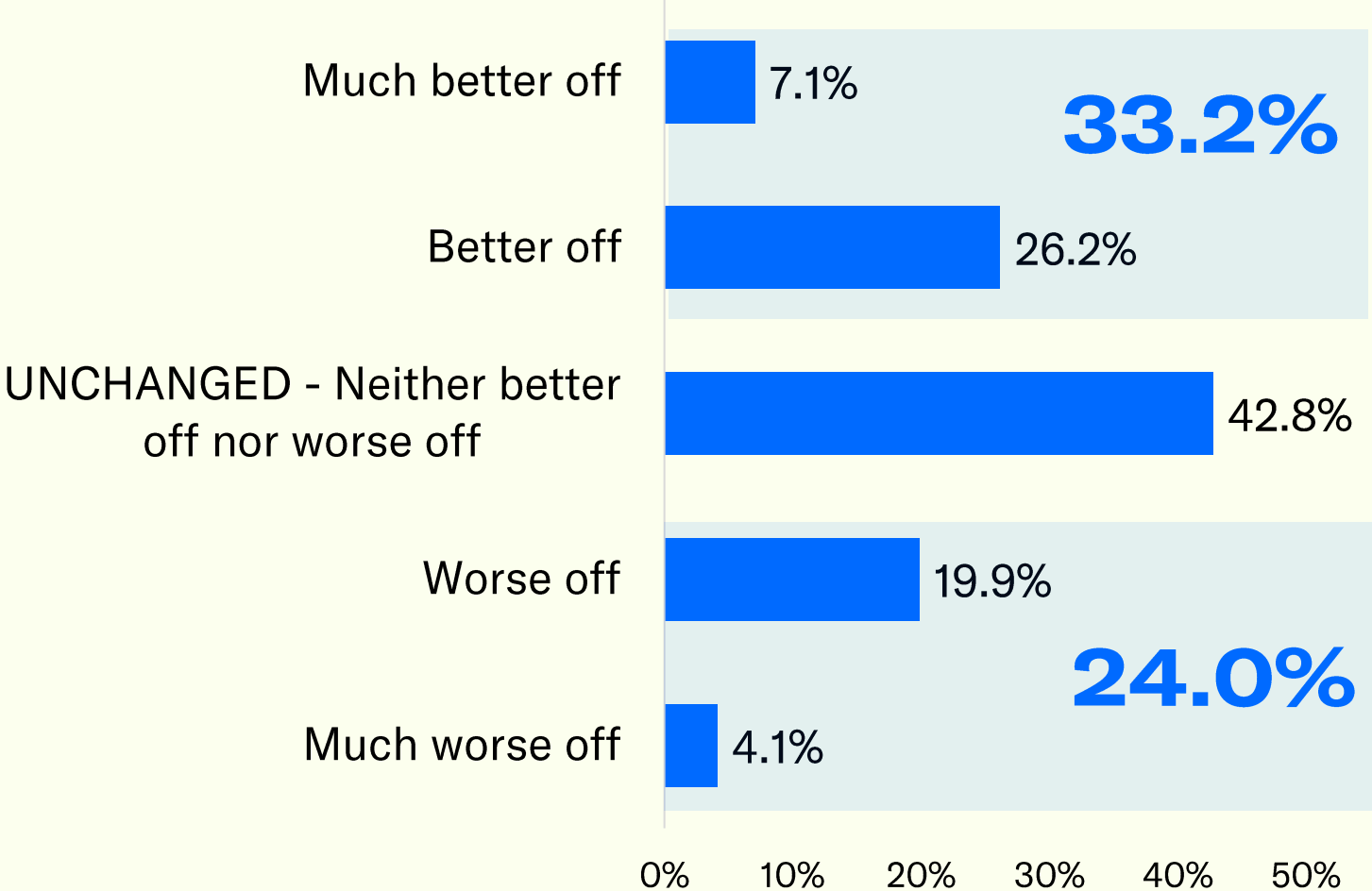


*American travelers are more committed than ever to travel, with recent record-high shares of those who say travel is a high near-term budget priority and a steady upward trend in the average number of leisure trips planned and dollars budgeted.*

# Household Finances Show Continued Stability

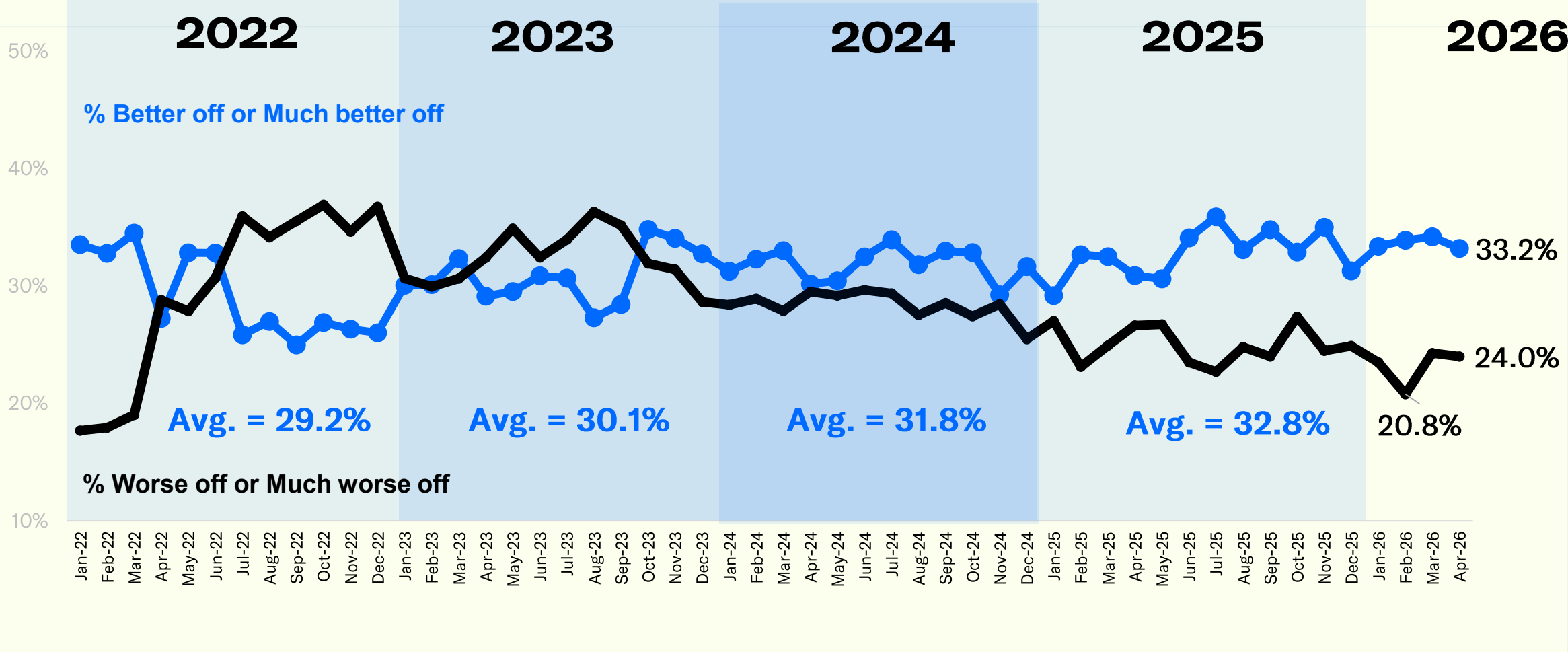
**Question:**

Would you say that you (and your household) are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?



# Household Finances Show Continued Stability

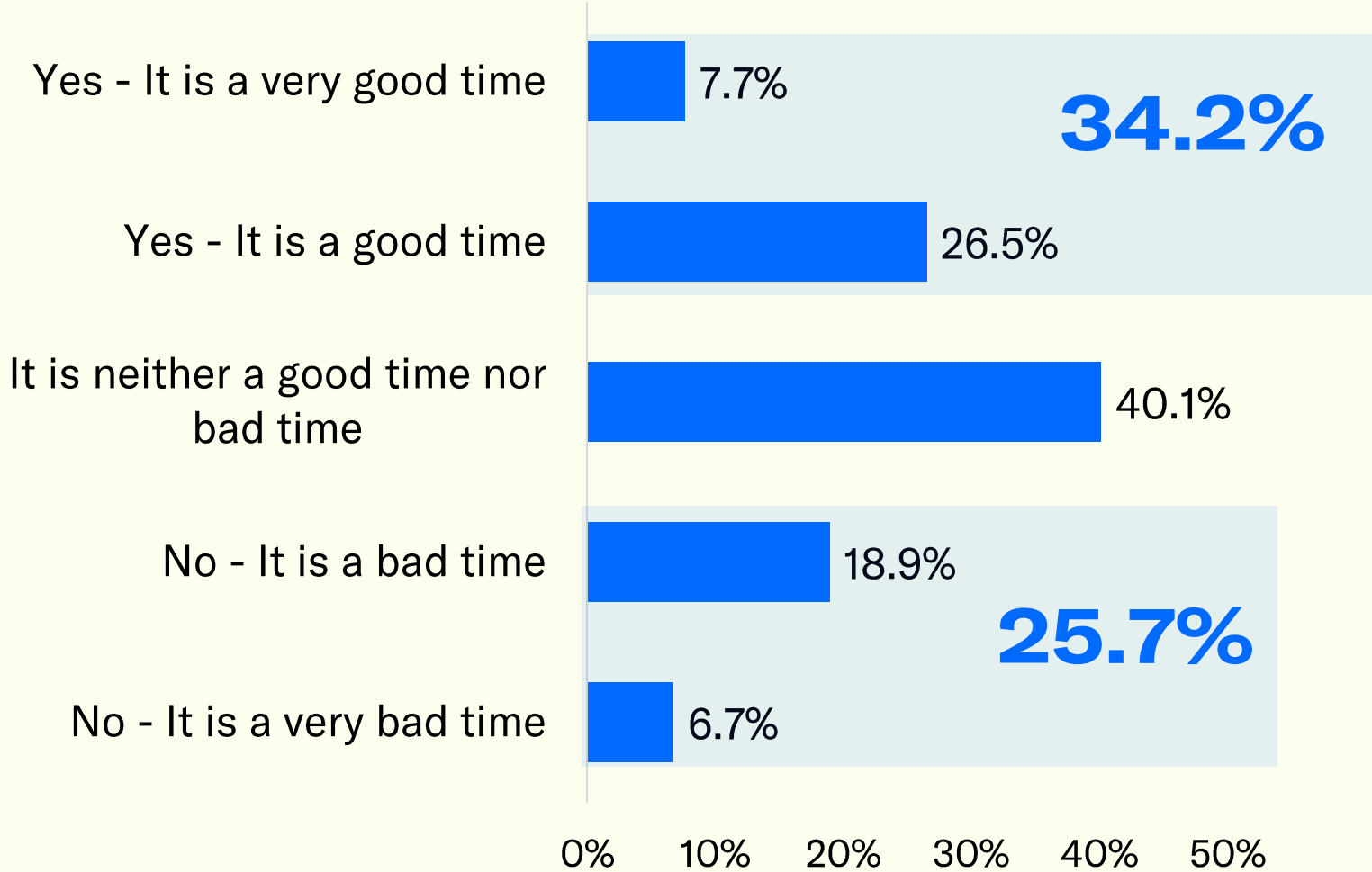
**Question:** Would you say that you (and your household) are better off or worse off financially than you were a year ago?



# More Travelers See Now as a Good Time to Spend Than a Bad One

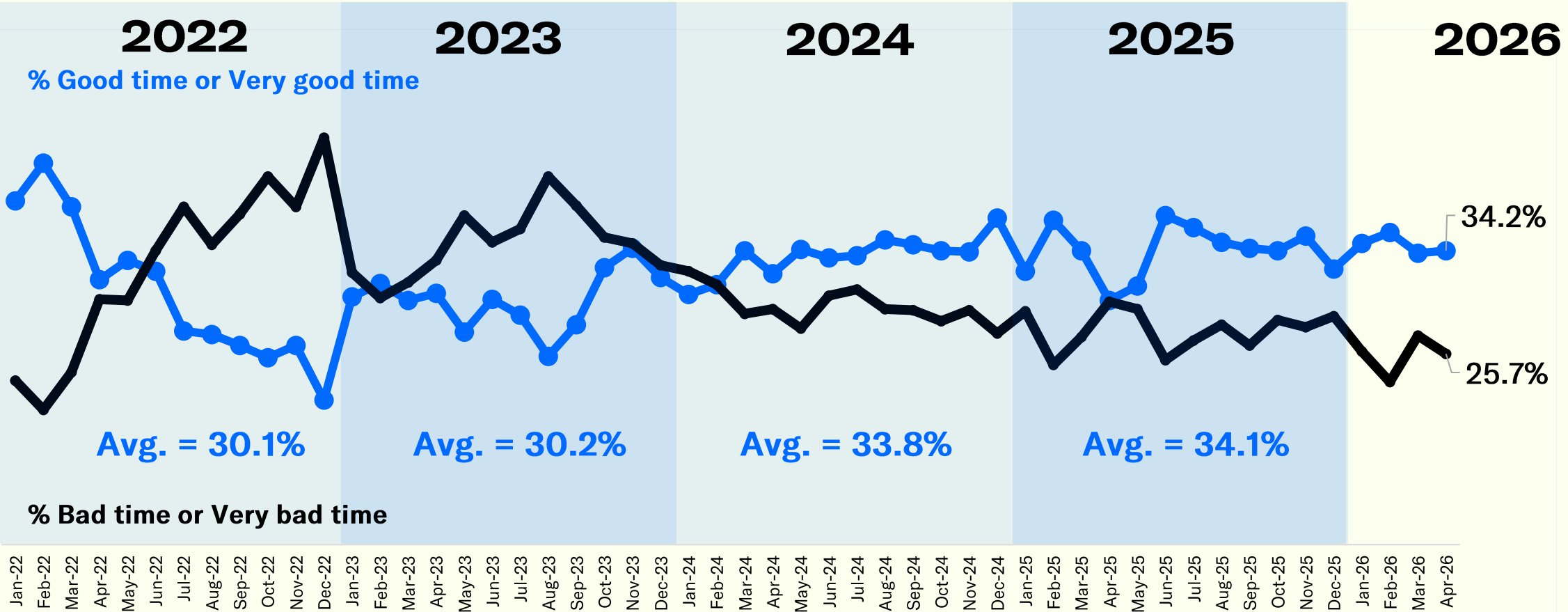
**Question:**

Thinking only of your household's finances, do you feel NOW is a good or bad time for you to spend money on leisure travel?



# More Travelers See Now as a Good Time to Spend Than a Bad One

Question: Thinking only of your household's finances, do you feel NOW is a good or bad time for you to spend money on leisure travel?

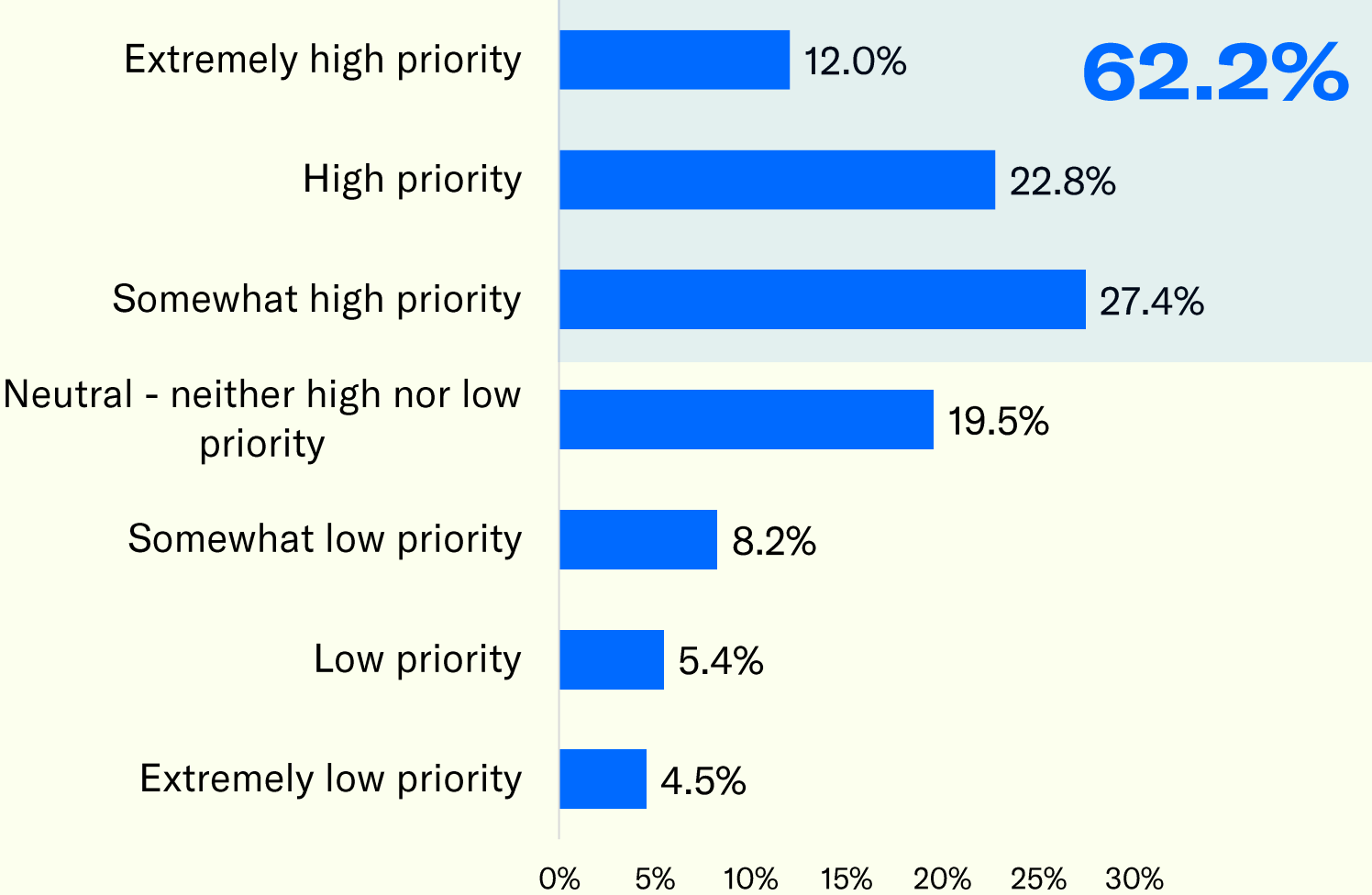


# Travel Still Claims a Top Spot Among Consumer Spending Priorities

**Question:**

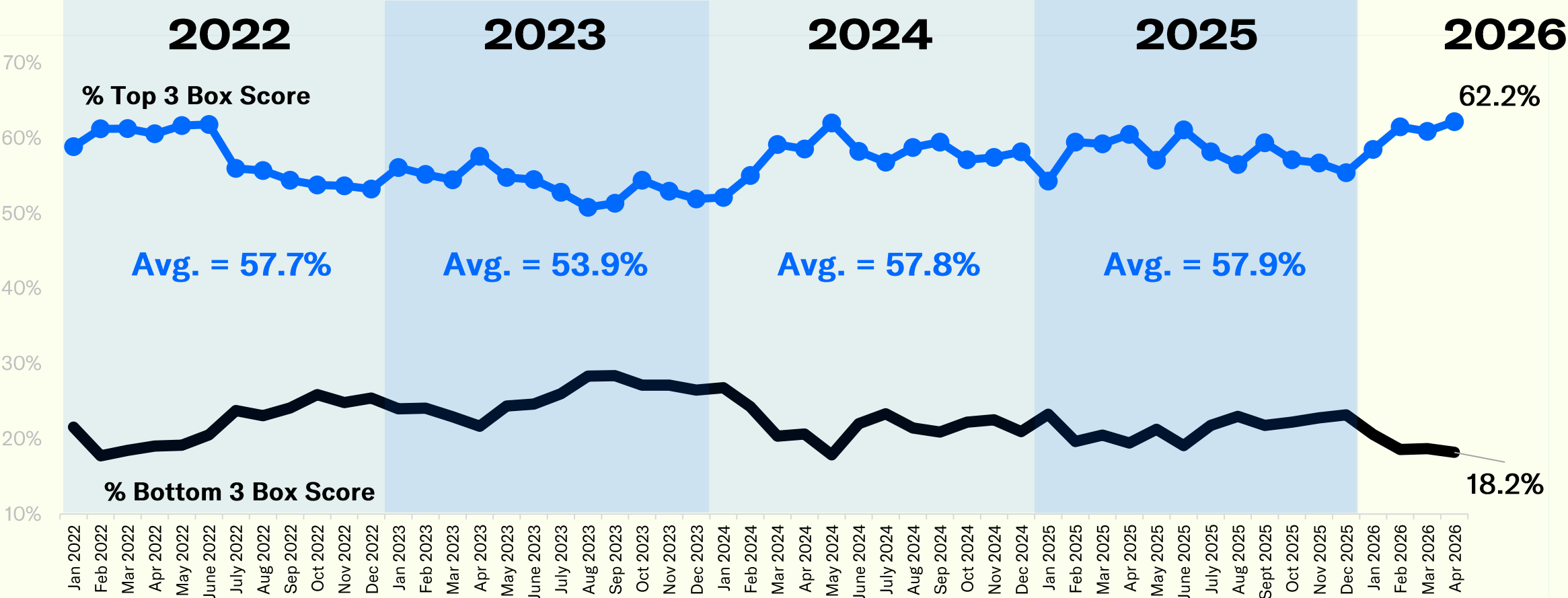
Thinking carefully about how you expect to spend your income in the NEXT THREE MONTHS, please use the scale below to describe your spending priorities.

Leisure travel will be a(n) \_\_\_\_\_.



