



2025 TECH TRENDS AND ADULTS 50-PLUS

January 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive summary

New technology is capturing the attention of adults age 50-plus, potentially recognizing its power to help them age in place.

- More than six in ten (63%) are using one or more smart home devices to add ease and functionality to their home.
- Similarly, interest and use of home safety tech has also increased with almost half (46%) using one or more devices to help provide peace of mind and 40% expressing interest in using such tech in the future.

Health and wellness tech has the potential to meet some of the growing needs of an aging population.

- Many adults age 50-plus (46%) recognize technology can enable a healthy life, with significant interest (47%) expressed for brain health tech such as brain training exercises or wearables to track sleep and stress levels.
- In addition, some caregivers (33%) are beginning to embrace tech specifically designed to assist them, while many are also leveraging a variety of digital services to aid in their responsibilities.

Older adults maintain a steady engagement with a variety of digital services.

- Two-thirds (66%) see technology as a means for enriching their lives by making daily life and aging easier.
- Adults age 50-plus currently use more than a dozen digital services to help them manage their home, finances, social lives, and personal interests.
- Some older adults are using health-related and non-health specific digital services to help them improve or maintain their health and wellness.
- Most of the digital services older adults use are free, with more than half (60%) not willing to pay a fee for such services in the future.



Executive summary (cont.)

Tech spending remains steady year over year among adults age 50-plus.

- Slight, but significant, increases in ownership of most of the primary tech devices is seen among older adults in 2024.
- Smartphones remain the most common purchase made (26%), with most (62%) having upgraded their phones in the past 2 years.
- That said, 2 in 5 older adults held off from making a purchase in 2024 due to finances, with big ticket items such as laptops, smartphones, and wearables mentioned most.

AI awareness and adoption are on the rise across the ages, with significant movement among adults age 50-plus.

- The use of AI doubled from 9% in 2023 to 18% in 2024.
- Among AI users, the general perception is that it is helpful with most expecting to continue exploring its possibilities as the needs arise.
- Currently, those without any direct experience with AI remain skeptical of its potential.

Though interest in new technology is increasing, older adults require some assurances before fully adopting a new technology.

- Most older adults continue to believe technology is not designed with their age in mind, but there is evidence this perception is fading; 64% agreed with the claim in 2023 vs. 59% in 2024.
- However, concern for the privacy of their personal data remains a top hesitation to purchasing or embracing new technology.
- A support service designed specifically with the older adult in mind provides an opportunity for adoption. Seven in ten (71%) agree with a support service, but most older adults think costs for this should be part of the product purchase.



TECH OF THE FUTURE

Technology of the Future

Today's technology is revolutionizing how older adults maintain their independence while staying connected to family and communities.

The future of technology looks even more promising, with significant development focused on solutions that empower older adults to take control of their lives while also providing peace of mind.

Today and tomorrow's technology includes tech designed not only for communication, convenience, safety, and entertainment but also for all aspects of health – personal wellness and health, caregiving, and brain health.

Five categories of technology were evaluated in this study.

1

Smart Home Tech

Smart home devices that use the home Wi-Fi to add ease and functionality to the home, most are manageable through an app on a mobile device.

2

Home Safety Tech

Devices for the home that add a layer of safety and security, such as cameras, alarms, sensors to detect if someone falls, remote access to appliances, lights, thermostat, etc.

3

Mobility Tech

Technology options for getting around, whether that be in the home or around town.

4

Brain Health Tech

Various technologies such as apps for brain training exercises, a wearable device to track sleep and stress patterns, etc.