# Travel Still Claims a Top Spot Among Consumer Spending Priorities

**Question:** Thinking carefully about how you expect to spend your income in the NEXT THREE MONTHS, please use the scale below to describe your spending priorities.



# Looking Forward

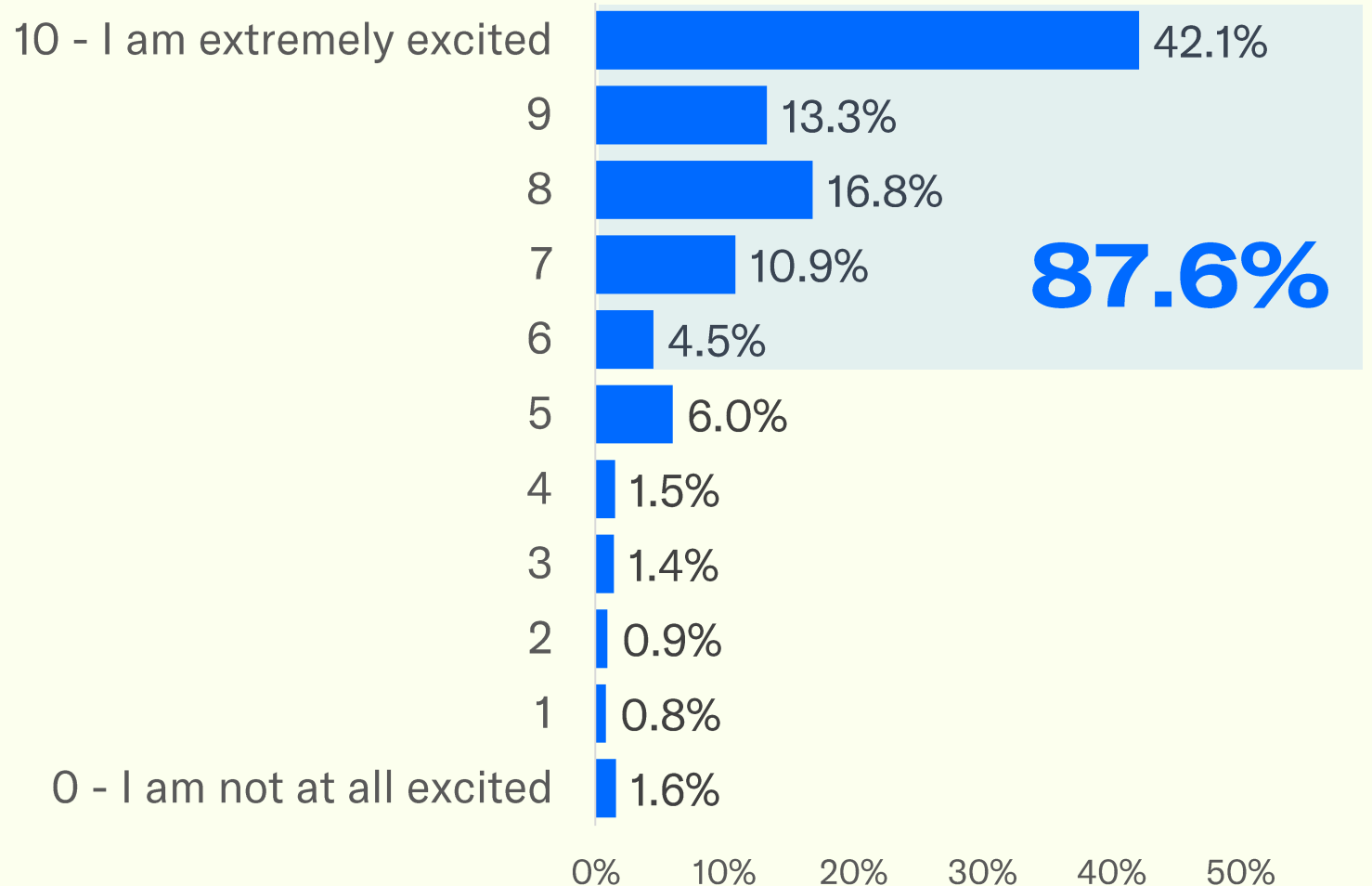
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# Excitement for Leisure Travel Remains High

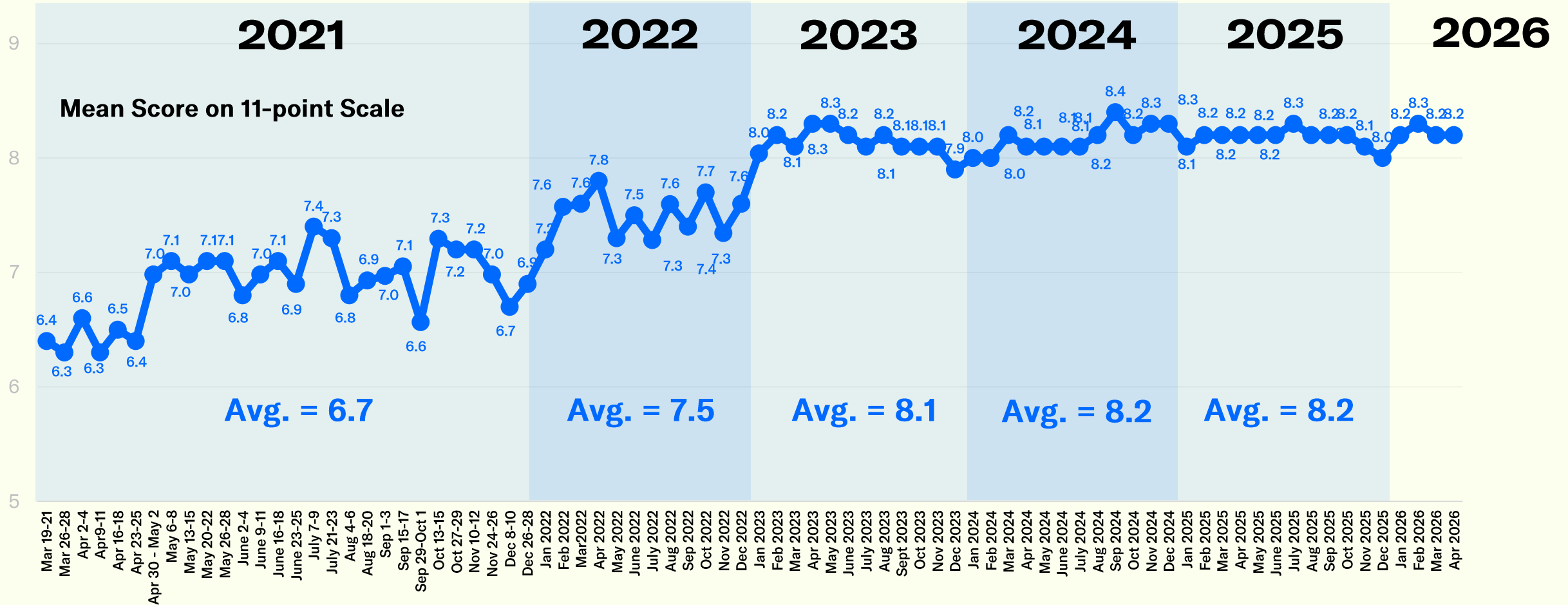
## Question:

Which best describes how excited you are about LEISURE TRAVEL in the NEXT TWELVE (12) MONTHS?



# Excitement for Leisure Travel Remains High

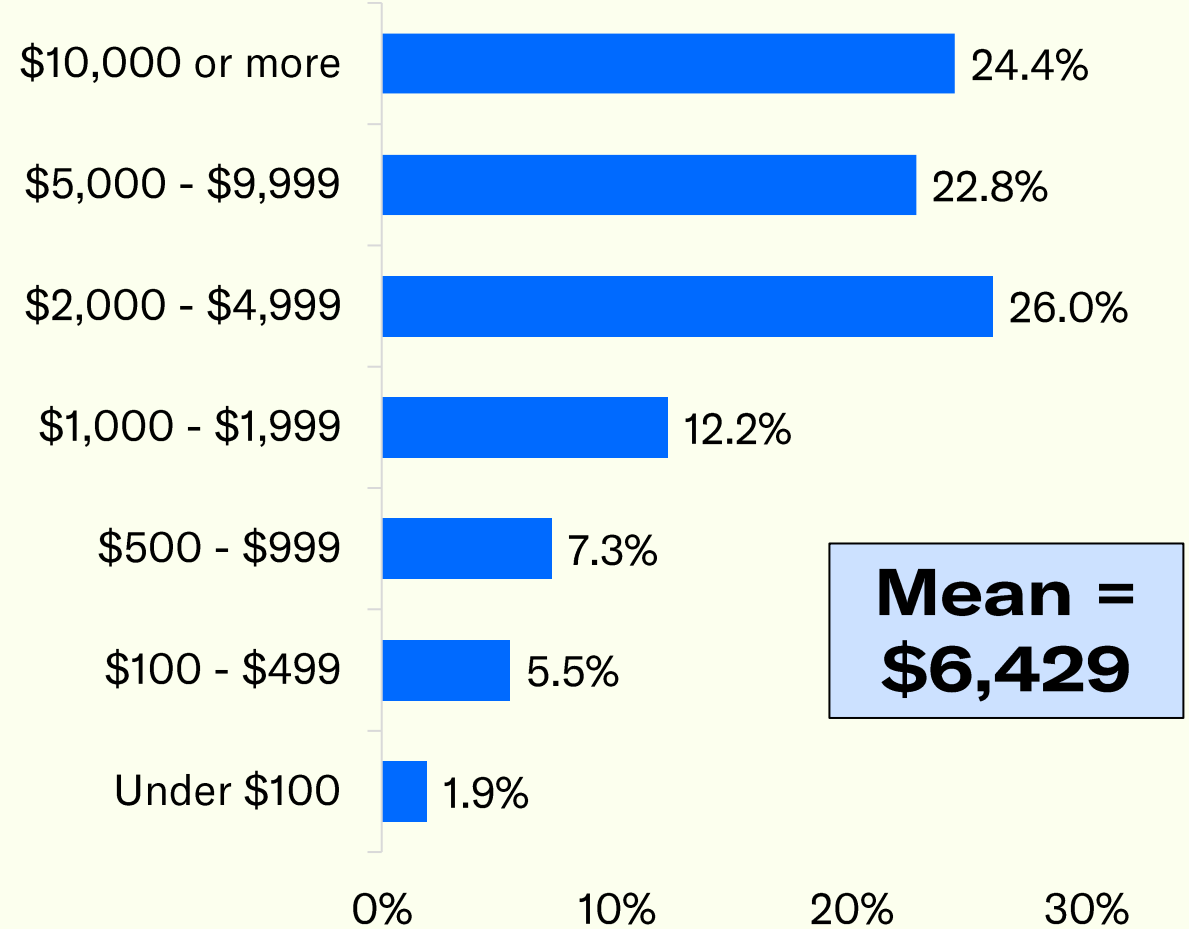
**Question:** Which best describes how excited you are about LEISURE TRAVEL in the NEXT TWELVE (12) MONTHS?



# Americans Continue to Have High Expectations for Travel Spending

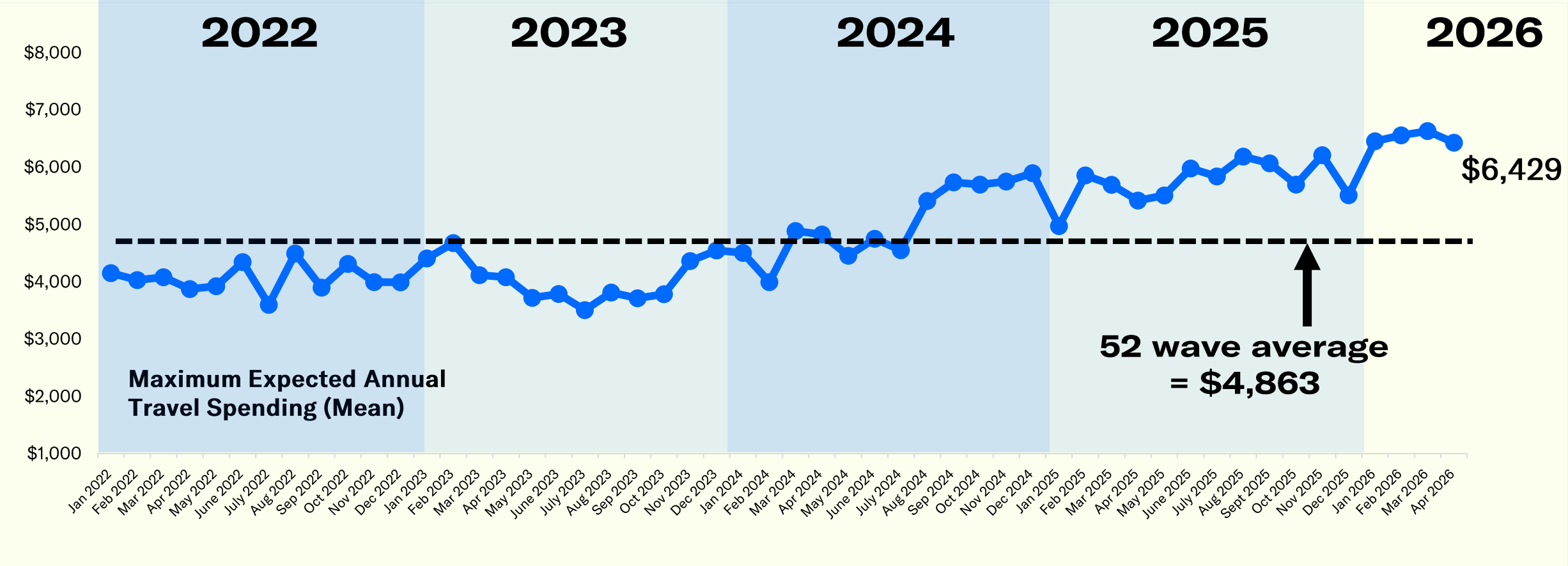
## Question:

How much IN TOTAL is the maximum you will spend on leisure travel (including airfare, accommodations and all other trip related spending) during the NEXT 12 MONTHS?



# Americans Continue to Have High Expectations for Travel Spending

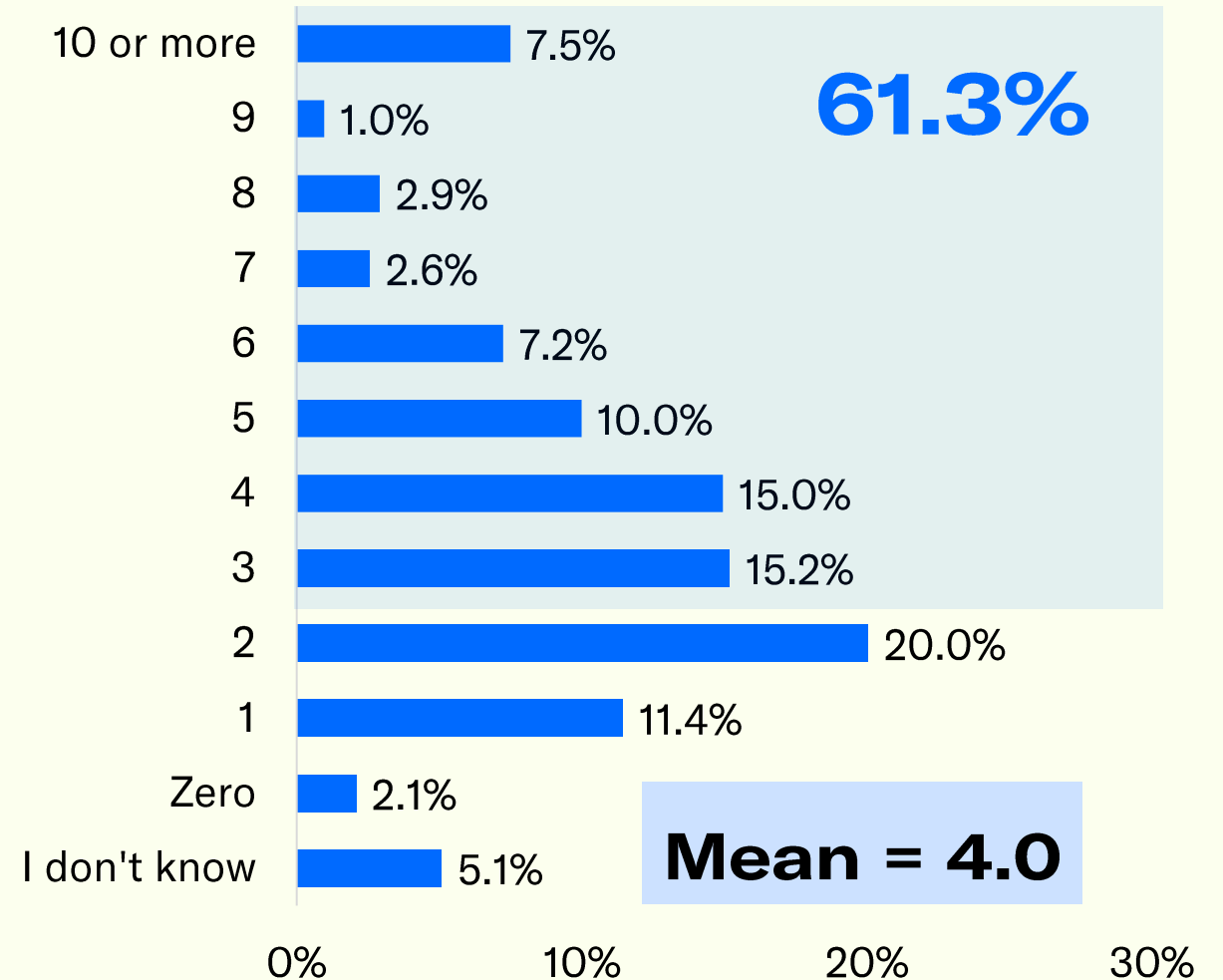
Question: How much IN TOTAL is the maximum you will spend on leisure travel (including airfare, accommodations and all other trip related spending) during the NEXT 12 MONTHS? Maximum I would spend on leisure travel (next 12 months):



# The Year Ahead Looks Travel Filled, with Most Planning 3+ Trips

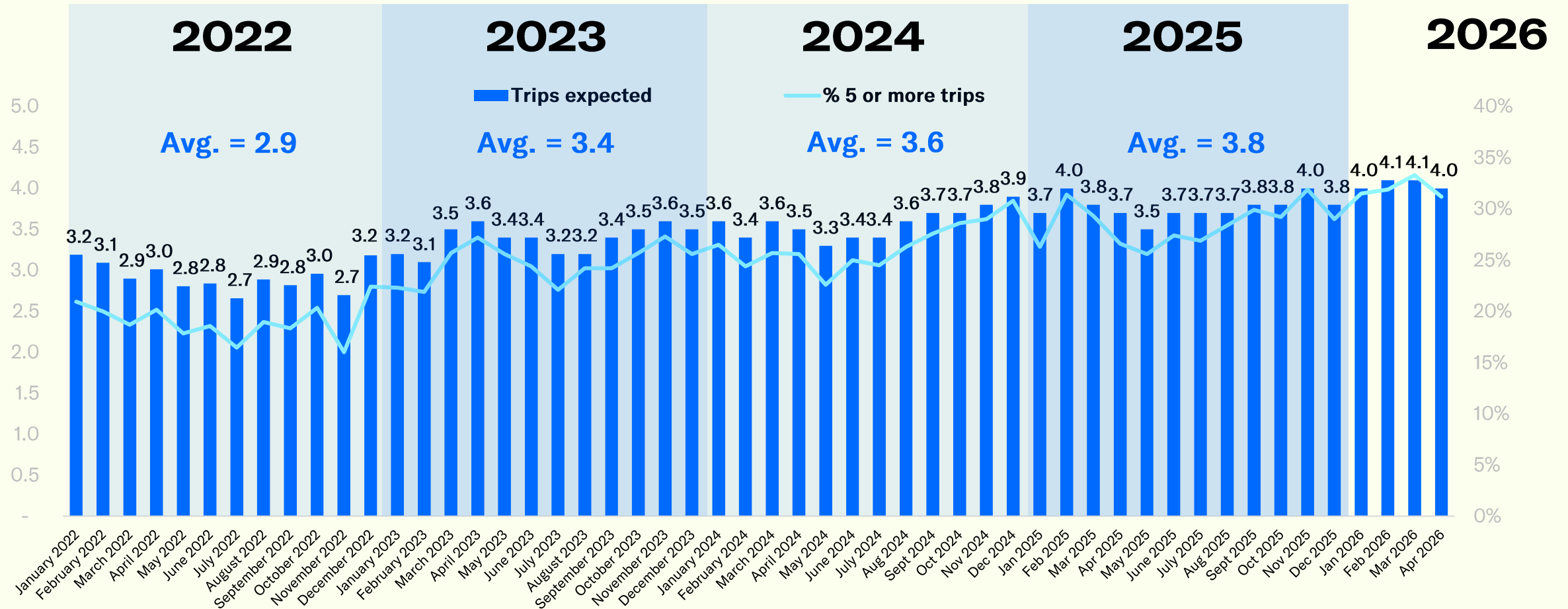
## Question:

IN TOTAL, how many leisure trips (of 50 miles or more from your home) do you expect to take in NEXT TWELVE (12) MONTHS?



# The Year Ahead Looks Travel Filled, with Most Planning 3+ Trips

**Question:** IN TOTAL, how many leisure trips (of 50 miles or more from your home) do you expect to take in NEXT TWELVE (12) MONTHS?



# The Impact of Barriers on Travel Sentiment



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*Recessionary fears, rising gas prices, and global economic uncertainty are amplifying perceived financial barriers to travel — even among the most motivated segments — and driving near-term competition squarely toward value and price.*

# Financial Barriers are Reshaping How Travelers Decide and Plan

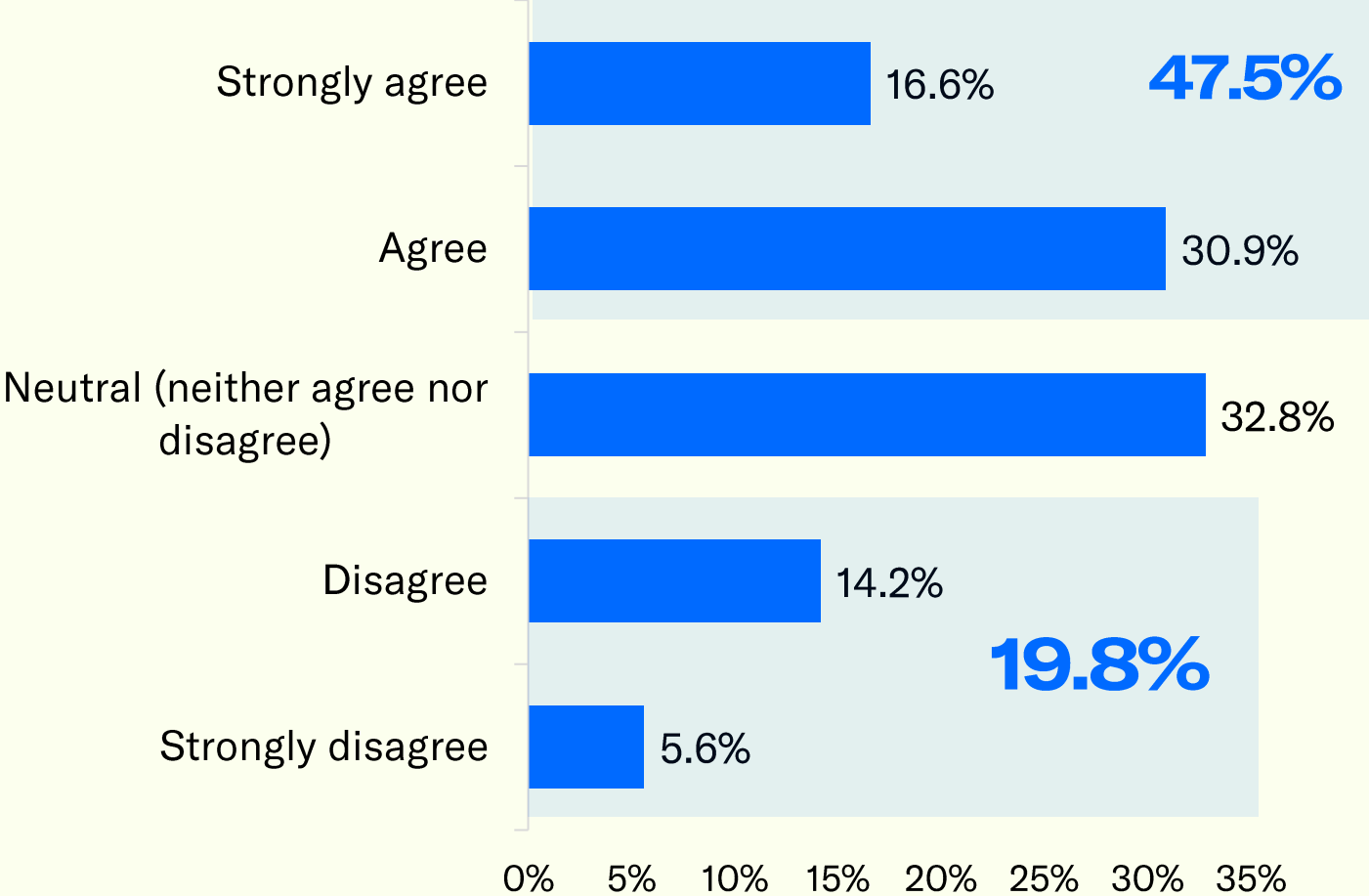
## Question:

In the PAST SIX (6) MONTHS, which (if any) of the following have kept you from traveling more than you would have otherwise preferred? (Select all that apply)



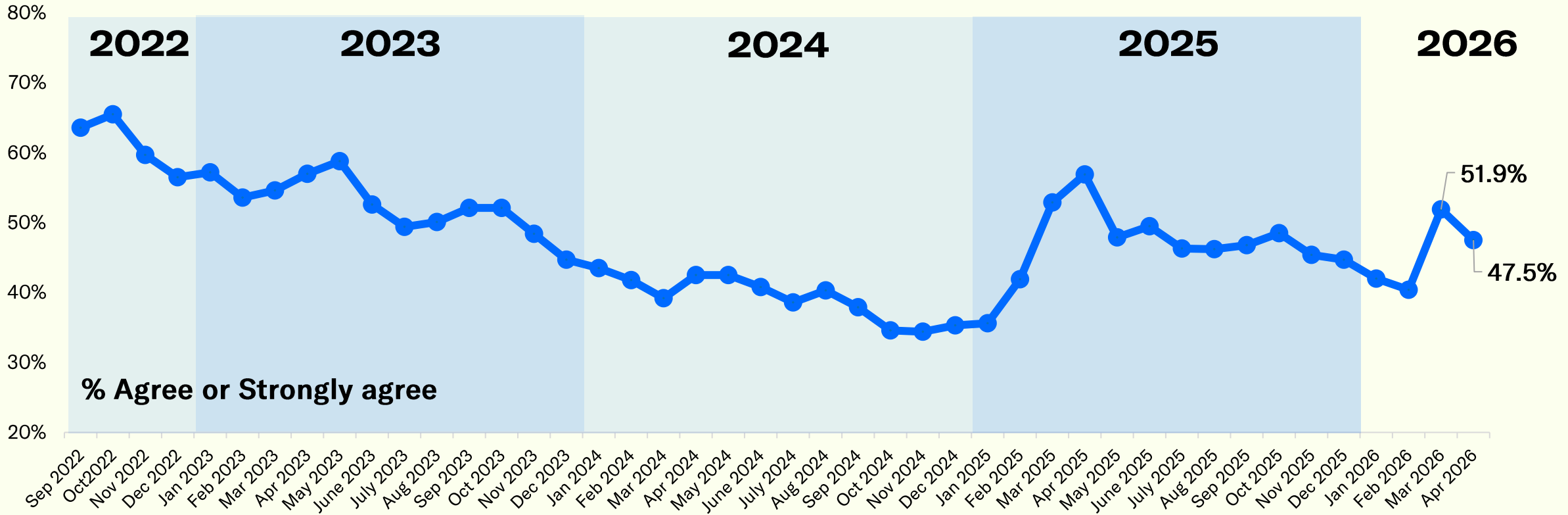
# Recession Fears Stabilize

**Statement Agreement:**  
I expect the United States will enter an economic recession sometime in the NEXT SIX (6) MONTHS.



# Recession Fears Stabilize

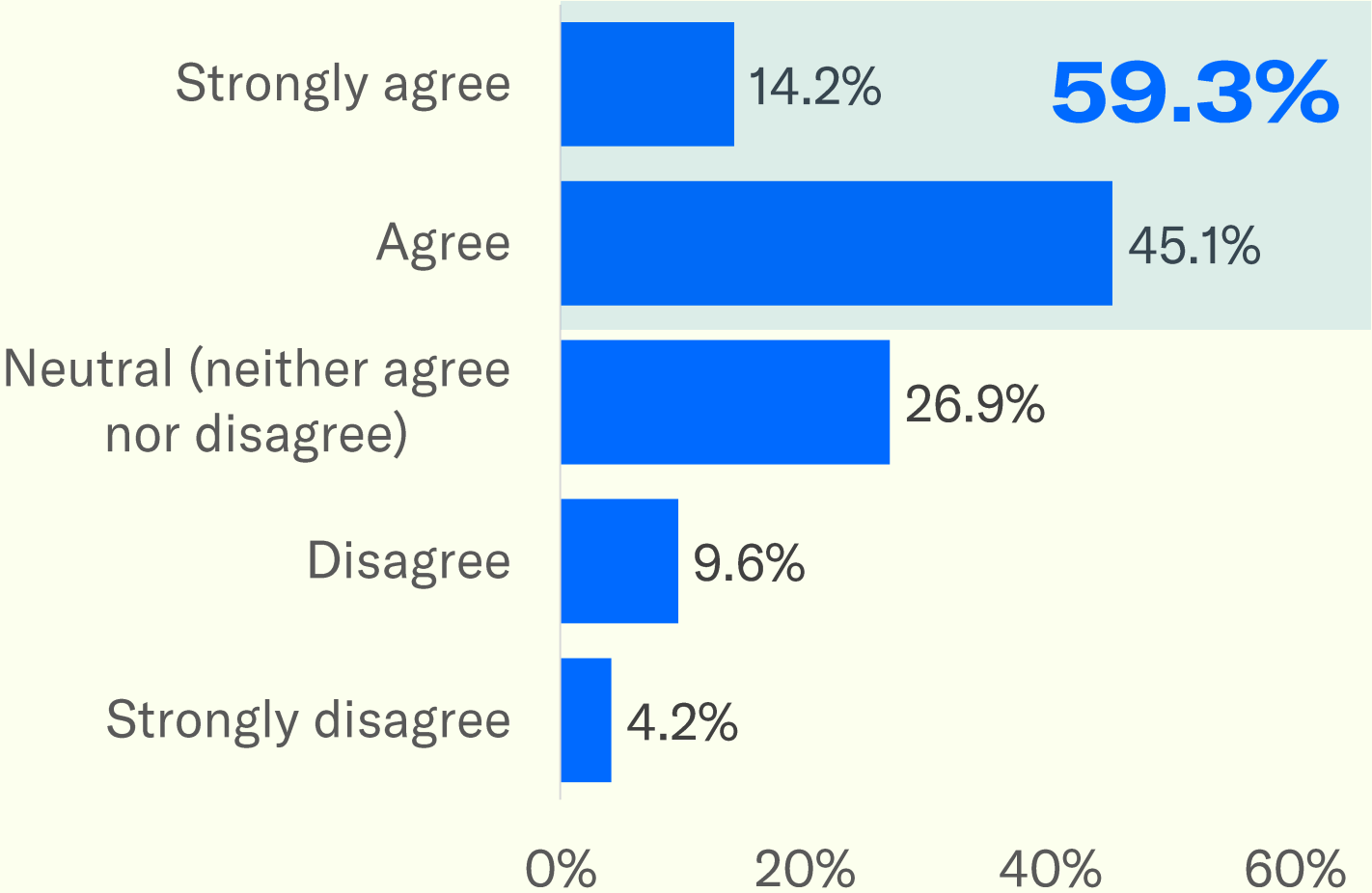
**Statement Agreement:** I expect the United States will enter an economic recession sometime in the NEXT SIX (6) MONTHS.



# Still Though, Most Americans Agree That Travel is a Worthwhile Investment

**Question:**

Even in an economic recession, I'd consider travel to be a worthwhile investment.



# Traveler Tech Trends in an AI-First World

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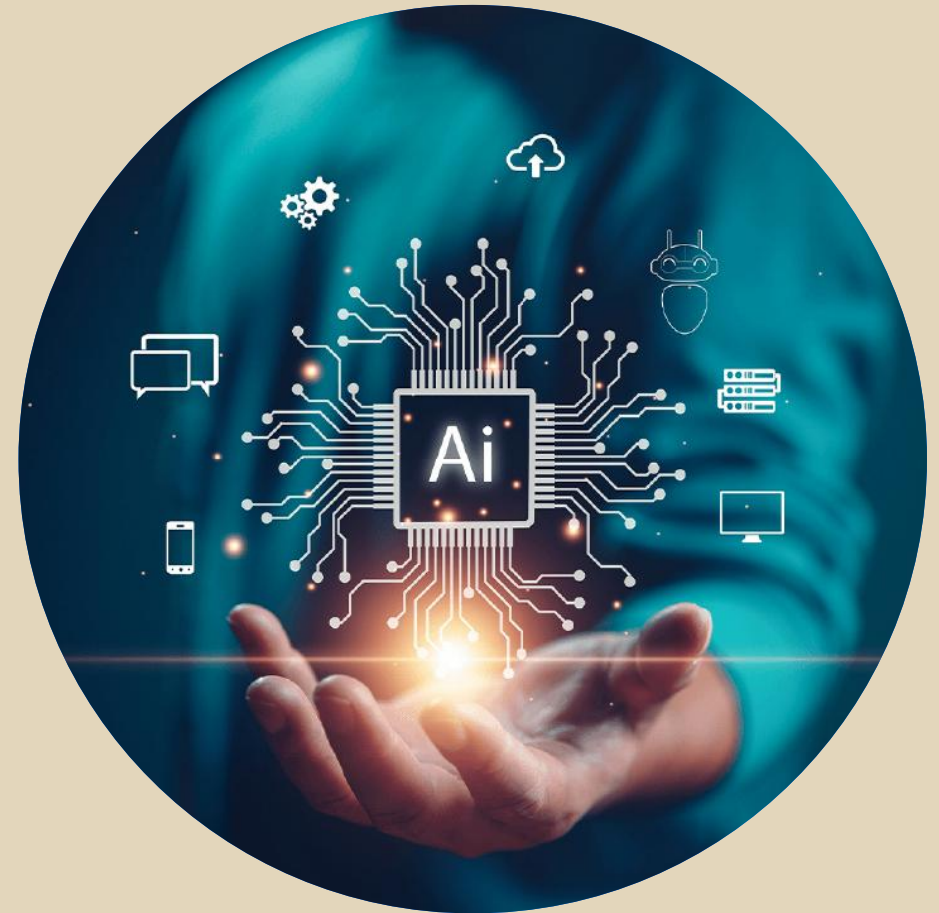
*While AI use continues to evolve rapidly as a trip planning tool, there are crucial intersections with other channels – including print – in the media diets of travelers. It's as vital as ever for travel brands to maintain a marketing strategy that leverages a diverse range of media channels to maximize impact and conversion.*

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# AI Tool Usage

**30.1%**

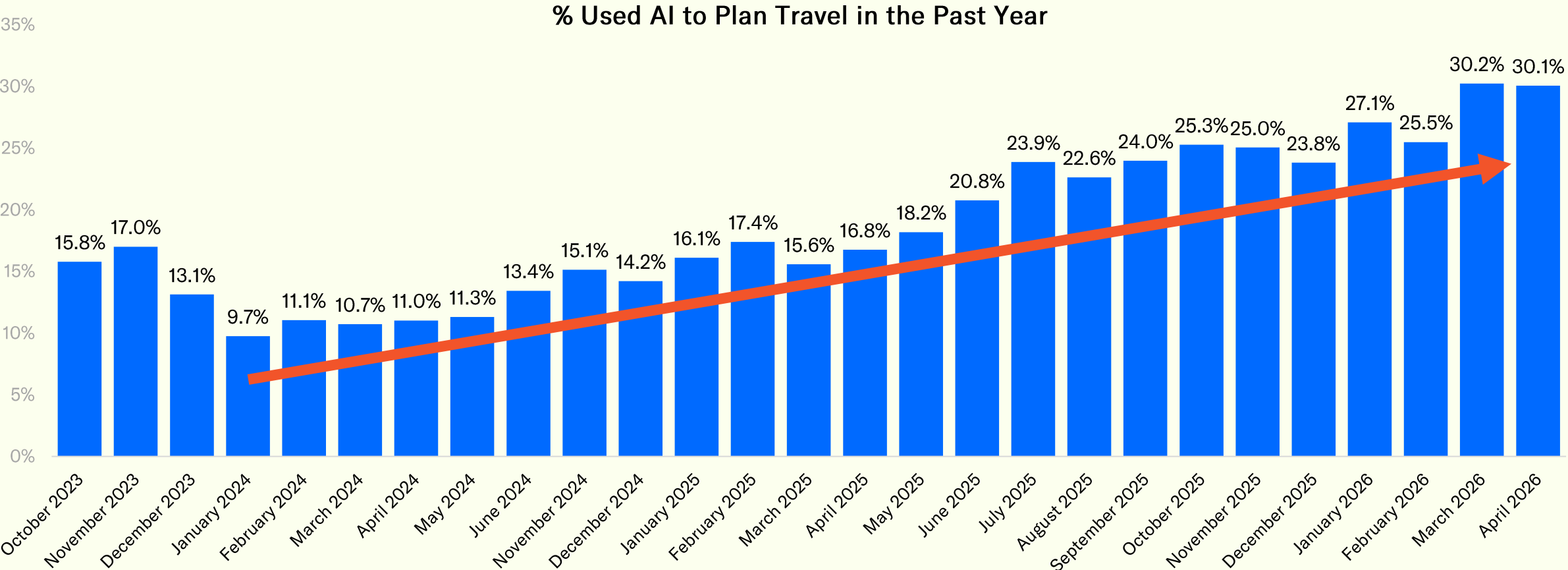
of travelers say they have  
used an ***artificial  
intelligence tool*** to plan a  
trip in the past year



# AI adoption for travel planning has nearly doubled in the past year.



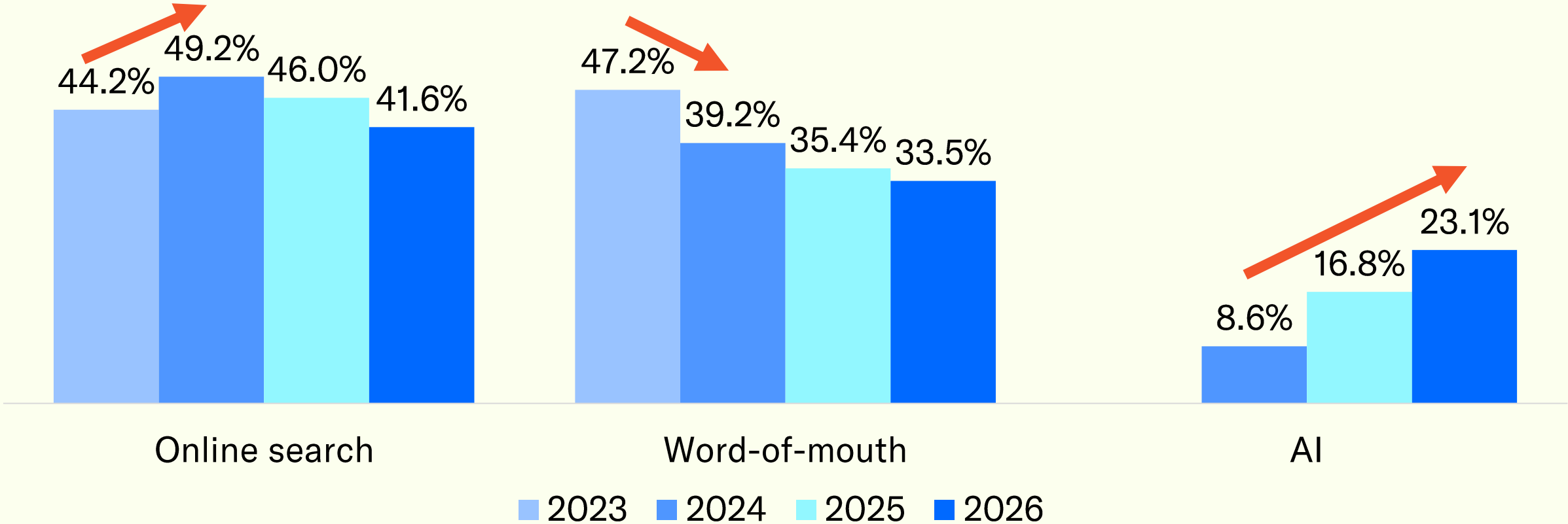
**Question:** In the past 12 months, have you used any Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools specifically to help you plan (or prepare for) your trips?



# AI Shows Growth as a Source of Destination Inspiration for Global Travelers



Sources Use for Destination Inspiration – Change Compared to Last Year  
(% of Total Aggregate)



A woman with dark curly hair is sitting on a bed in a bedroom, wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants. She is wearing a VR headset and has her hands raised in a gesture, as if interacting with a virtual environment. The room has a stone wall, a window with string lights, and a patterned chair. A laptop is open on the bed in front of her.