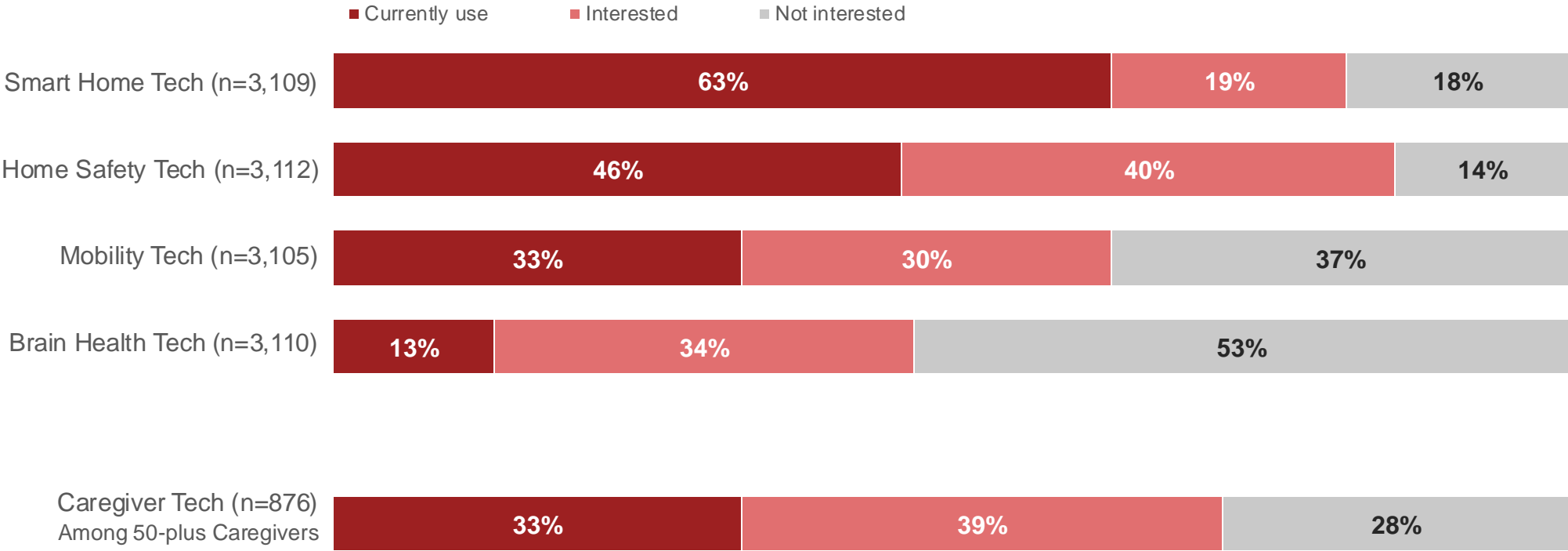
5

Caregiving Tech

Tech devices and services specifically designed to aid in the care of another person, such as motion sensors, scheduling assistants, and online support communities.

Each of the new categories of technology capture the attention of older adults, though with varying degrees of usage and future interest.

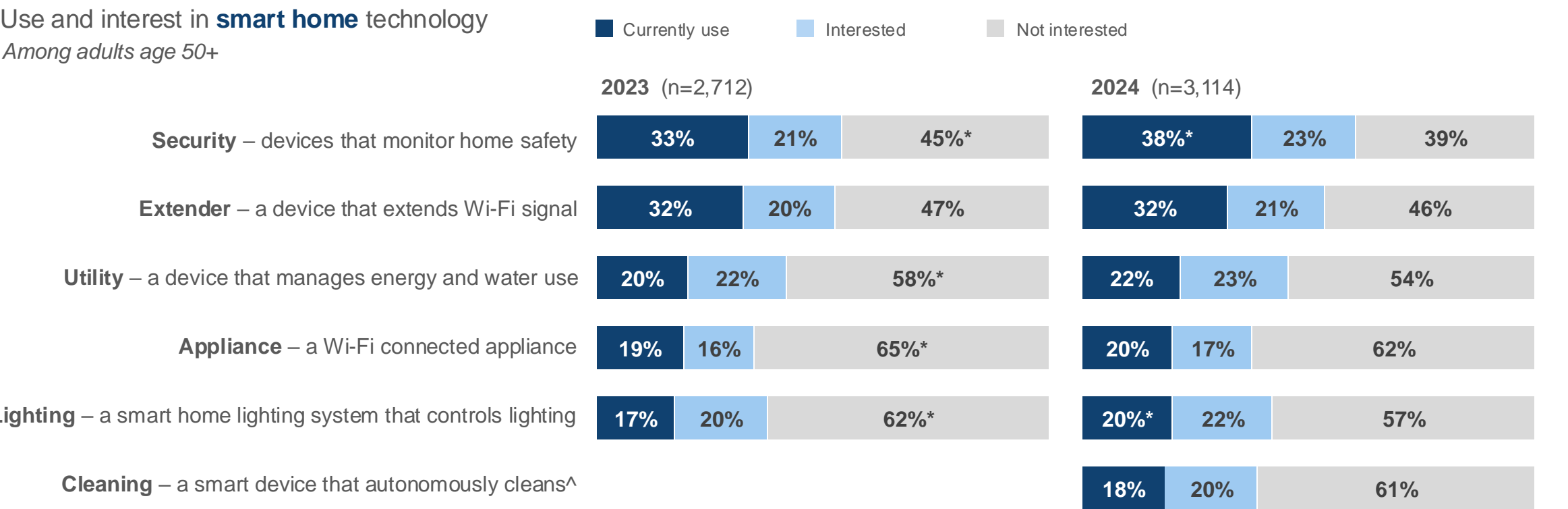
Overall use and interest in technology category
Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q77_2024, Q40, Q84_2025, Q41, Q81_2025
Respondents were asked to indicate their level of awareness and interest, across a list of products per category, on a 5-point scale. The responses to these questions were netted into one of three positions: Currently Use, Interested In, Not Interested In

Interest and use of smart home tech has increased.