# Virtual & Augmented Reality

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# Virtual Reality Headsets

**14.6%**

of travelers say they have access to a *virtual reality headset.*



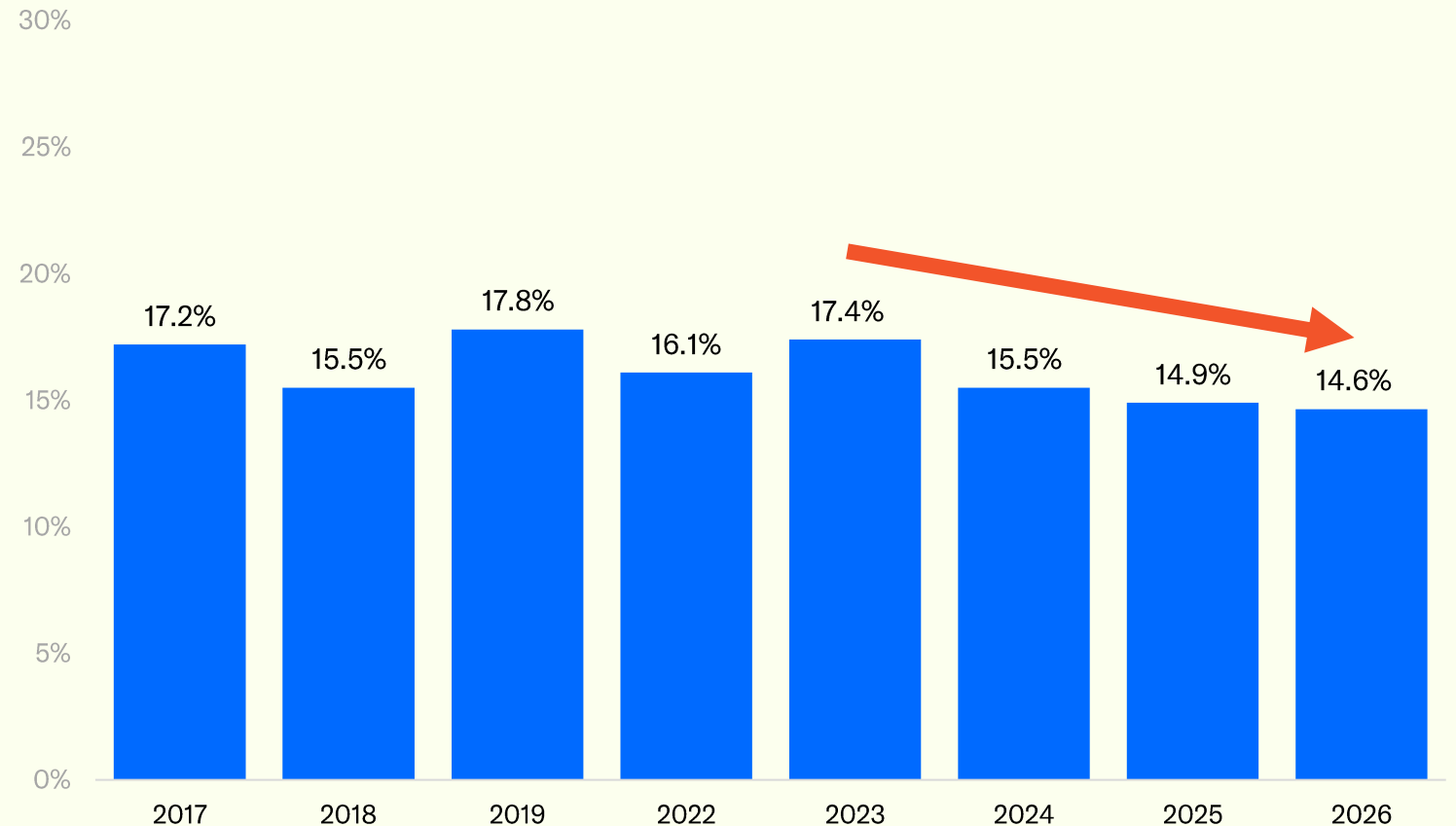
# Use of virtual reality headsets has plateaued over the past two years.



## Question:

Do you currently own (or have access to use) a virtual reality headset?

% Own or have access to a virtual reality headset

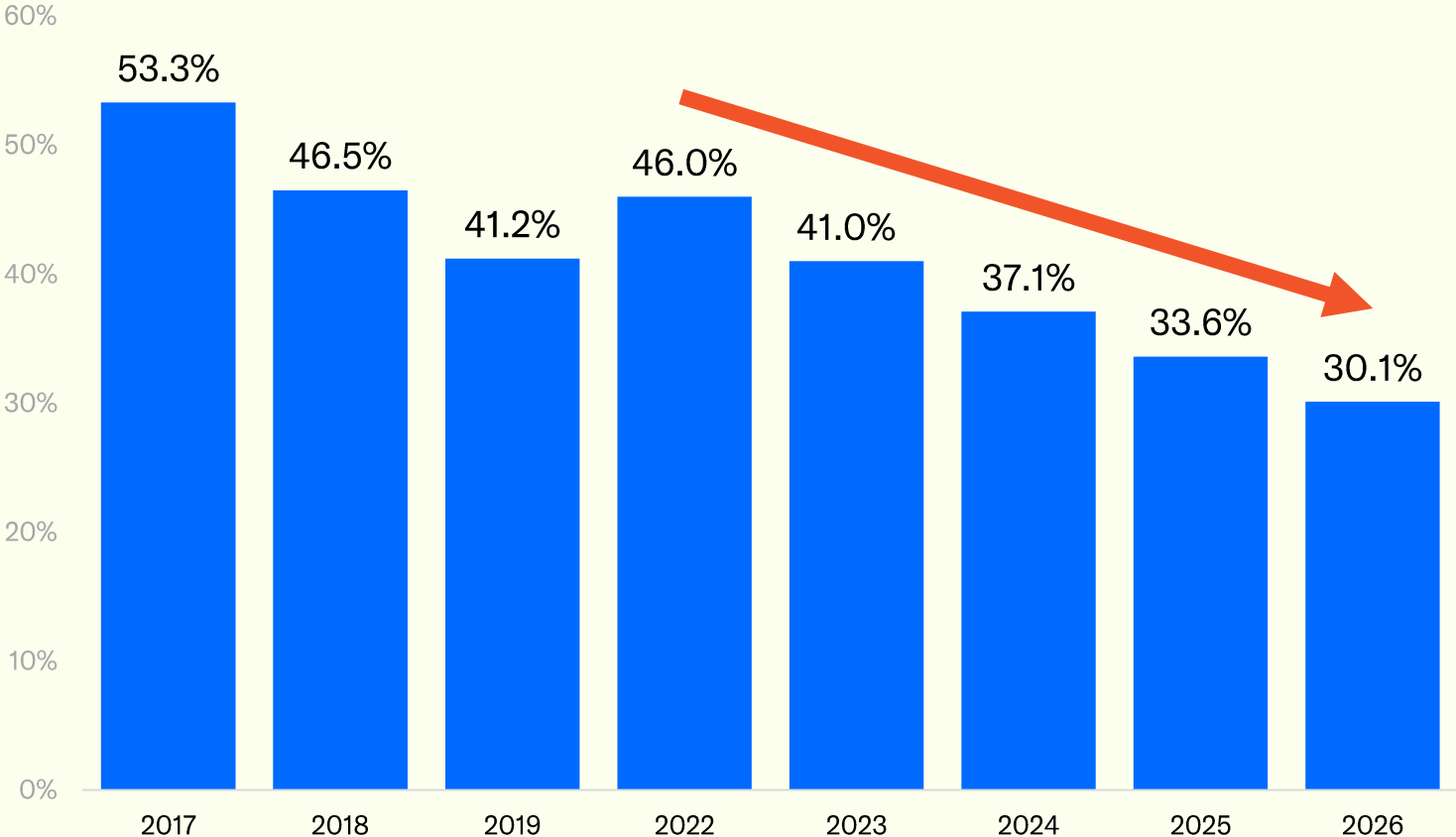


# Interest in using VR headsets to research leisure destinations has been declining.



**Question:**

If good contents were available, how interested would you be in using a Virtual Reality Headset to research leisure destinations you are considering visiting?



# Audio glasses

Available this fall



# Digital Influencers



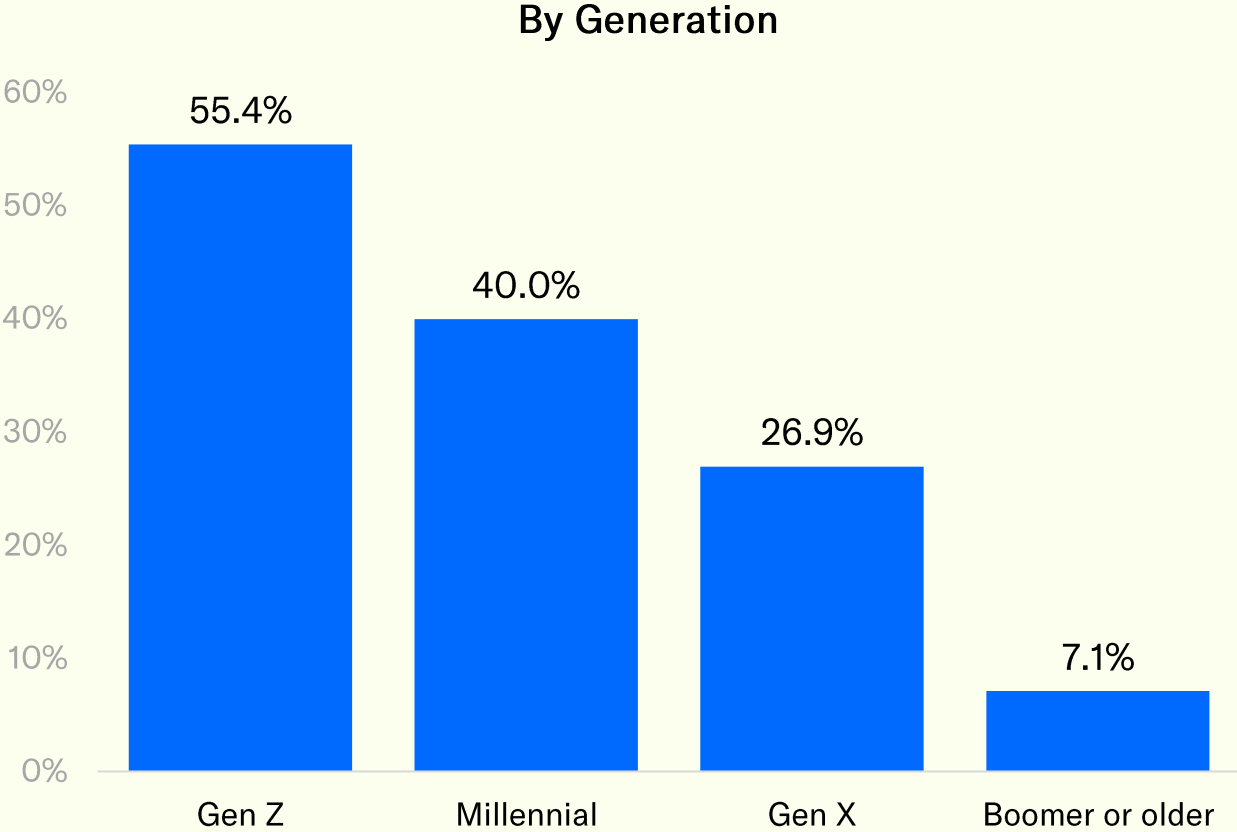
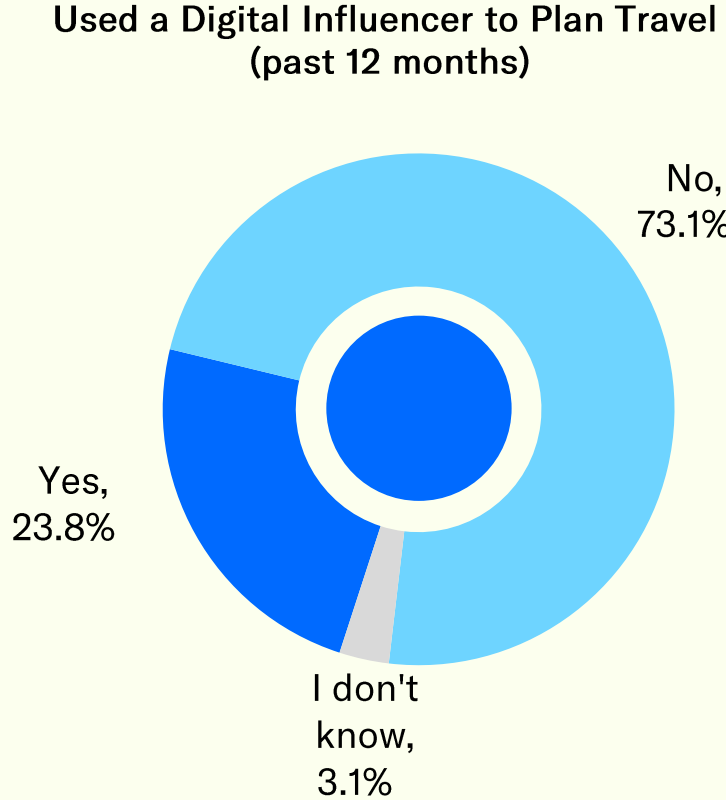
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# Digital influencer impact remains skewed significantly towards younger travelers.

**Question:**

In the past 12 months, have you used the opinions of a DIGITAL INFLUENCER to help plan any travel?

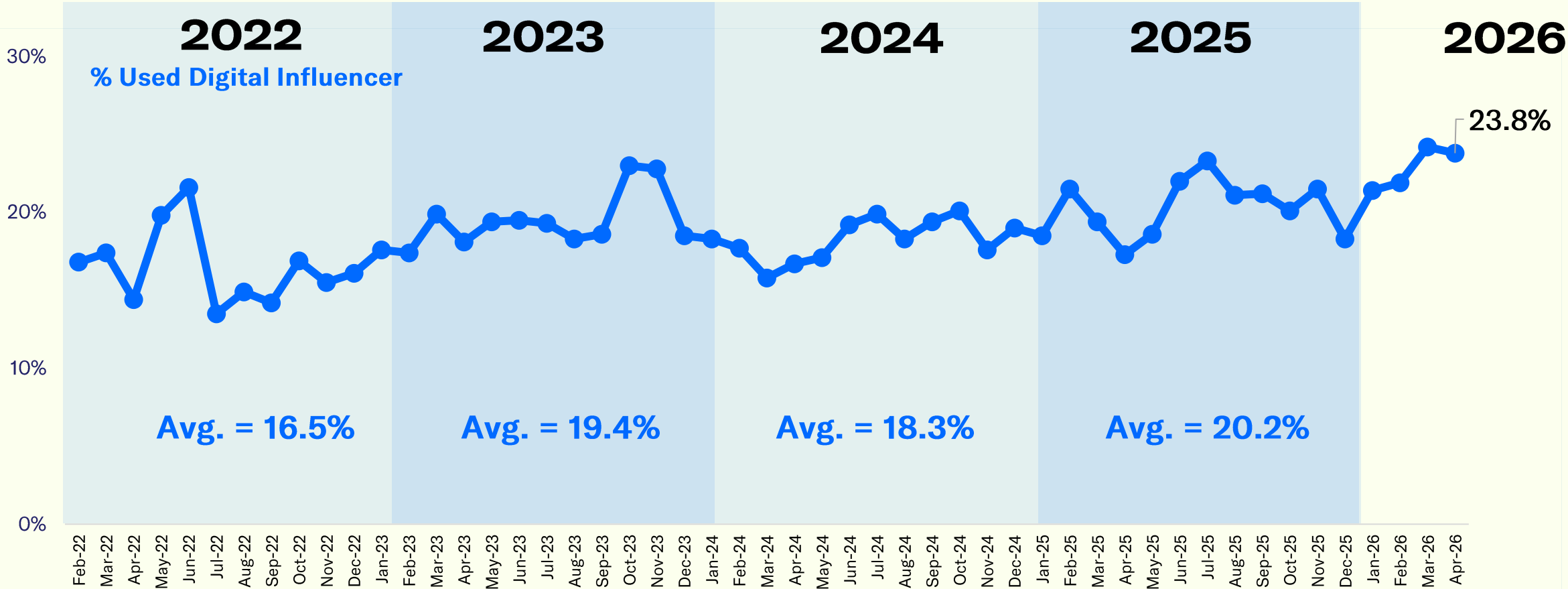


# Digital influencer use has been trending upward over the last two years.



**Question:**

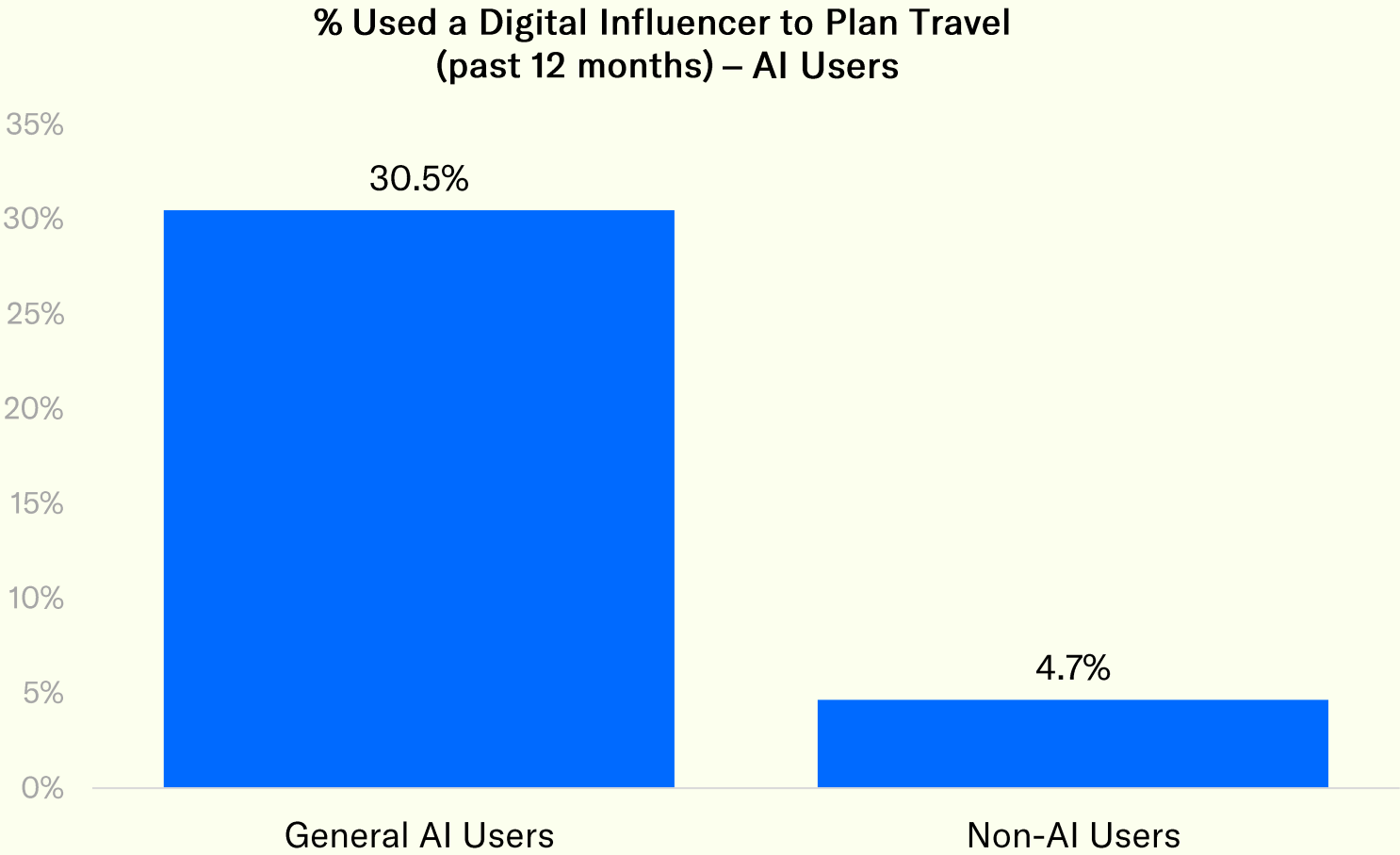
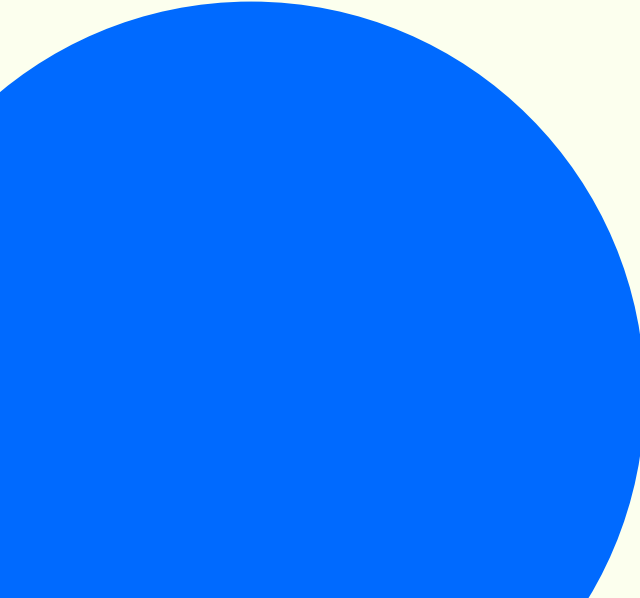
In the past 12 months, have you used the opinions of a DIGITAL INFLUENCER to help plan any travel?



# There is also *significant* overlap between travelers who use general AI and those who plan travels with the help of digital influencers.

**Question:**

In the past 12 months, have you used the opinions of a DIGITAL INFLUENCER to help plan any travel?



(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# Podcasts

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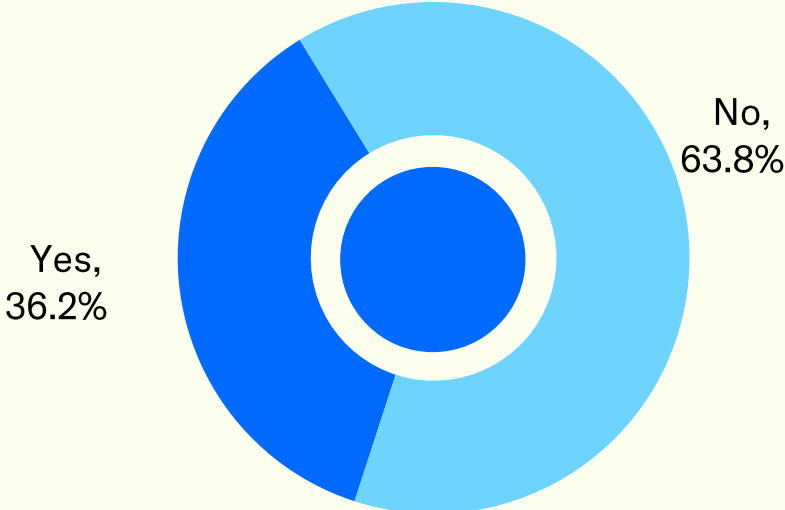


# Podcasts continue to be a key channel, particularly for genres that help travelers stay up to date with the world.

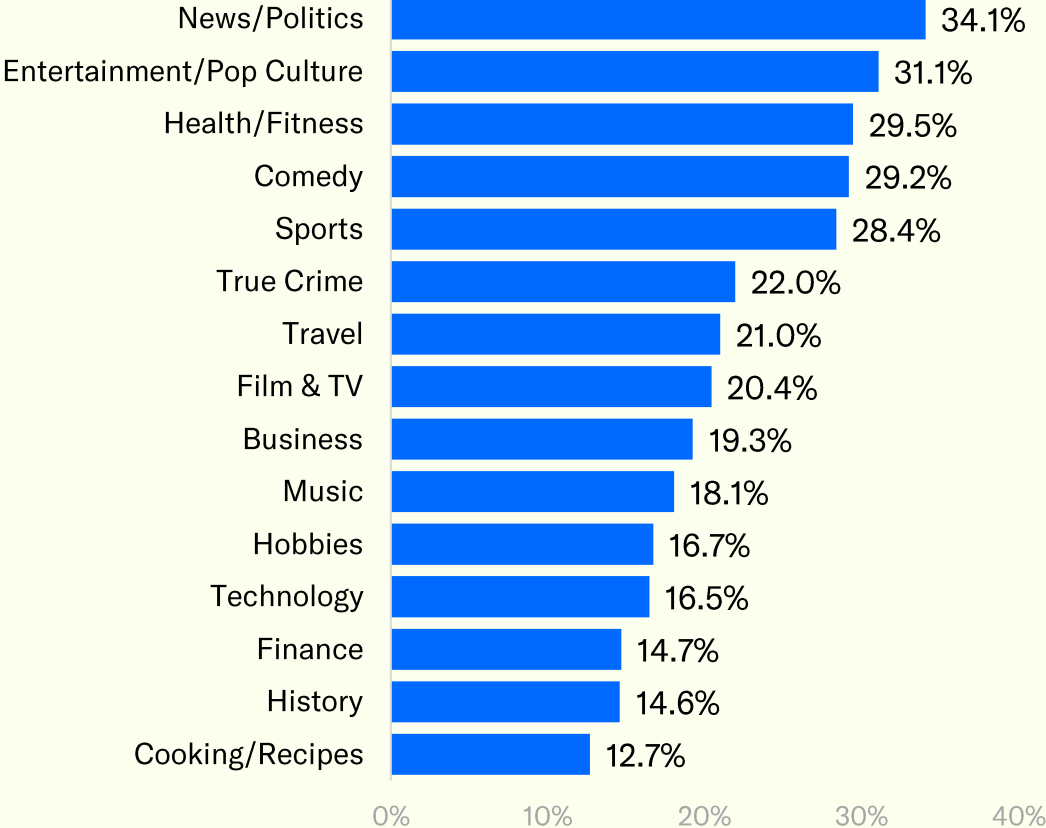
## Question:

Do you listen to any podcasts on a regular basis? What podcast genres do you listen to on a regular basis? (Select all that apply)

Listen to Podcasts Regularly



Top Podcast Genres



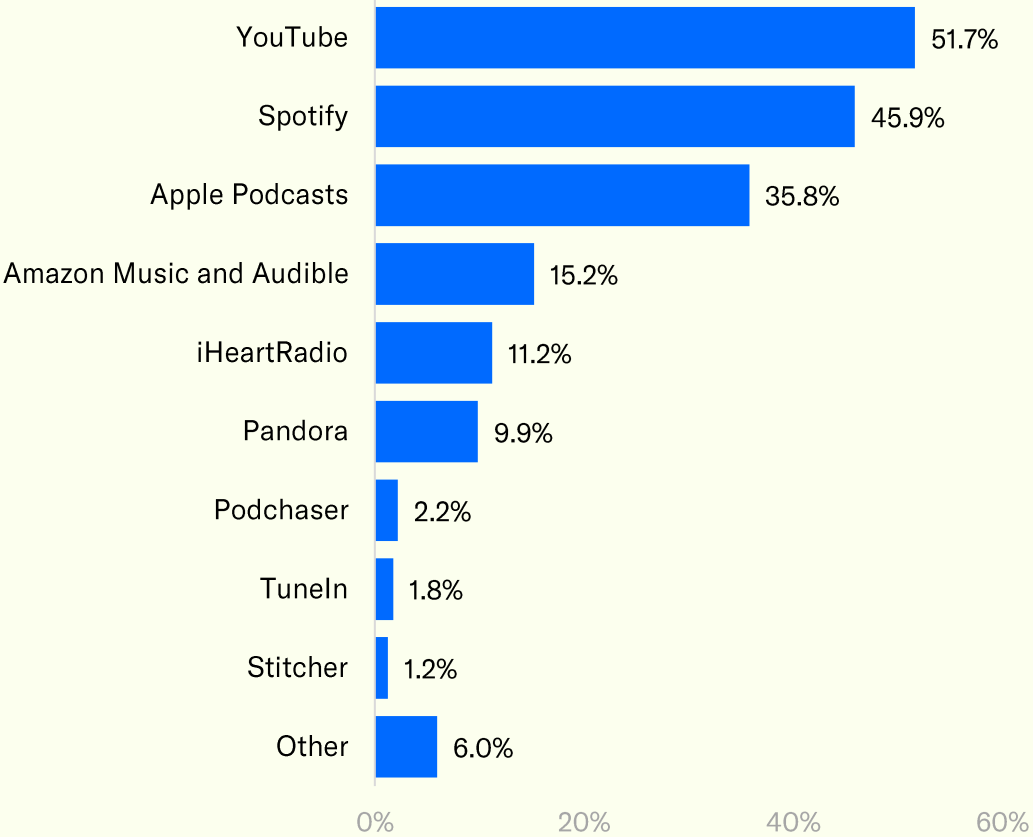
(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# The majority of podcast listeners are using YouTube to listen – or watch – their shows.

**Question:**

What streaming services do you typically use to listen to podcasts? (Select all that apply)

Top Podcast Streaming Services

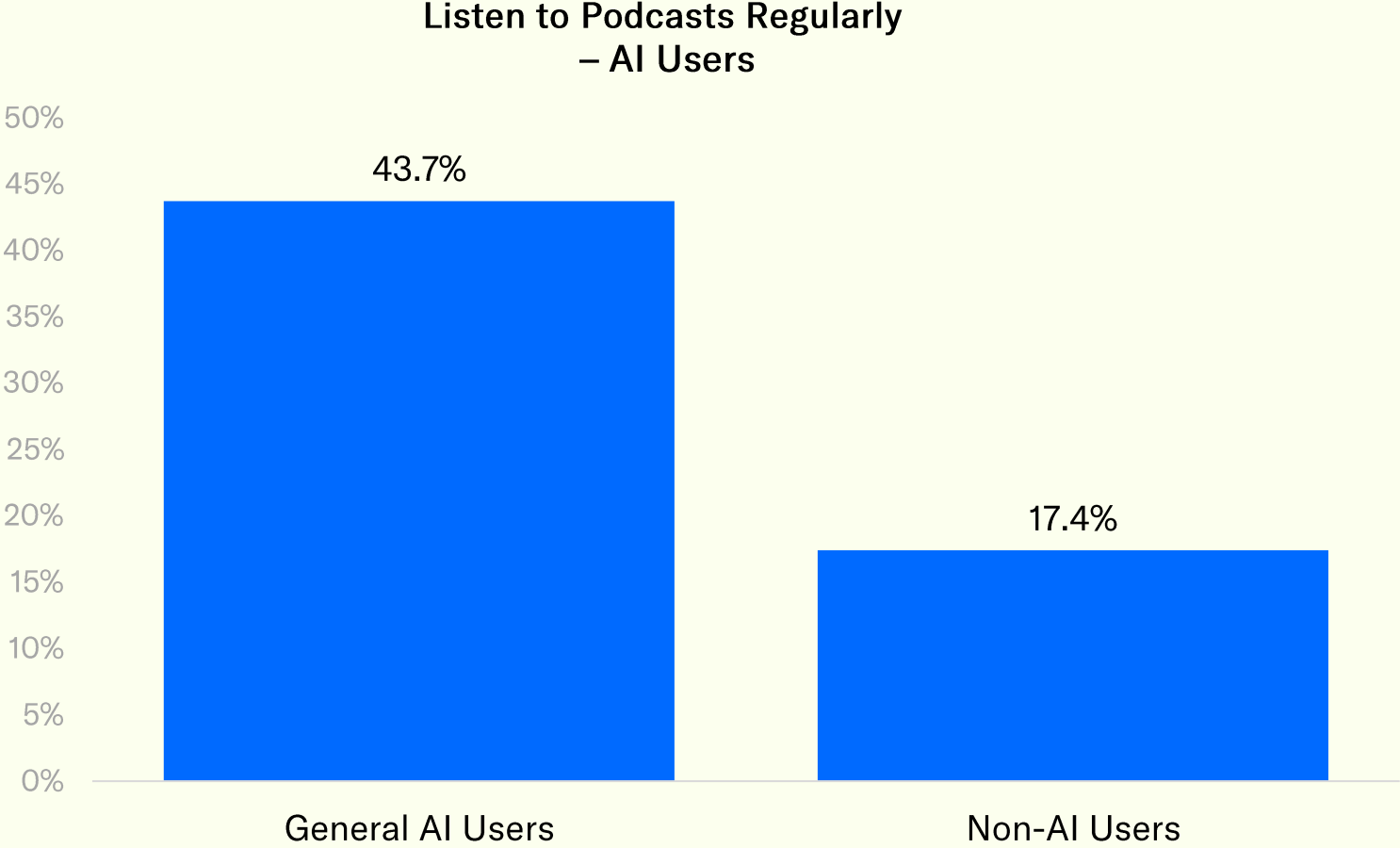
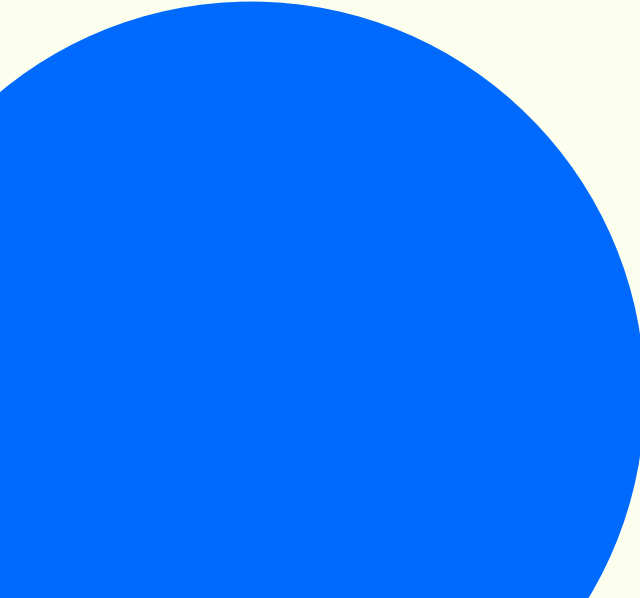


(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# As with influencers, general AI users are also more likely to regularly tune in to podcasts.

**Question:**

Do you listen to any podcasts on a regular basis? What podcast genres do you listen to on a regular basis? (Select all that apply)



(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# Streaming Services



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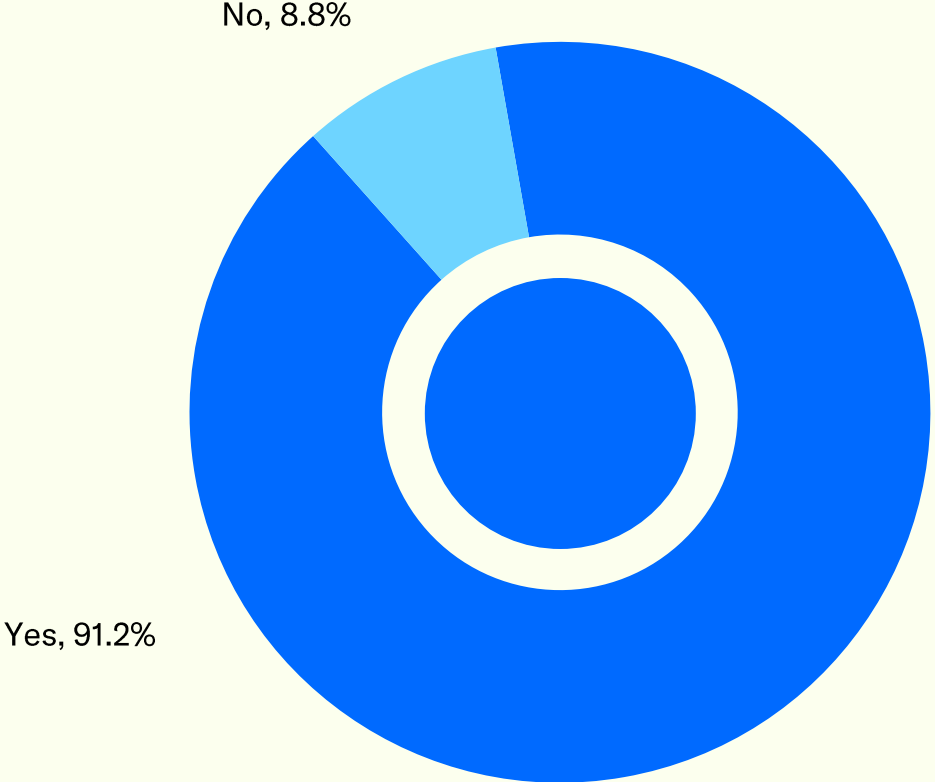


# Streaming platforms represent a near-universal touchpoint for American travelers.

**Question:**

Which of these streaming services do you currently subscribe to or regularly watch? (Select all that apply)

Regularly Watch Any Streaming Services

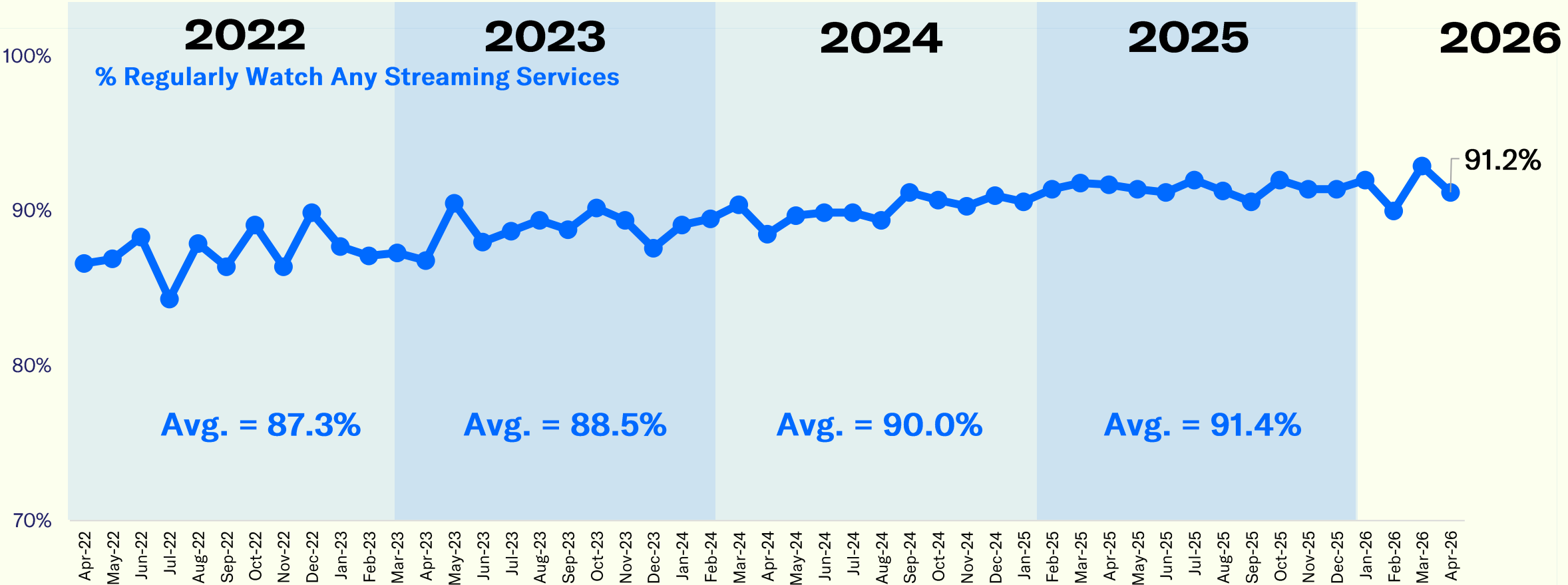


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**Question:**

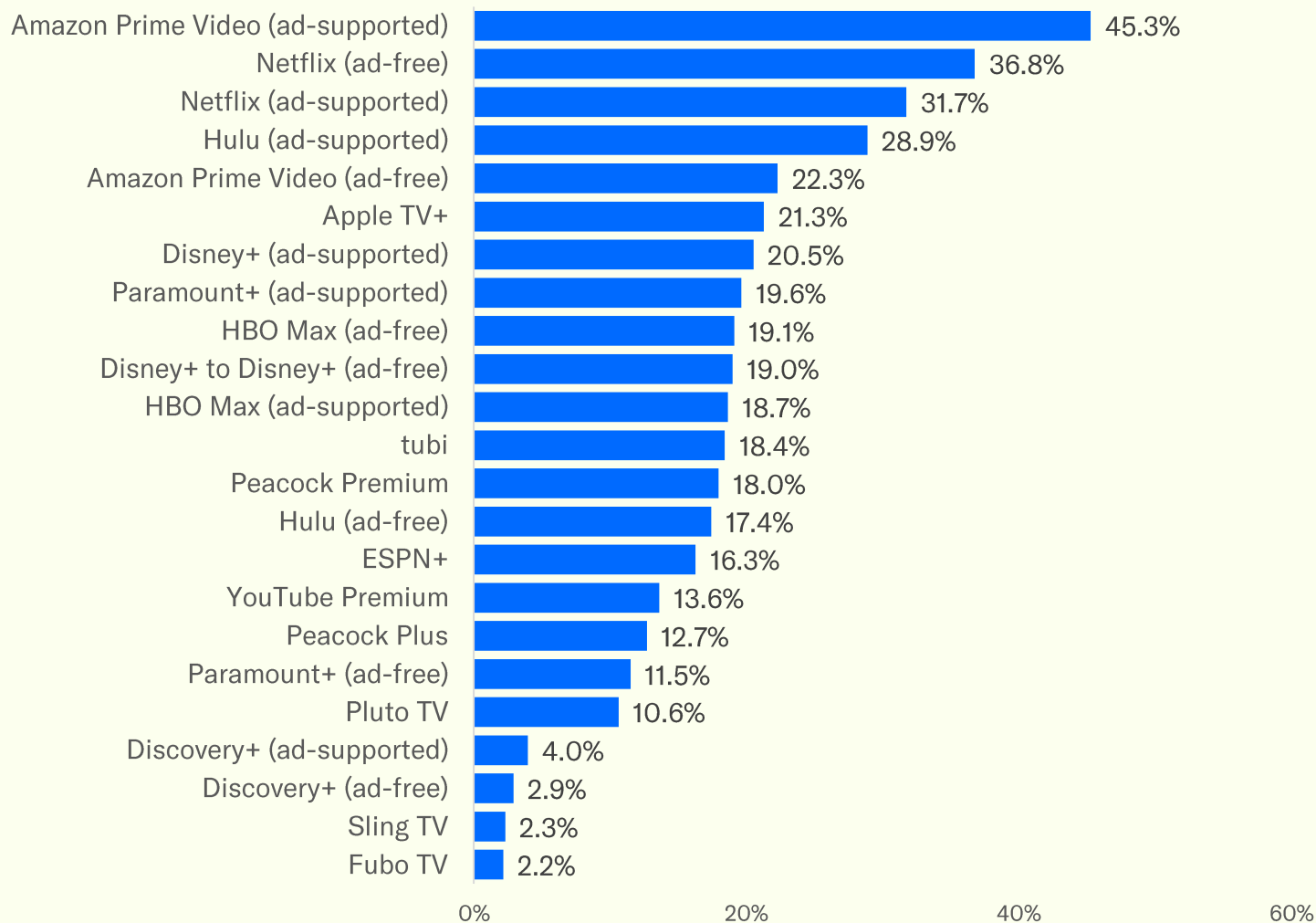
Which of these streaming services do you currently subscribe to or regularly watch? (Select all that apply)



# Amazon Prime Video's ad tier squarely tops the list of streaming platforms currently used.

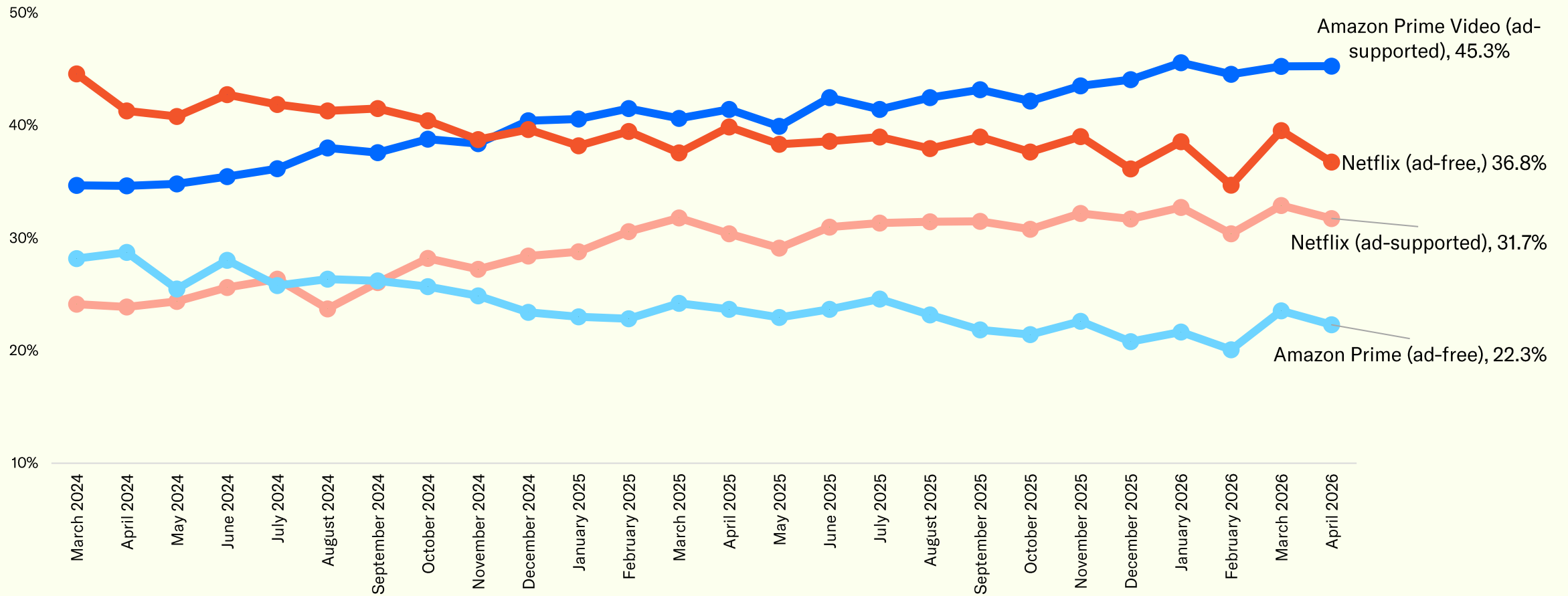
## Question:

To which of these streaming services do you currently subscribe or regularly watch?  
(Select all that apply)



(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# Amazon has continued to make gains on that lead in the last six months.