Most adults age 50-plus say they want to live in their home for as long as possible.¹ Smart home technology can provide easy solutions that encourage aging-in-place, so it's not surprising this is a top technology category for older adults. Six in ten (63%) currently use at least one type of smart home technology device. Use of home security devices and smart home lighting has grown, up from 33% and 17% in 2023, respectively.



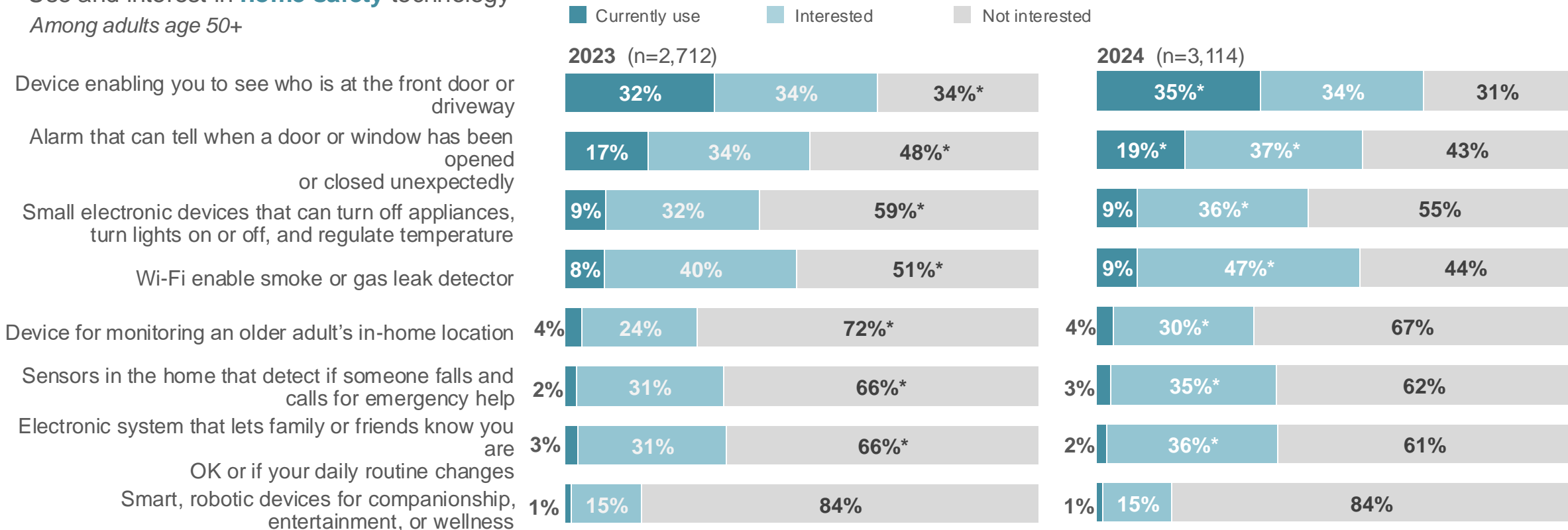
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
[QUESTION UPDATED 2024] Q77_2024. Please indicate your level of familiarity with each of the following types of smart home devices.

2023 data has been netted to allow for YOY comparisons ^New answer 2024
* Indicates a significant difference across years at a 95% confidence level

Home safety tech revolves around a sense of safety and peace of mind.

About half (46%) currently use any type of home safety tech; but a comparable amount (40%) are interested in these devices. Use of doorbell cameras and window alarms have grown significantly year over year, while interest in sensors for various types of home monitoring is up.