# The Continued Relevancy of Print Media

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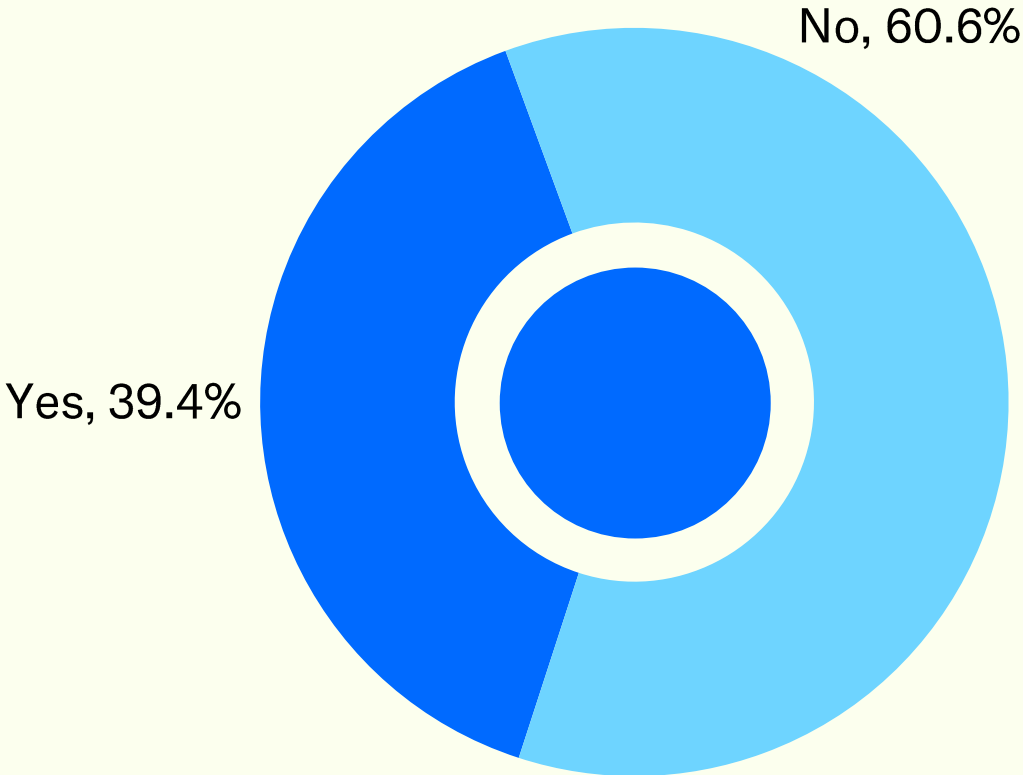


# Four in ten still use offline travel planning resources.

**Question:**

In the PAST 12 MONTHS, which of these resources have you used to help plan your travel? (Select all that apply) PLEASE ONLY CHECK IF USED FOR TRAVEL PLANNING, IDEAS OR INSPIRATION]

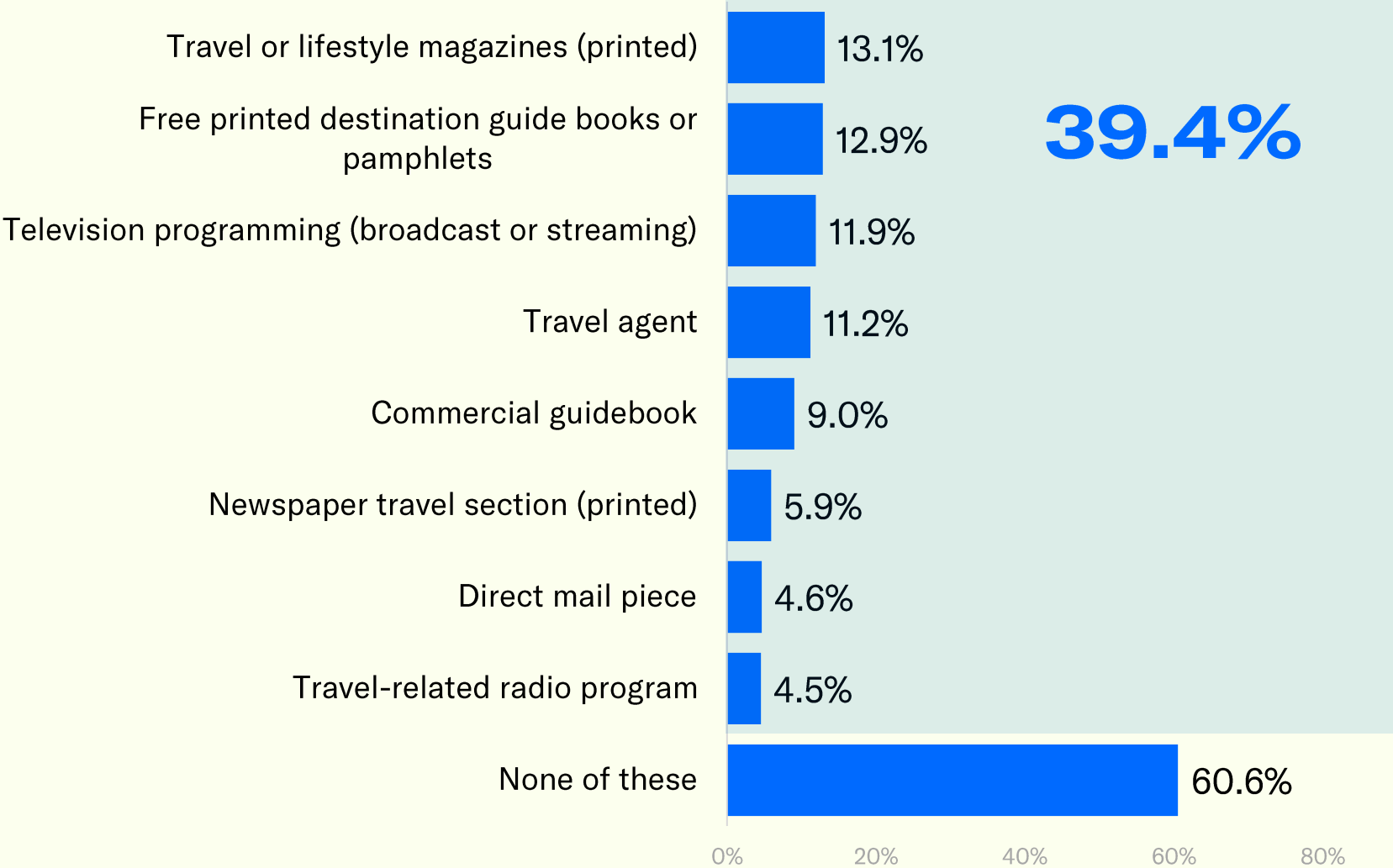
Used a Traditional Media Source to Plan Travel in the Past 12 Months



# Print materials lead as the top traditional media resource for travelers.

**Question:** In the PAST 12 MONTHS, which of these resources have you used to help plan your travel? (Select all that apply)

PLEASE ONLY CHECK IF USED FOR TRAVEL PLANNING, IDEAS OR INSPIRATION

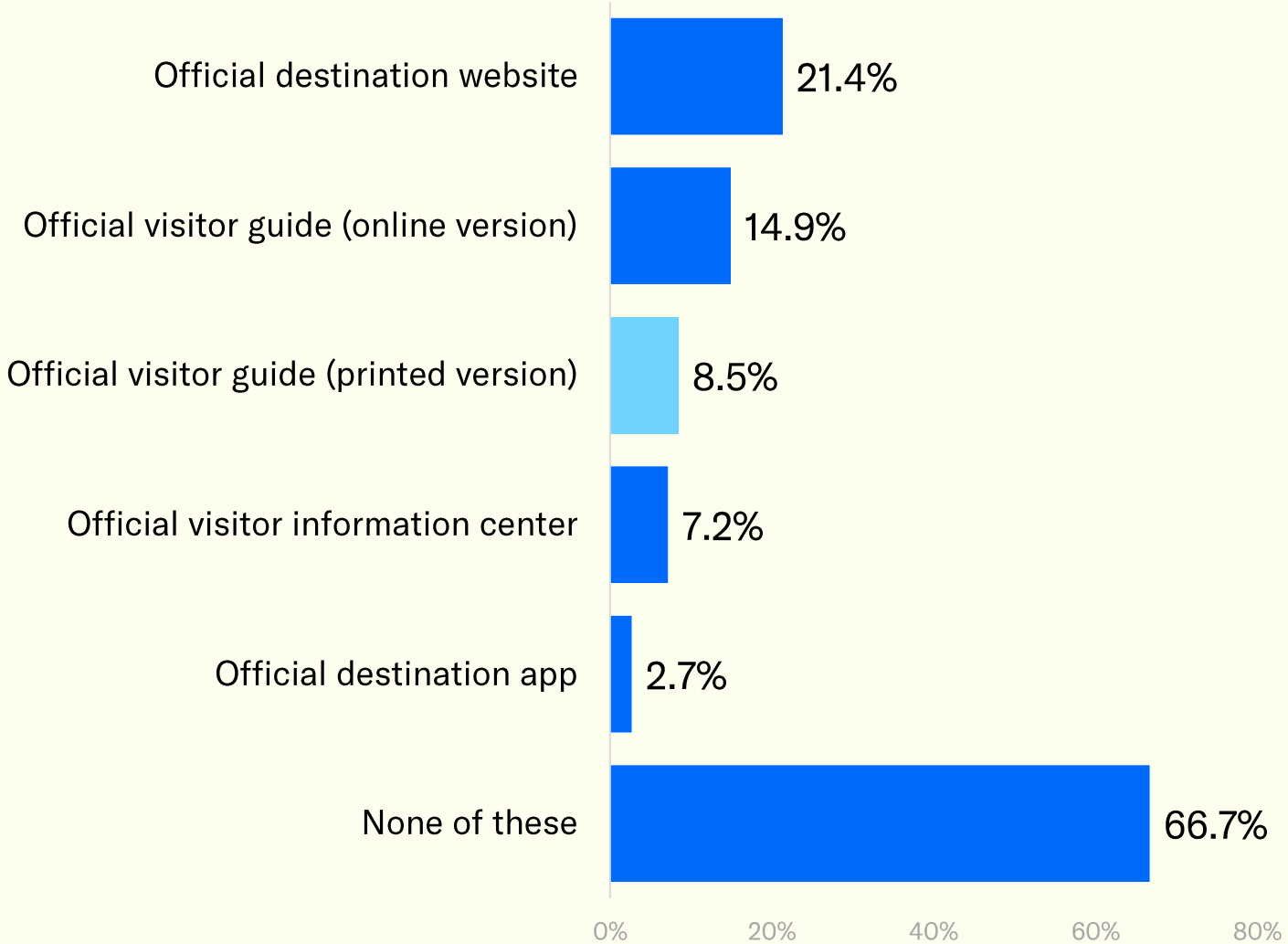


39.4%

(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# Among DMO resources, just under one in ten travelers have used an official print visitor guide.

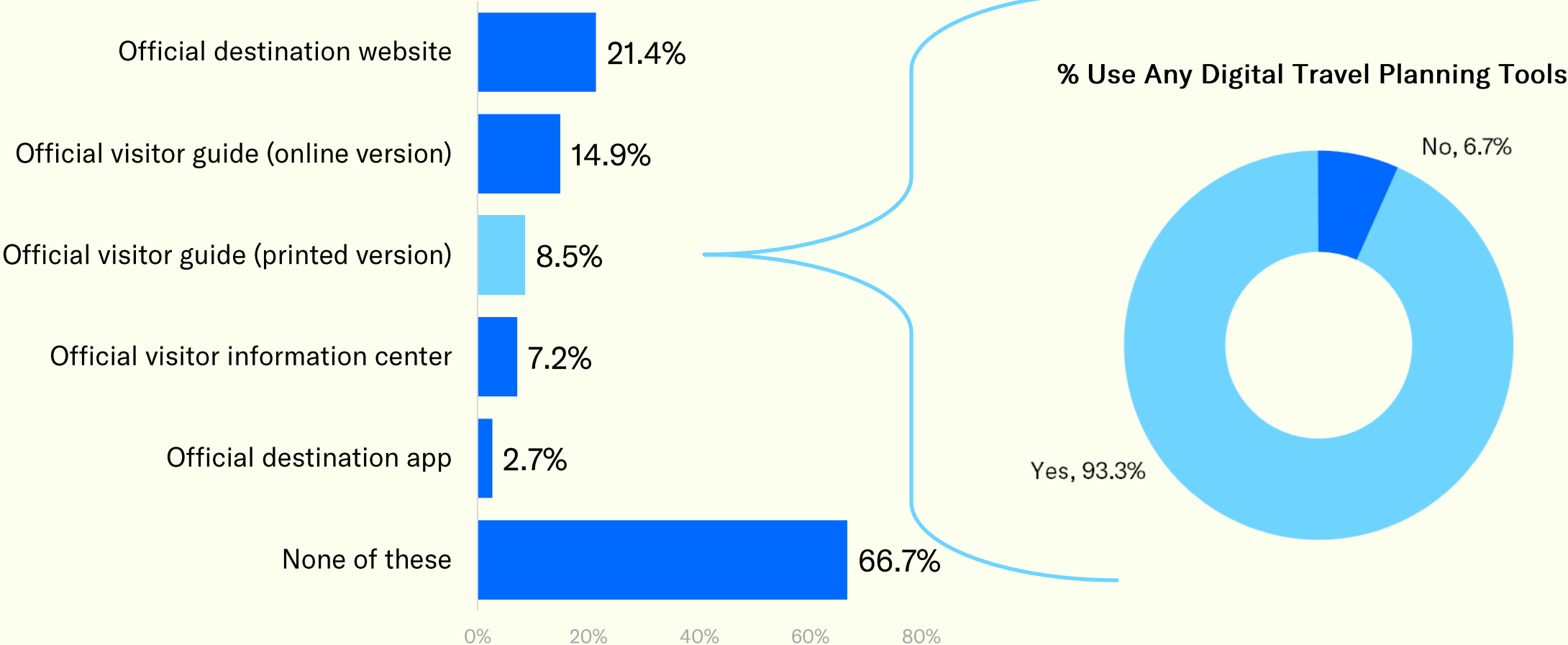
**Question:** In the PAST TWELVE (12) MONTHS, have you used a destination's official local Visitors or Convention Bureau (or Chamber of Commerce), or state or national government tourism office to help plan any travel? If so, which resources did you use?



(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# These print visitor guide users are still extremely likely to also turn to other, *digital* planning tools.

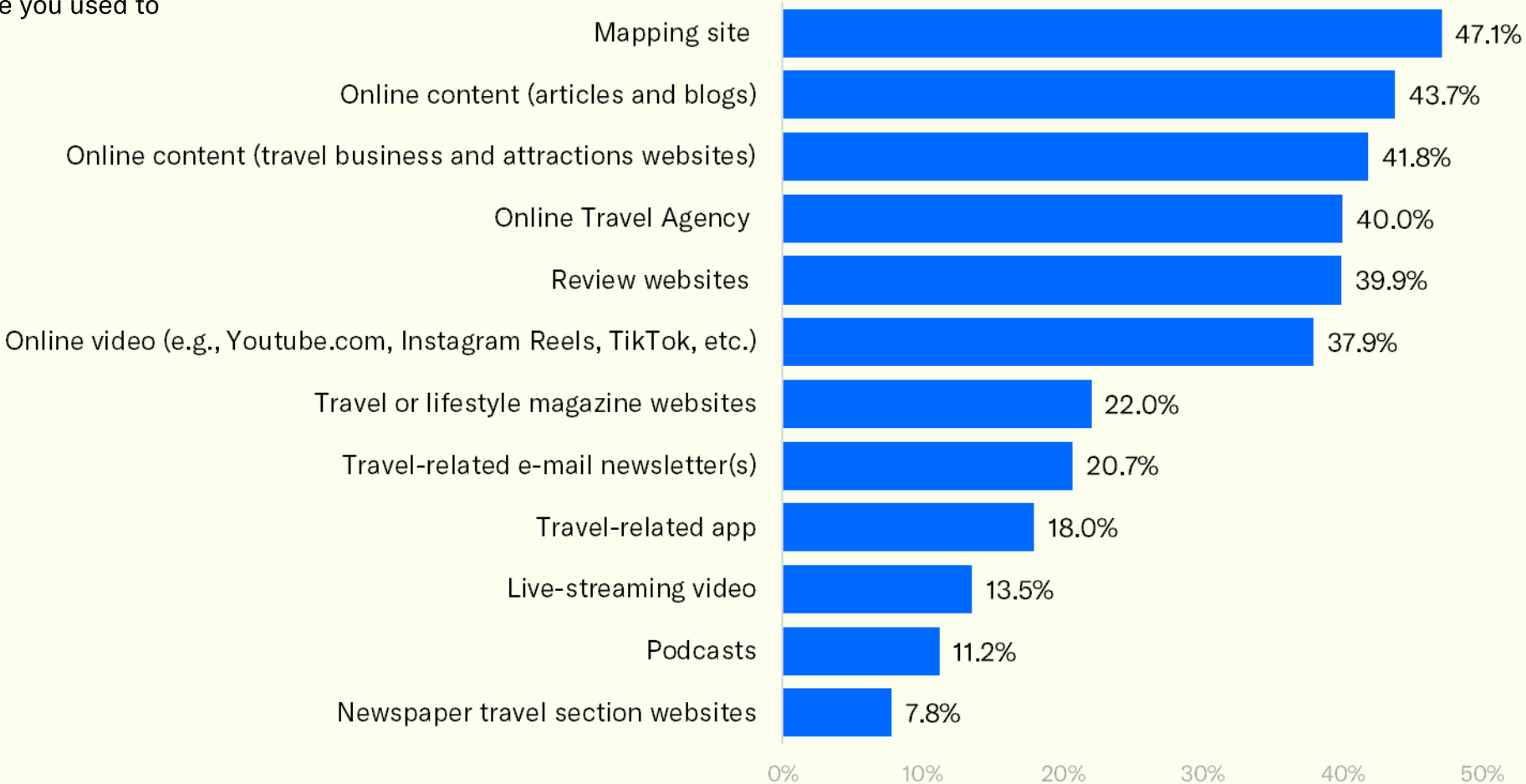
**Question:** In the PAST TWELVE (12) MONTHS, have you used a destination's official local Visitors or Convention Bureau (or Chamber of Commerce), or state or national government tourism office to help plan any travel? If so, which resources did you use?



# Among these, mapping sites, online content, OTAs, and review sites are the most common.

**Question:** In the PAST 12 MONTHS, which of these resources have you used to help plan your travel?

Past-Year Digital Tool Usage among Print Visitor Guide Users



# The Evolution of Short Form Video

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*Online video remains a strong opportunity for travel marketers, as the channel has not yet reached saturation. Younger travelers in particular are much more likely to turn to online video, particularly short-form and vertical formats like TikTok and Instagram. But don't let their age fool you, these travelers represent significant economic impact potential.*

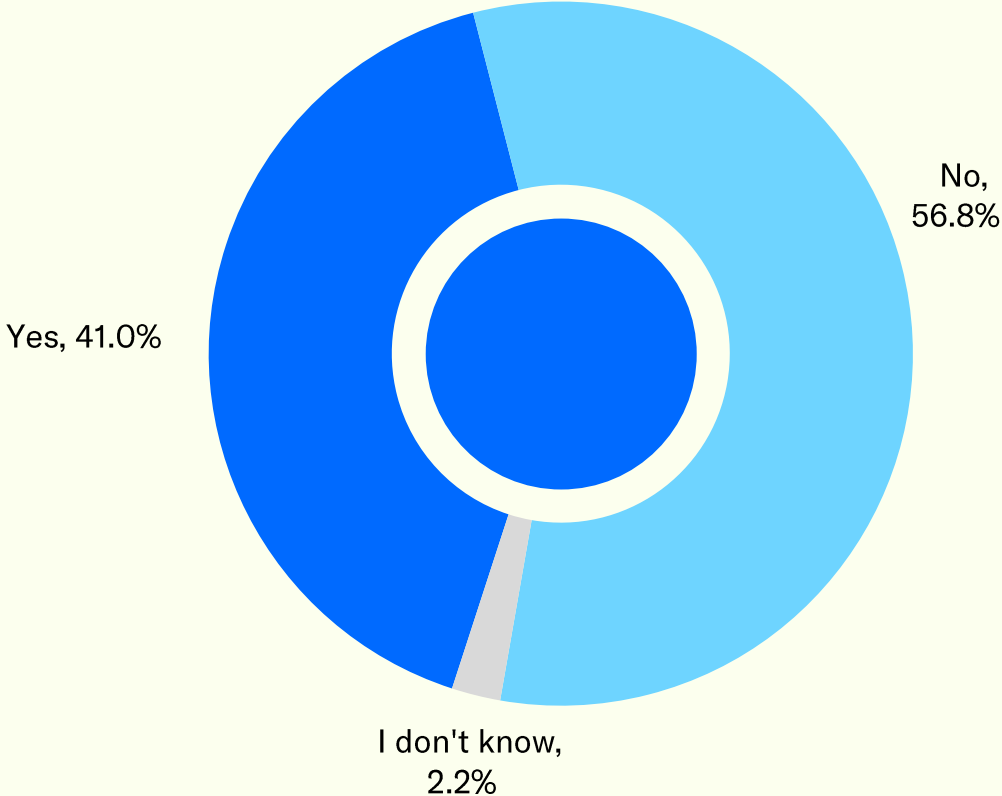
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# Online video continues to be an important space for travel planning.

**Question:**

In the past 12 months, have you used ONLINE VIDEO including visiting video sharing websites (e.g., Youtube.com, Instagram Reels, TikTok, etc.) to plan any travel?

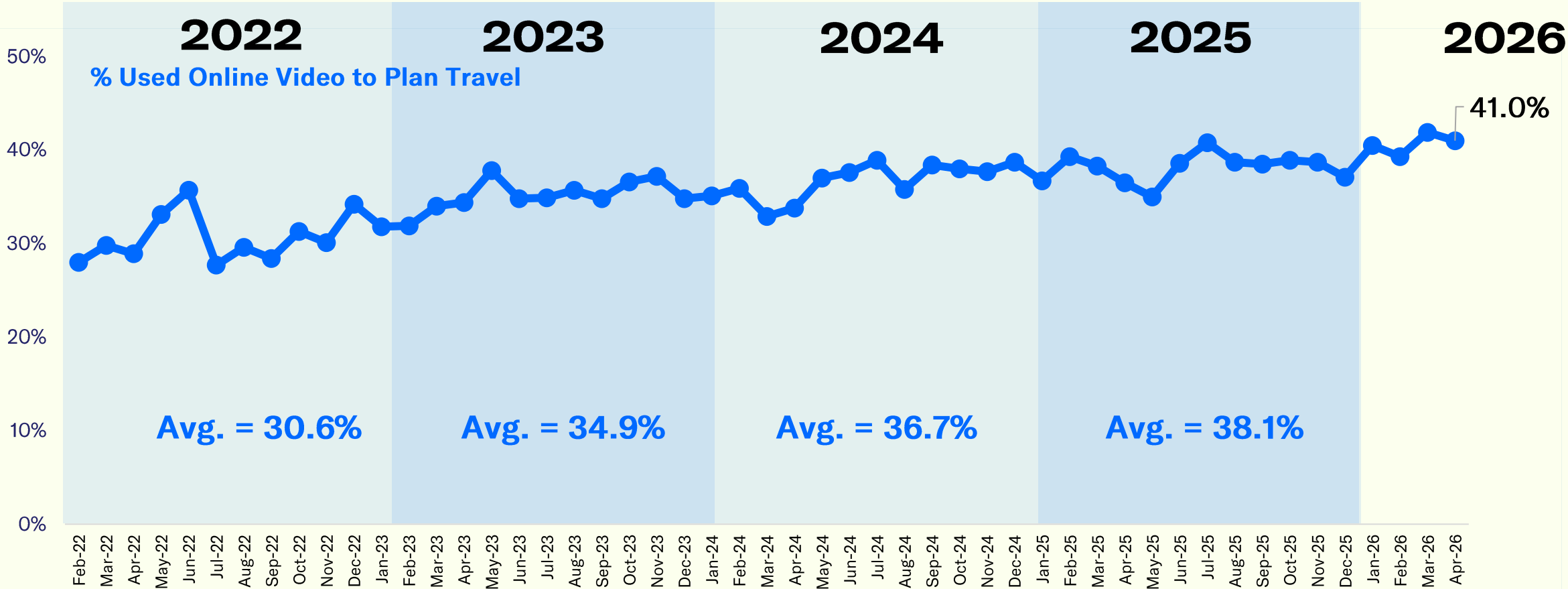
Used Online Video for Travel Planning (past 12 months)



# But there is still ample room for online video usage to grow as a trip planning tool.

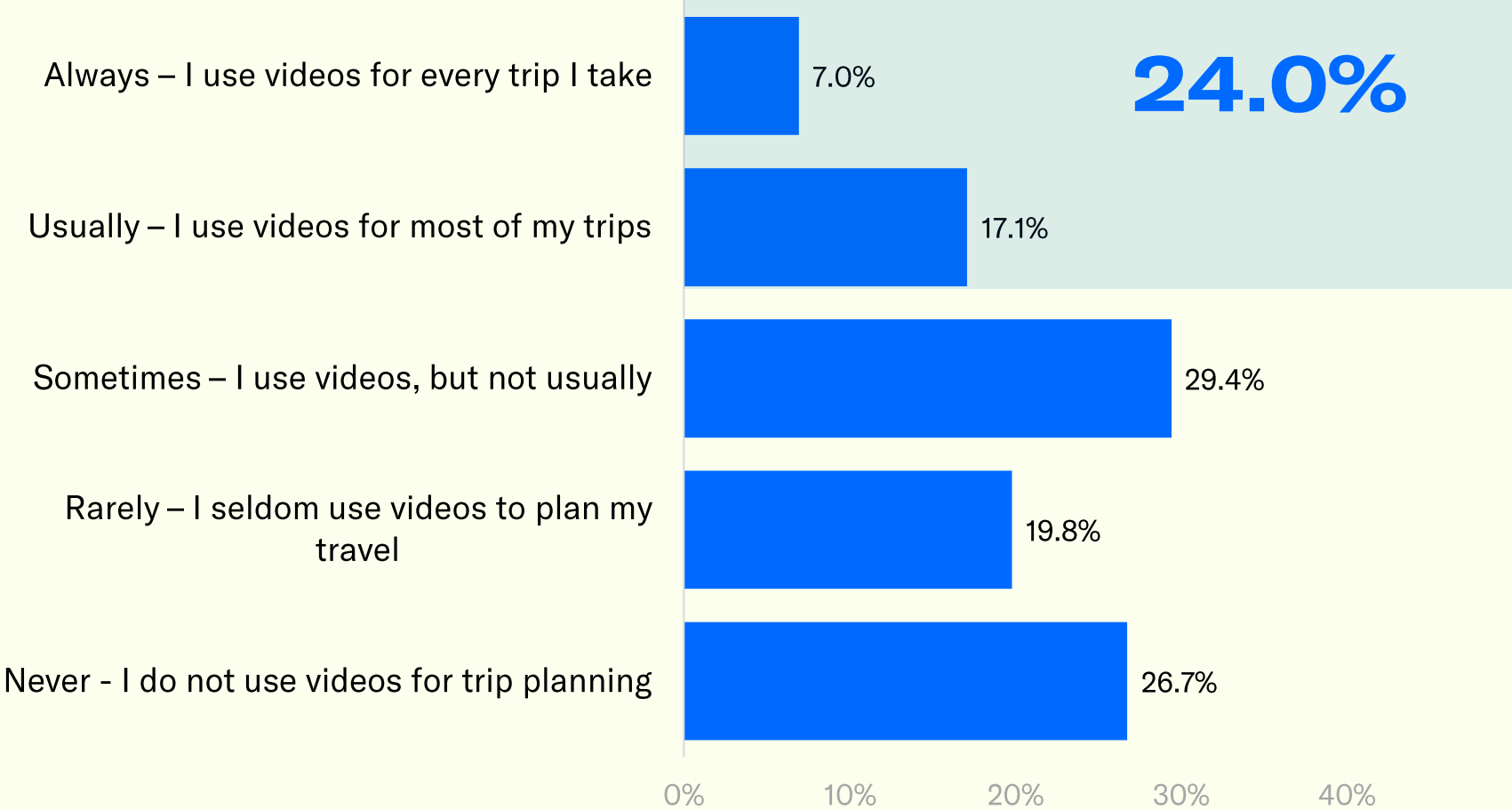
## Question:

In the past 12 months, have you used ONLINE VIDEO including visiting video sharing websites (e.g., Youtube.com, Instagram Reels, TikTok, etc.) to plan any travel?



# One in four American travelers use online videos for the majority of their trip planning.

**Question:**  
How often do you use ONLINE VIDEOS to plan your travel?

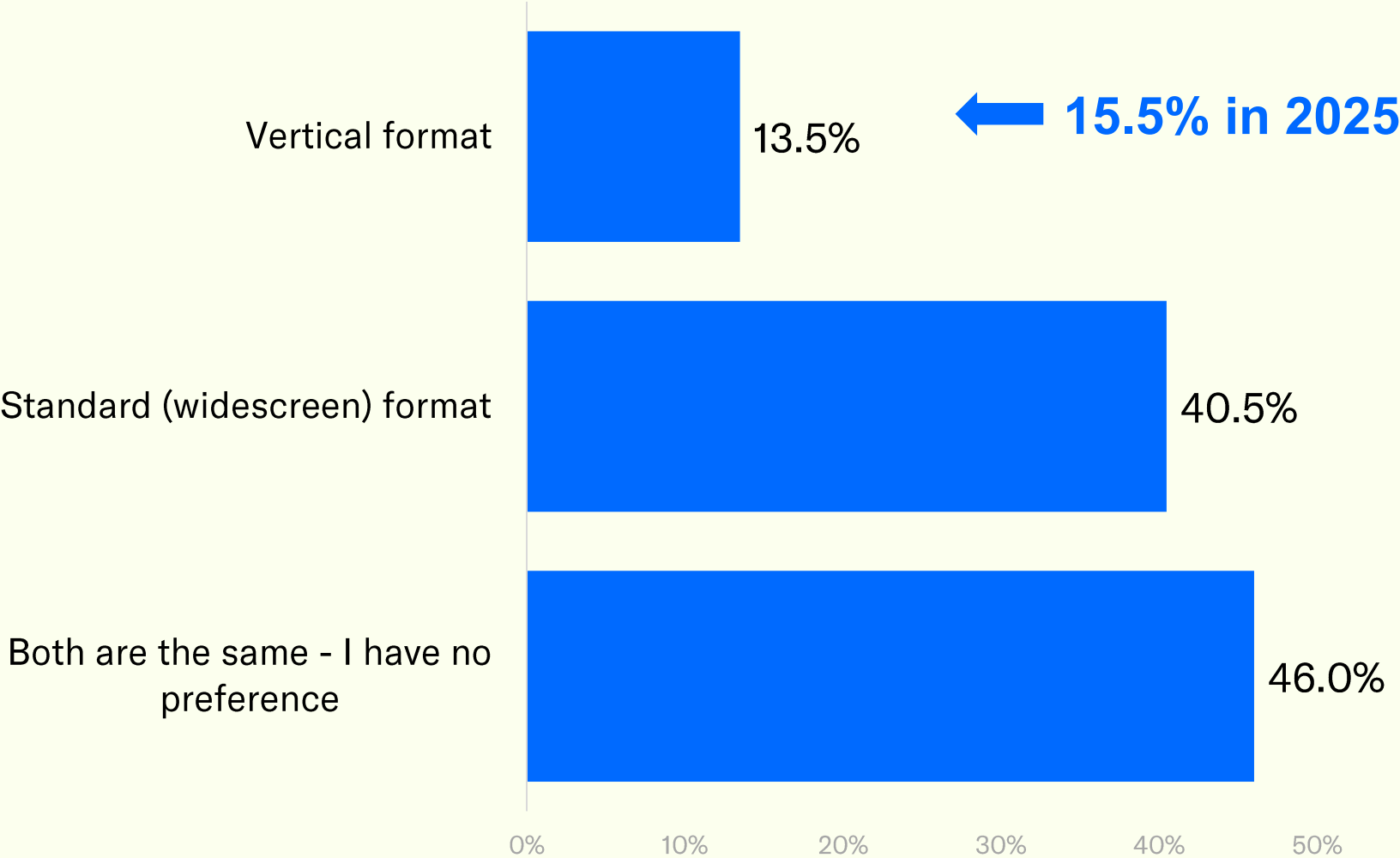


(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# Only a small minority prefers vertical video formats to widescreen.

**Question:**

When watching video online, do you generally prefer watching standard (widescreen) or vertical formats (like TikTok or YouTube Shorts)?



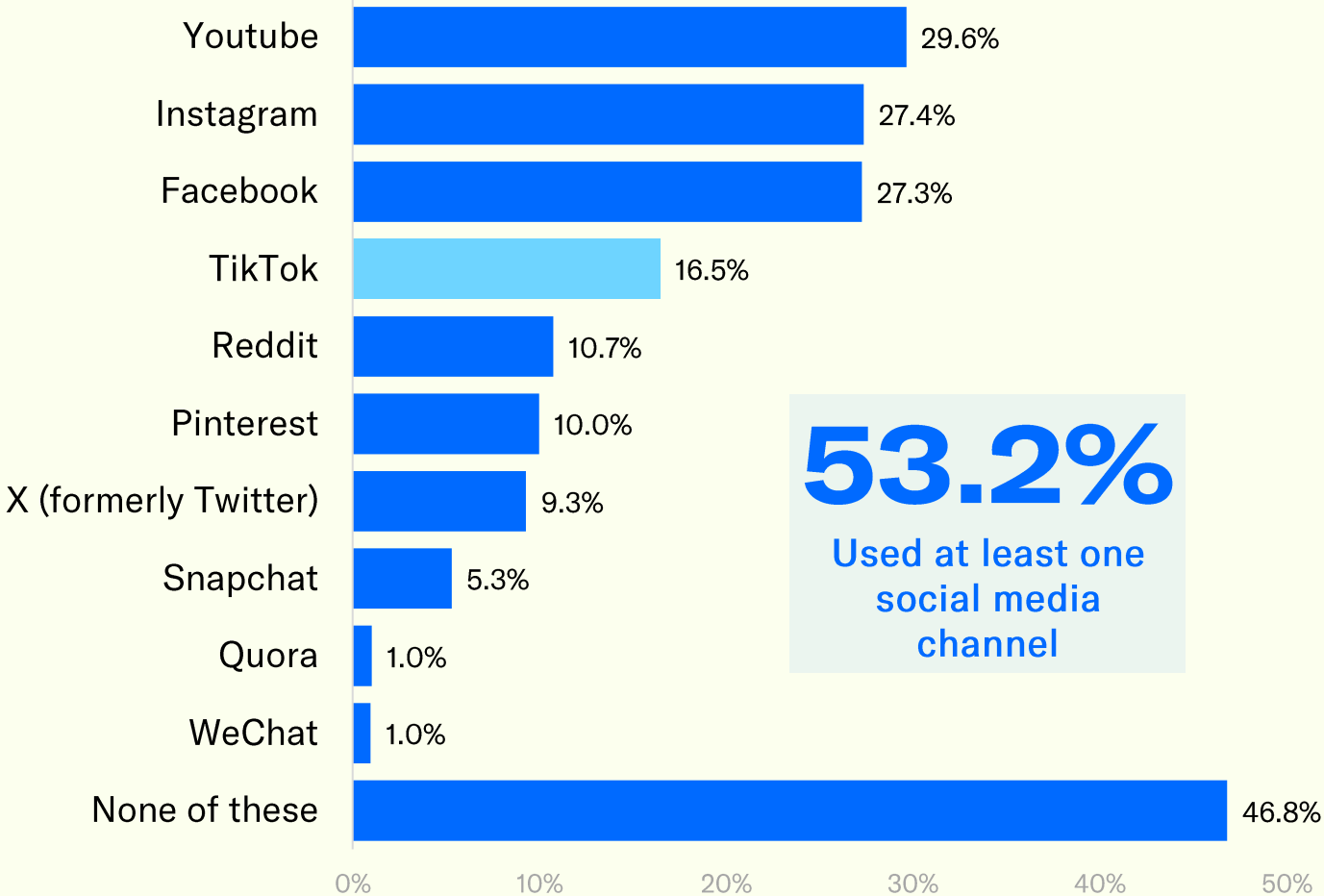
(Base: All respondents, 1,020 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# Social media channels as a whole are used as a planning tool by the majority of travelers.

**Question:** In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you used any of the following social media platforms TO PREPARE FOR OR PLAN YOUR TRAVELS? (Select all that apply)

PLEASE ONLY CHECK IF USED FOR TRAVEL PLANNING, IDEAS OR INSPIRATION.

% Used to Plan Travel in the Past 12 Months

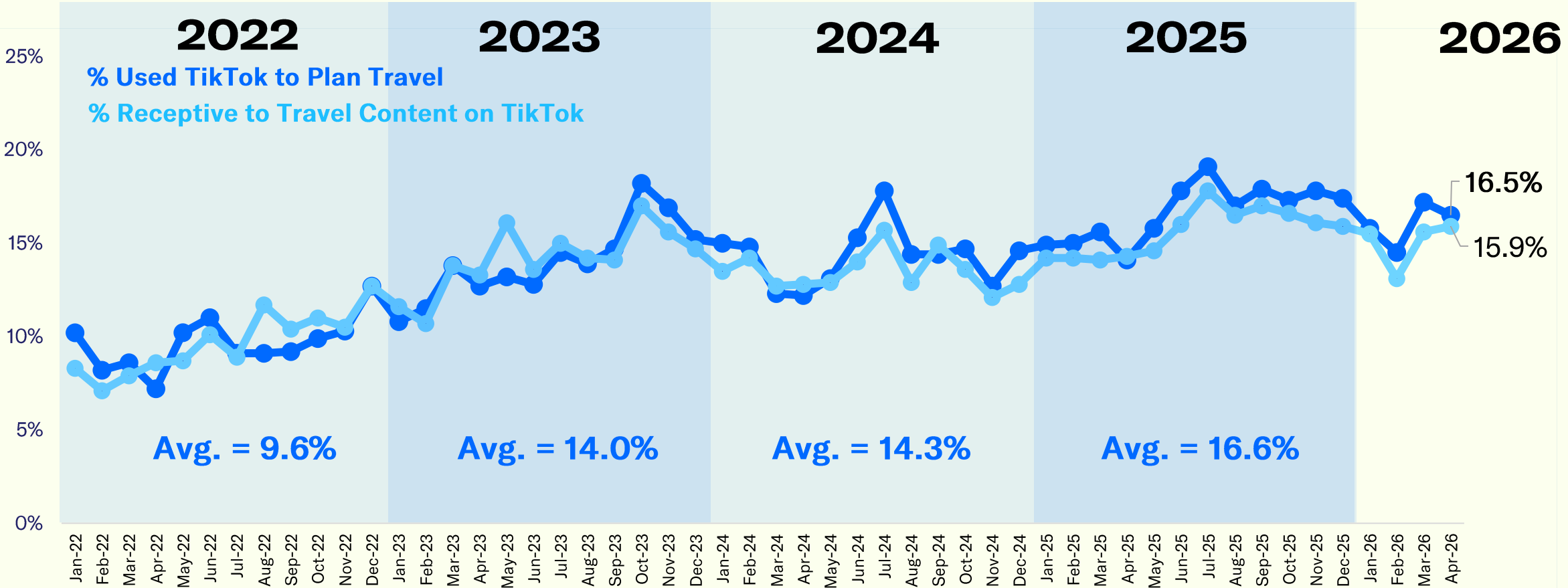


(Base: All respondents, 4,009 completed surveys. Data collected April 2026.)

# Historical trends in the use of TikTok as a trip planning tool closely aligns with those for receptivity to travel marketing on TikTok.

**Question:**

In the PAST 12 MONTHS, have you used any of the following social media platforms TO PREPARE FOR OR PLAN YOUR TRAVELS?