Use and interest in **home safety** technology
Among adults age 50+



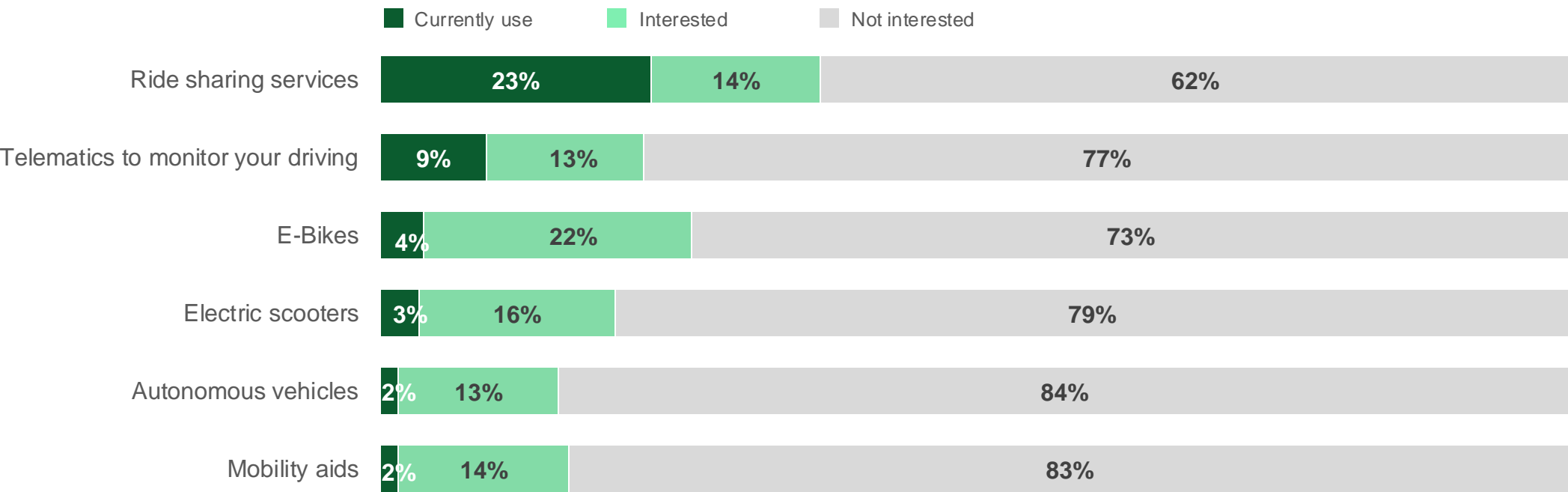
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q40. Now please indicate your level of familiarity and interest in the use of home safety technology devices for your home.

2023 data has been netted to allow for YOY comparisons
* Indicates a significant difference across years at a 95% confidence level

Older adults are relatively new to the concept of mobility technology, i.e., technology for getting around one’s community.

Aside from ride-sharing services, there is not a high degree of interest in other forms of mobility tech. Interest in autonomous vehicles may grow as exposure and market share become more prevalent.

Use and interest in **mobility** technology
Among adults age 50+

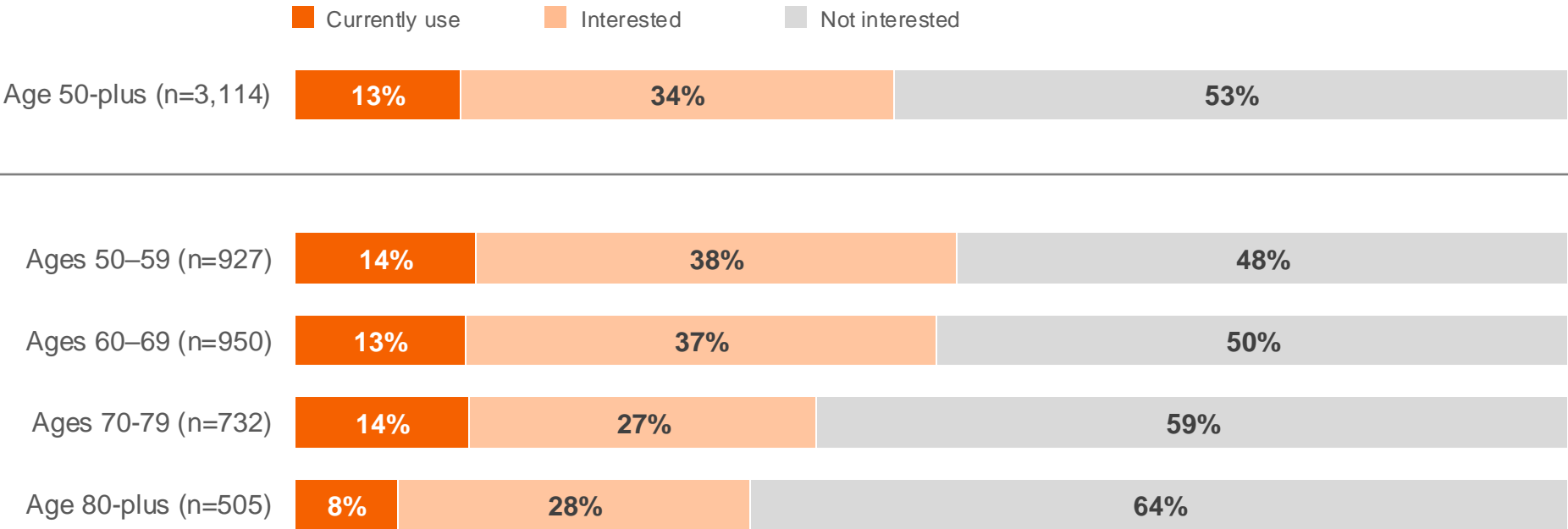


Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q84_2025. When it comes to getting around, please indicate your level of familiarity with and interest in each type of mobility technology

Technology designed to help maintain brain health generates significant interest among older adults of all ages.

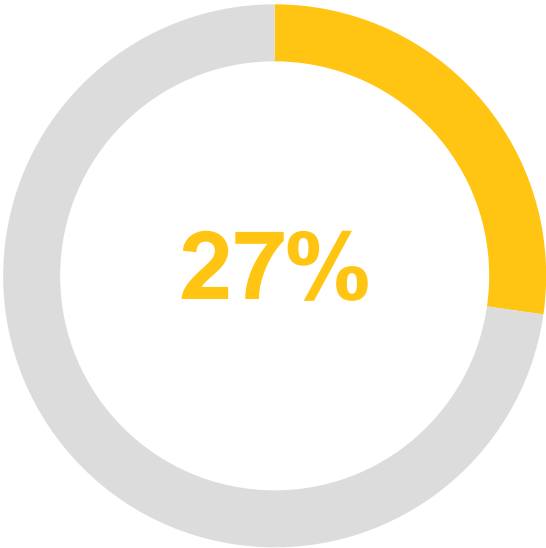
Across adults in their 50’s, 60’s, 70’s, and 80’s there is a shared thread of interest in technology to help maintain brain health- although interest has not translated to use.

Use and interest in technology to maintain **brain health**
Among adults age 50-plus



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q41_2025. What is your level of engagement and/or interest in using technology to help maintain brain health?

One in four older adults are or have been a caregiver in the last year.

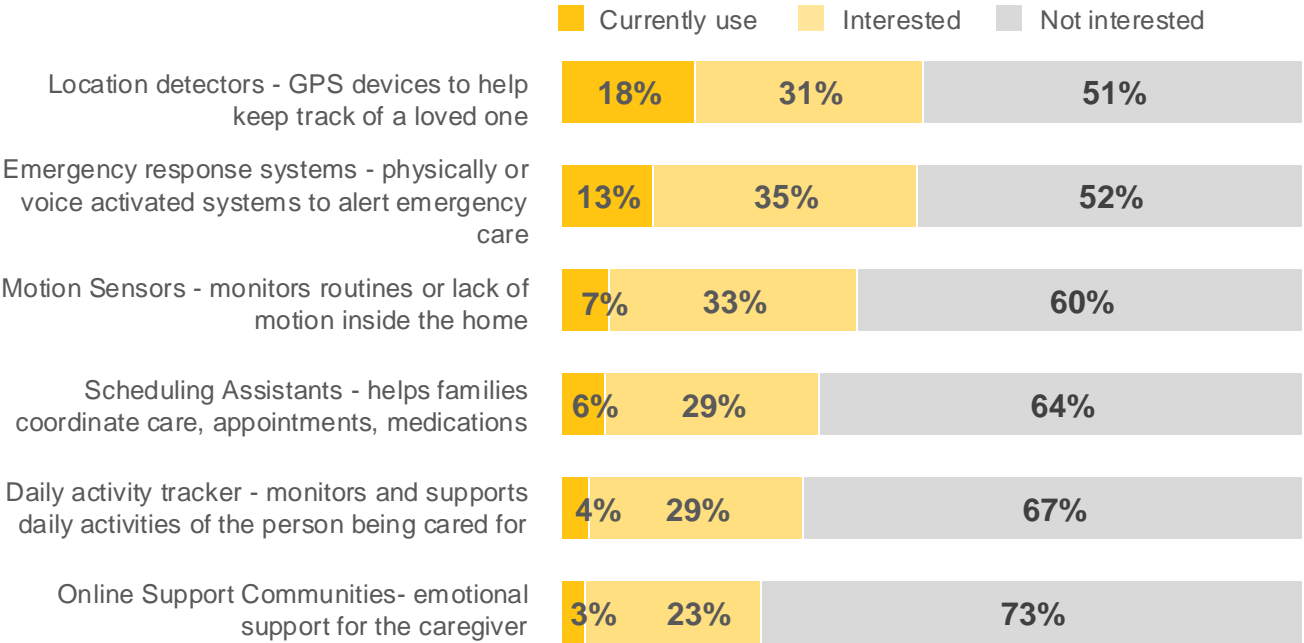


of adults age 50-+ were a caregiver in past year

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
D6. In the past year, have you provided unpaid care or assistance to an adult friend or family member who needs assistance due to aging, a disability, or a health-related issue?.

Caregivers are taking advantage of some of the technology specifically designed to assist them.