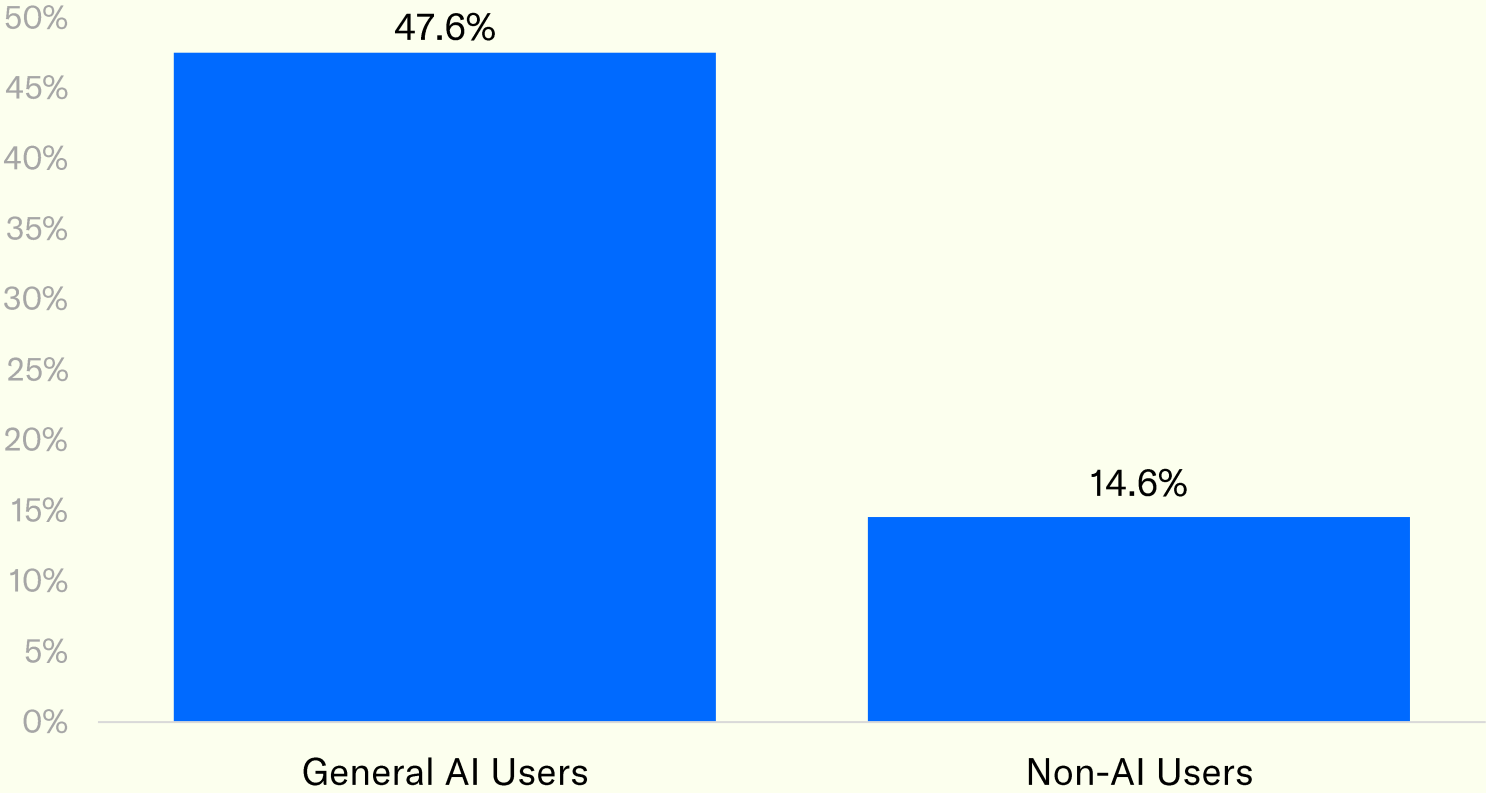


# As with other digital channels, general AI users are more likely to use online video as well.

**Question:**

In the past 12 months, have you used ONLINE VIDEO including visiting video sharing websites (e.g., Youtube.com, Instagram Reels, TikTok, etc.) to plan any travel?

% Have Used Online Video to Plan Travel – AI Users

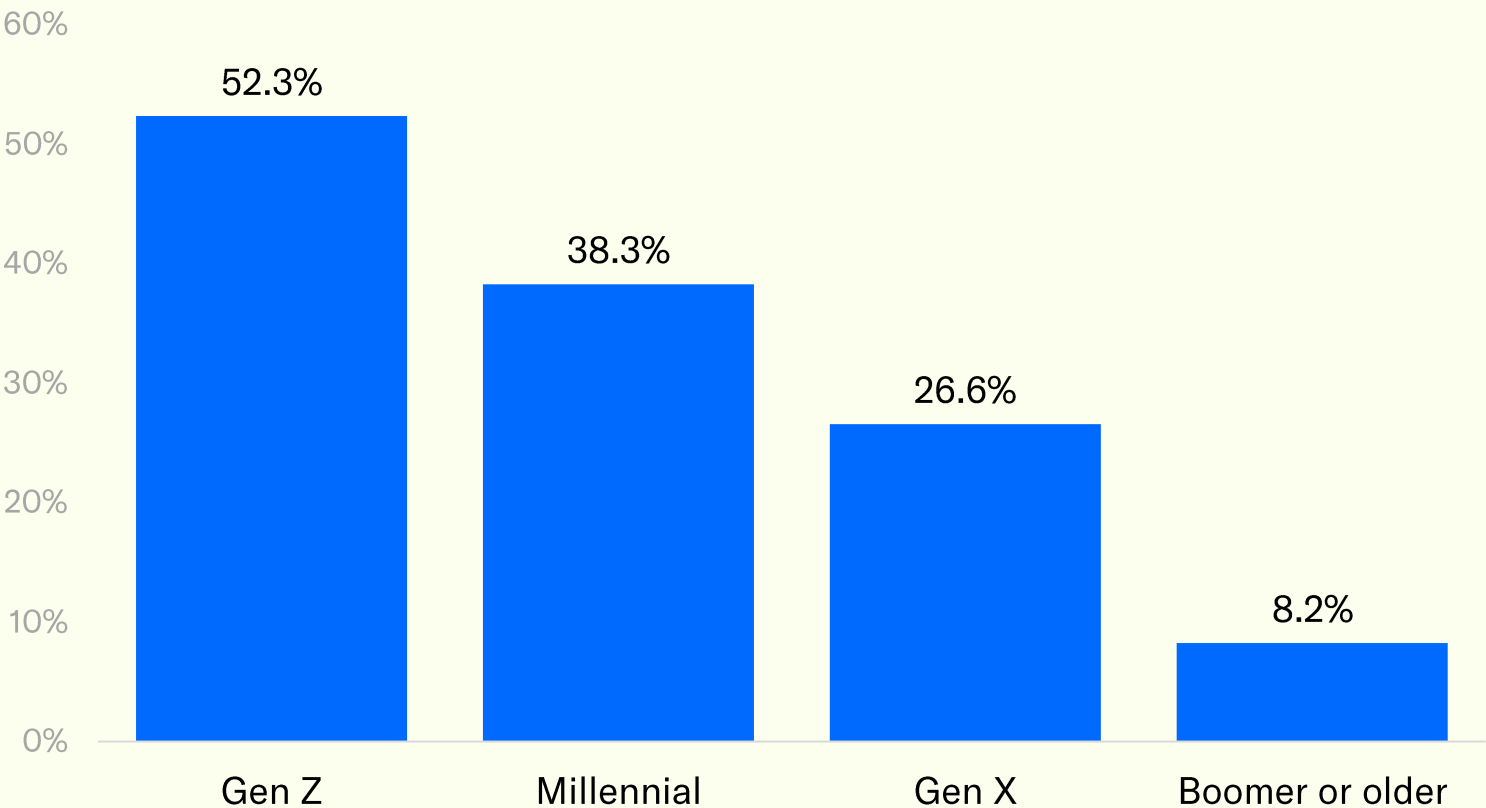


# Most younger travelers are already leveraging online video, while boomers have been most reticent to adopt this tool.

**Question:**

How often do you use ONLINE VIDEOS to plan your travel?

% Often or Always Use Online Videos to Plan Travel – By Generation

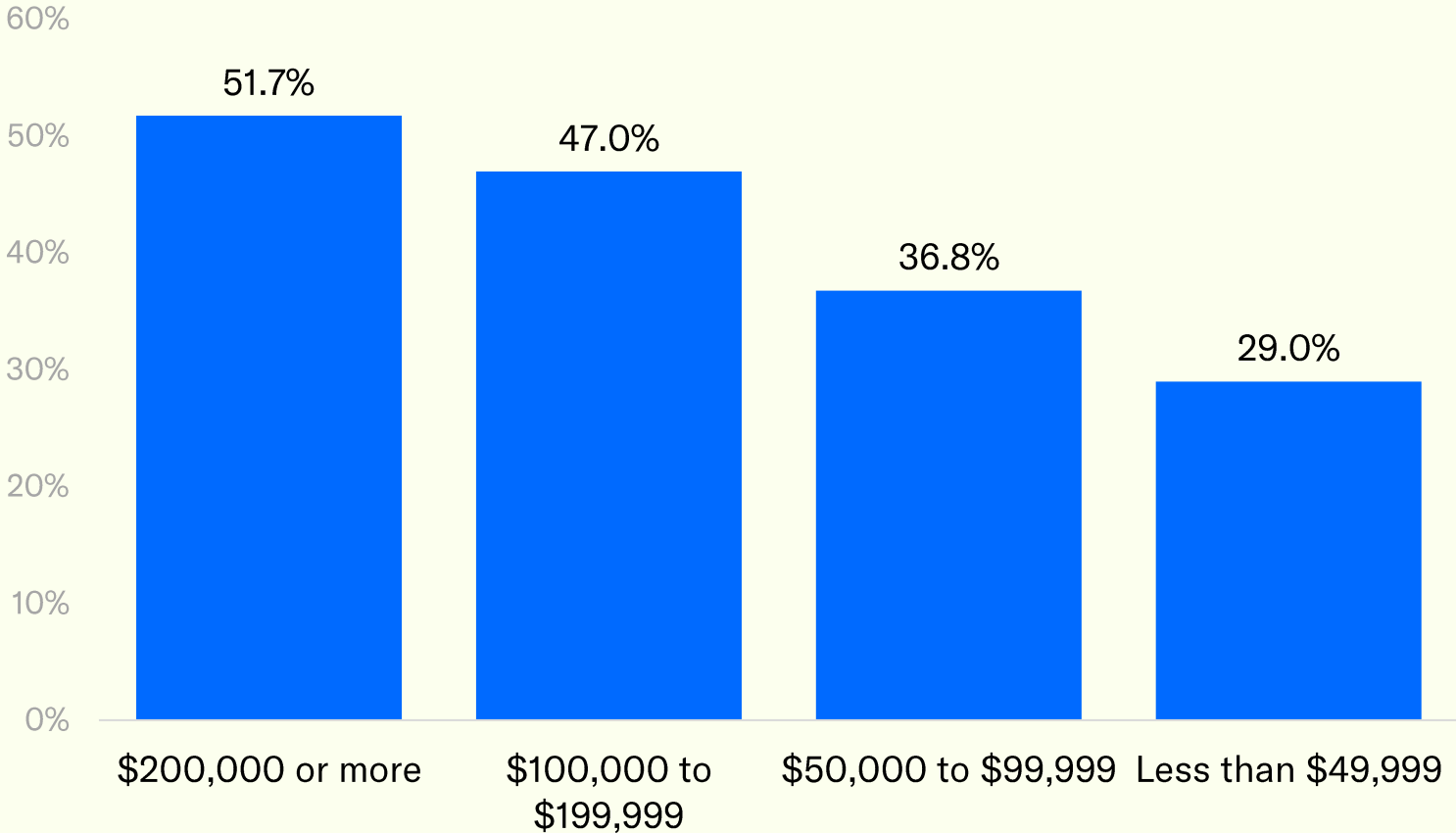


# Likelihood of online video use in travel planning also increases with income.

**Question:**

In the past 12 months, have you used ONLINE VIDEO including visiting video sharing websites (e.g., Youtube.com, Instagram Reels, TikTok, etc.) to plan any travel?

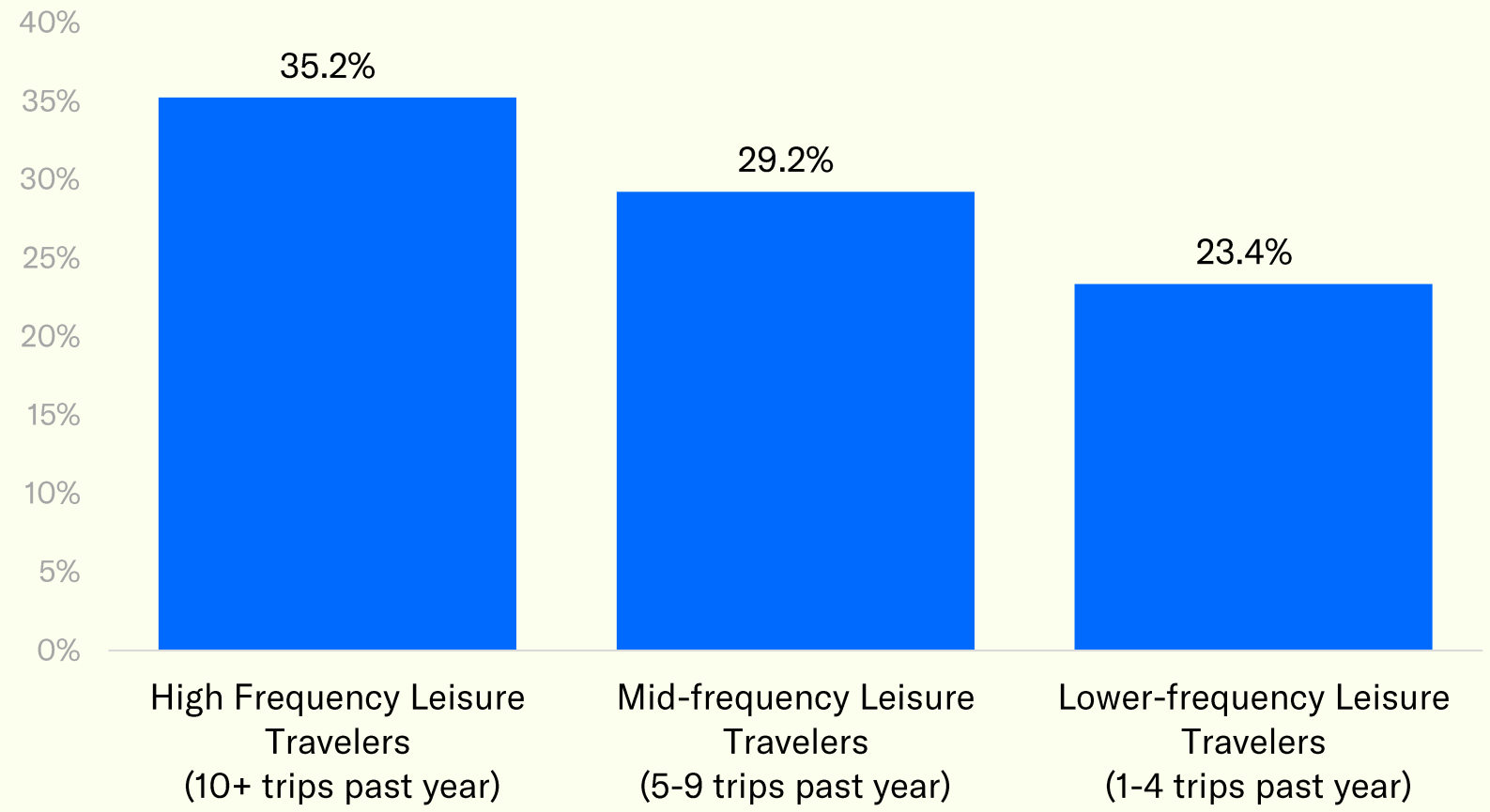
% Have Used Online Video to Plan Travel – By Income



# And higher frequency travelers are significantly more likely to turn to online video.

**Question:**  
How often do you use  
ONLINE VIDEOS to plan  
your travel?

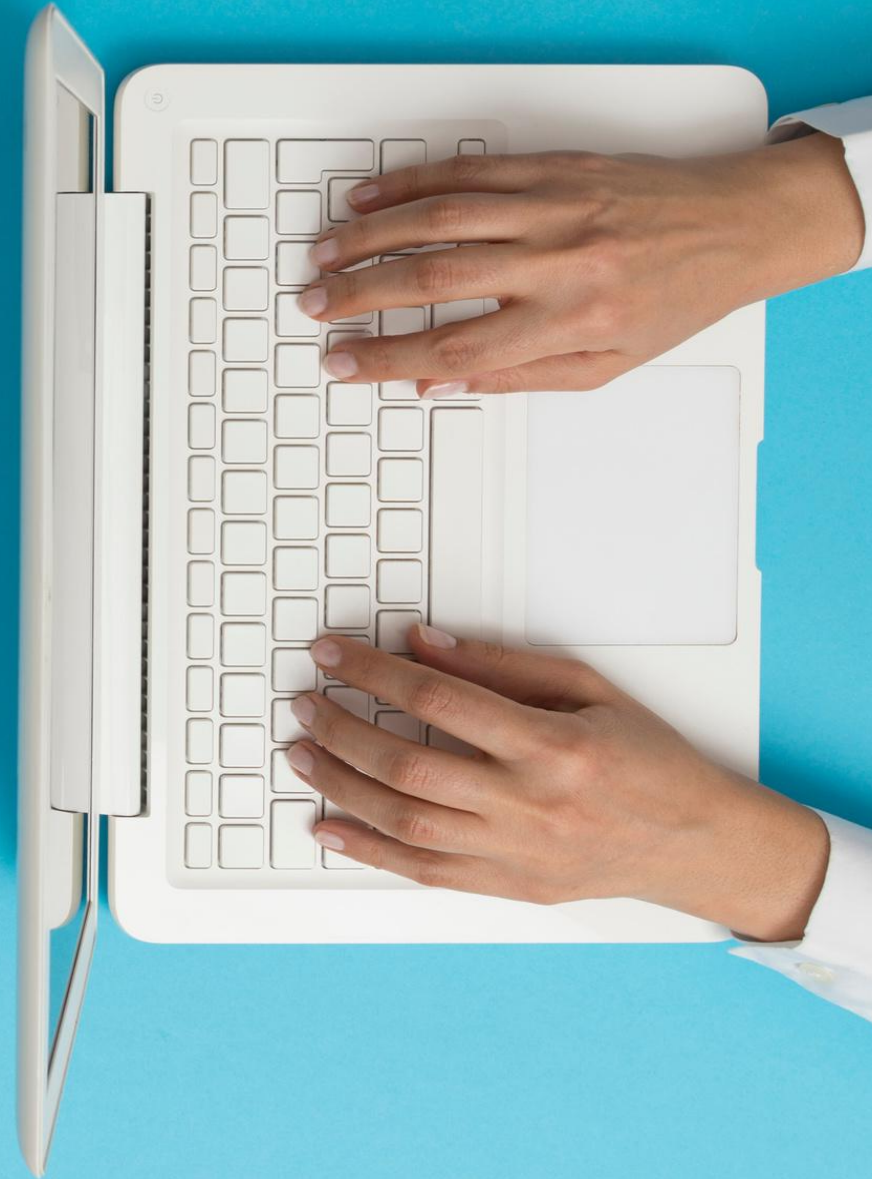
% Often or Always Use Online Videos to Plan Travel – By Travel Frequency



# DMO Website Relevancy Co-op

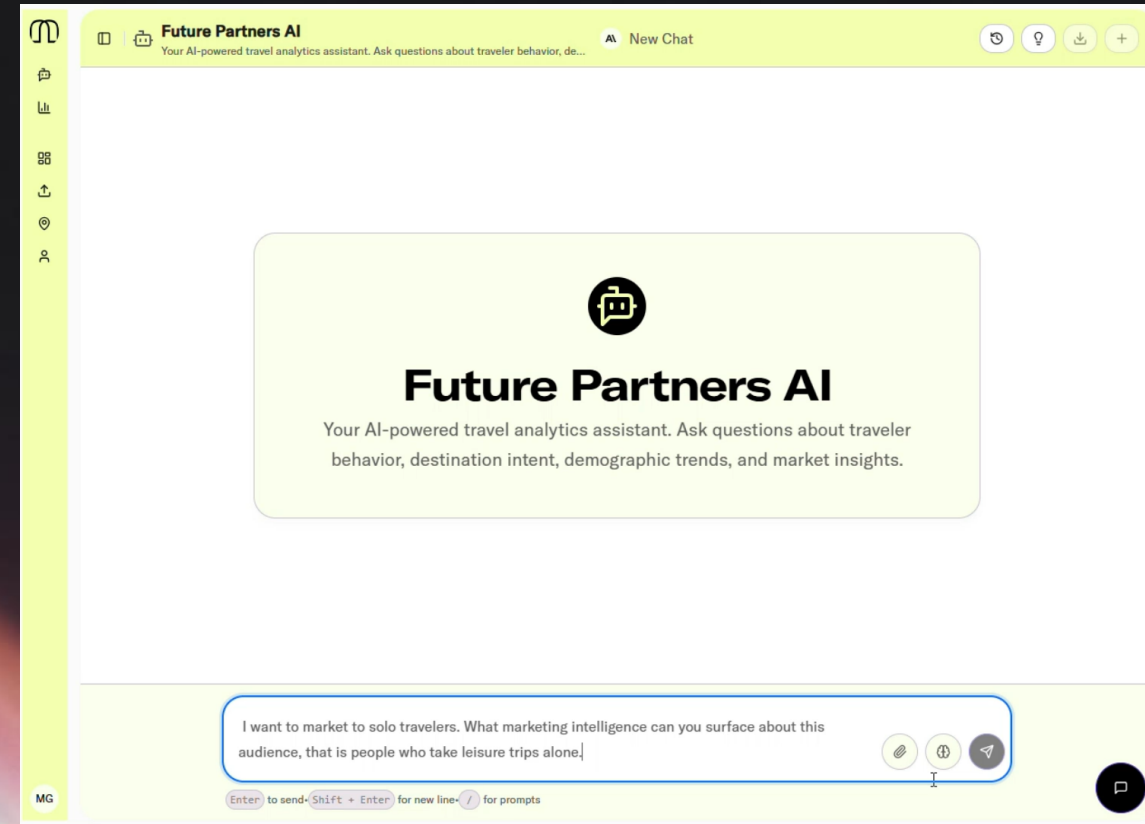
Understanding the Role of  
DMO websites in the Age of AI

**Future Partners**



# Introducing FPAI

This conversational tool gives you a continuous read on American traveler sentiment and its implications, so your brand and media investments are always grounded in what travelers are actually thinking and doing now - all at the push of a button.



# Now in Beta Testing – Get on the Waitlist





## David Reichbach

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# Thank You!



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