Use and interest in caregiver tech
Among adults age 50+ who have provided caregiving assistance



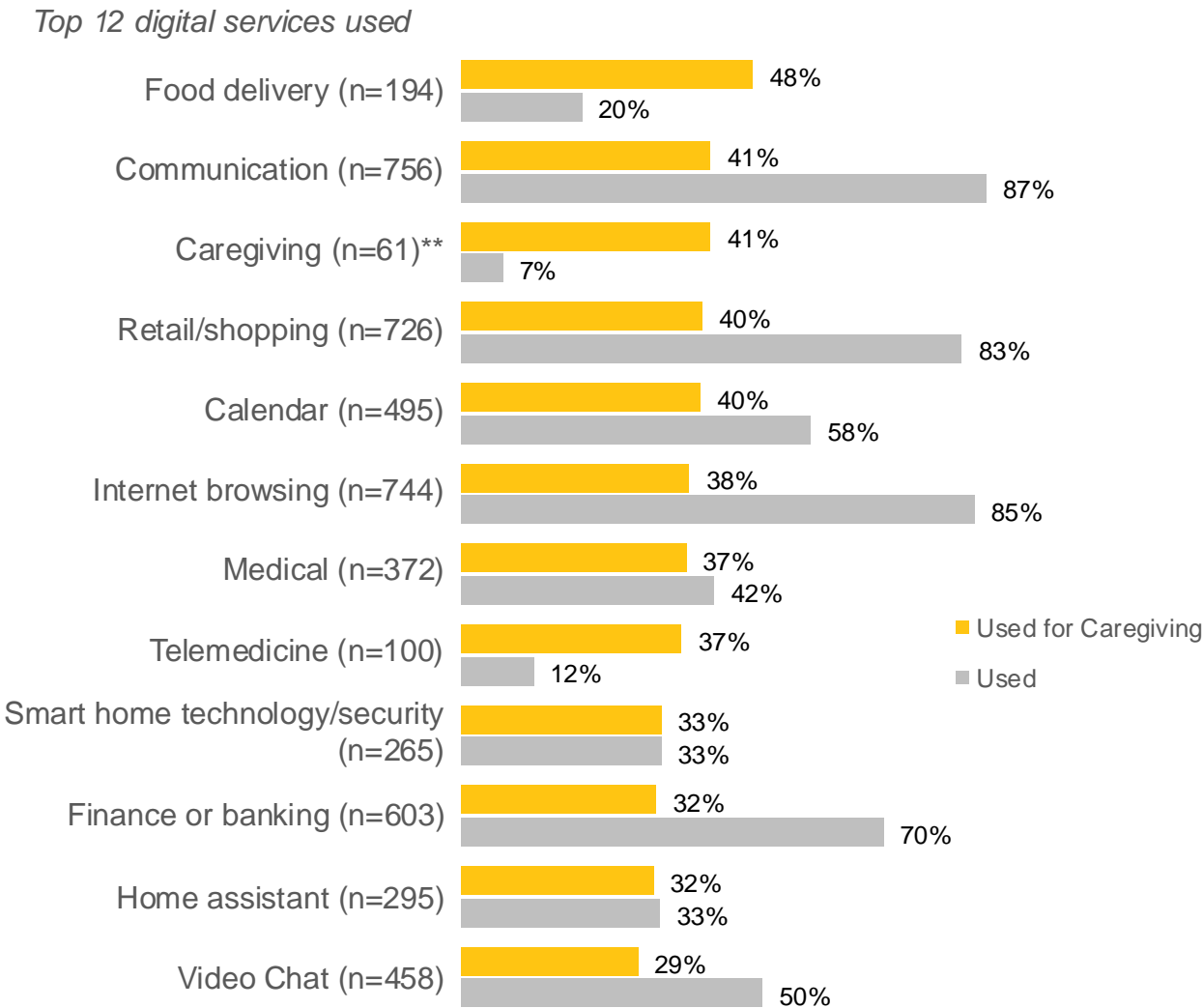
Base: Total 50-plus Caregivers (n=878)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q81_2025. Thinking about your role as a caregiver, please indicate your level of familiarity with and interest in each.

Beyond the curated technology, caregivers are leveraging a variety of digital services to assist them with their responsibilities.

Both health specific and non-health specific services are mentioned, with food delivery, communication tools, caregiving management, shopping, and calendar topping the list.

Base: Respondents 50-plus are caregivers and use digital service
NEW QUESTION 2024] Q82_2025. Still thinking about your role as a caregiver, reviewing the various digital services you indicated using in the past 3 months, which ones, if any, do you use to aid you in your caregiving responsibilities?

Top digital services used for caregiving
Among adults age 50+ who are caregivers and use digital service

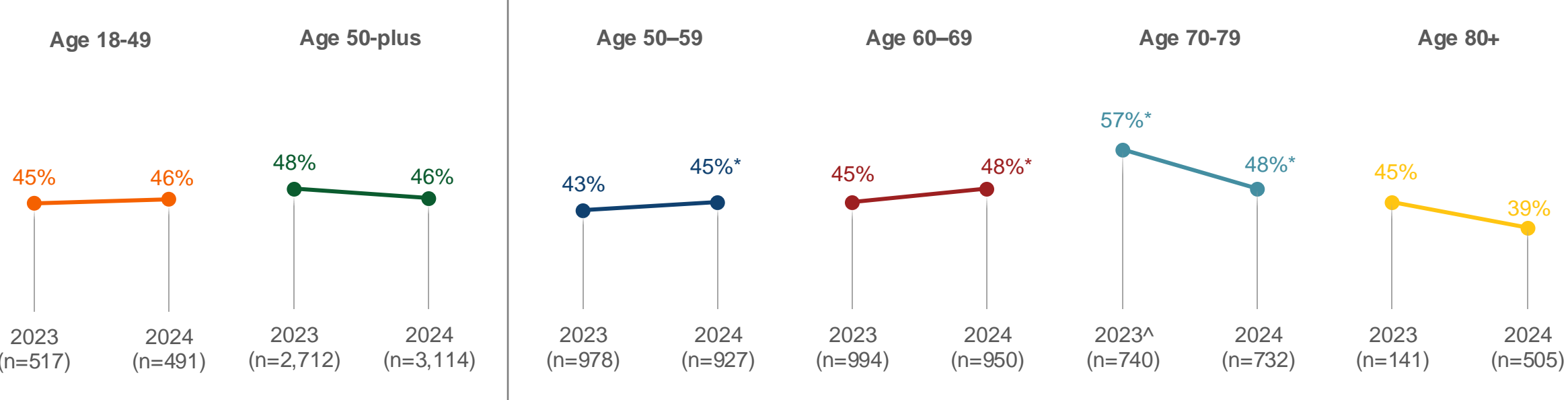


**Caution: Small base size

Many adults recognize technology can enable a healthy life.

There are numerous health-related technologies now available to help keep people healthy such as devices that keep track of fitness goals or monitor glucose levels, or digital services providing mental health assistance in the way of online therapy and stress management tools. Across all ages, about half see the promise of tech to enable healthy aging.

Percent of adults who agree and strongly agree that technology enables a healthy life
Among adults by age range, 2023 and 2024



Base: Total Respondents
Q23a_g. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following: Technology enables me to lead a healthy life.

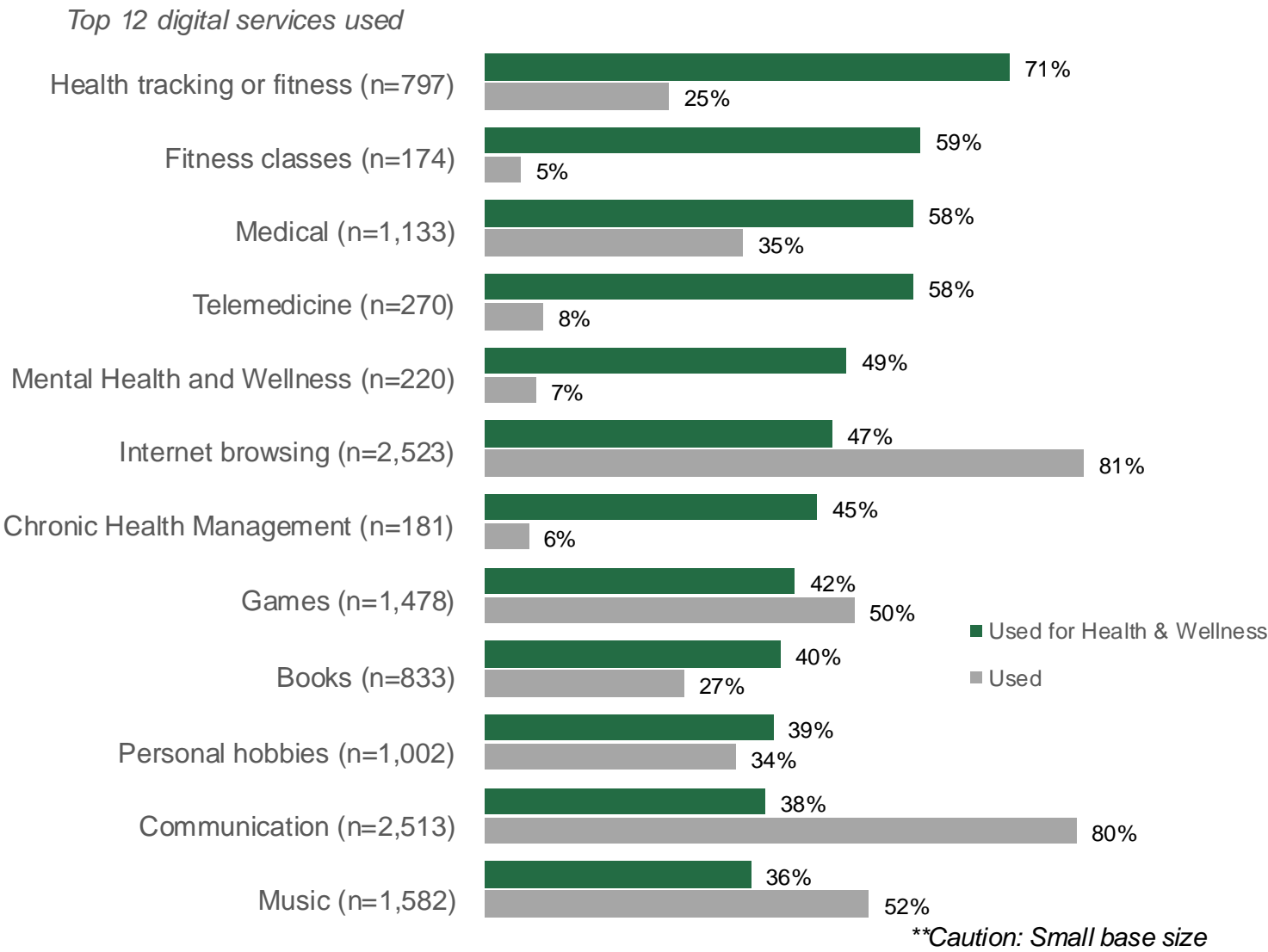
*Indicates a significant difference with other age ranges within the same year at a 95% confidence level
^reported as 70+ in 2023

A variety of digital services are currently being used to help adults maintain and improve their health and wellness, with health and fitness tracking at the top of the list.

Older adult are also apt to use digital games, books, hobbies, and music - to name a few – to aid in their personal wellbeing.

Base: Respondents 50-plus who use digital service
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q83_2025. Now, reviewing the various digital services you indicated using in the past 3 months, which ones, if any, do you use to help you maintain or improve your personal health and wellness?

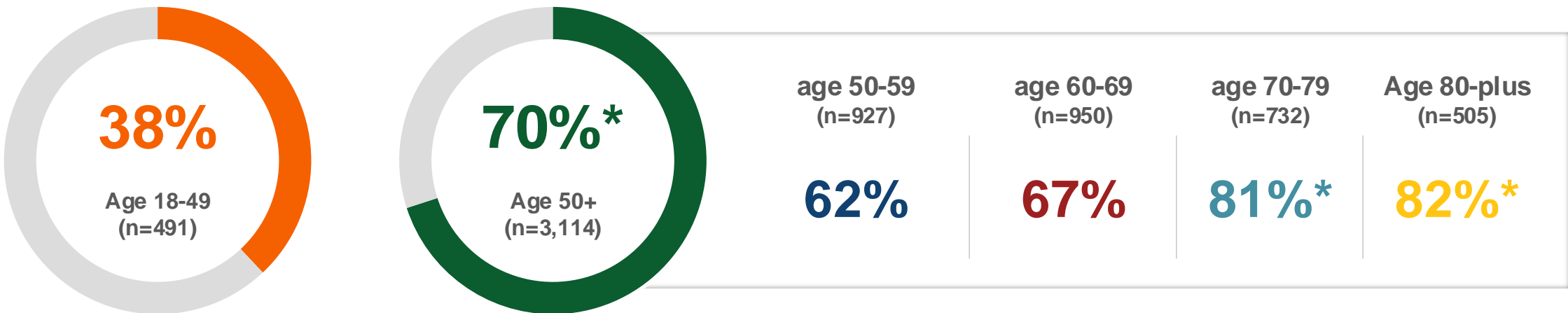
Top digital services used for health and wellness
Among adults age 50+ who use digital service



Seven in ten adults age 50-plus suffer from one or more chronic or serious health conditions.

A chronic health condition defined broadly is a persistent disease or health condition such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure or cancer that lasts one year or more and requires ongoing medical attention.² The number of adults impacted significantly increases with age. By age 80, four in five have some chronic health issue.

Percent who have one or more health conditions
Among adults by age range



Base: Total Respondents
Q76_2024. How many (if any) chronic or serious medical conditions do you suffer from?
²Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/about/index.htm>

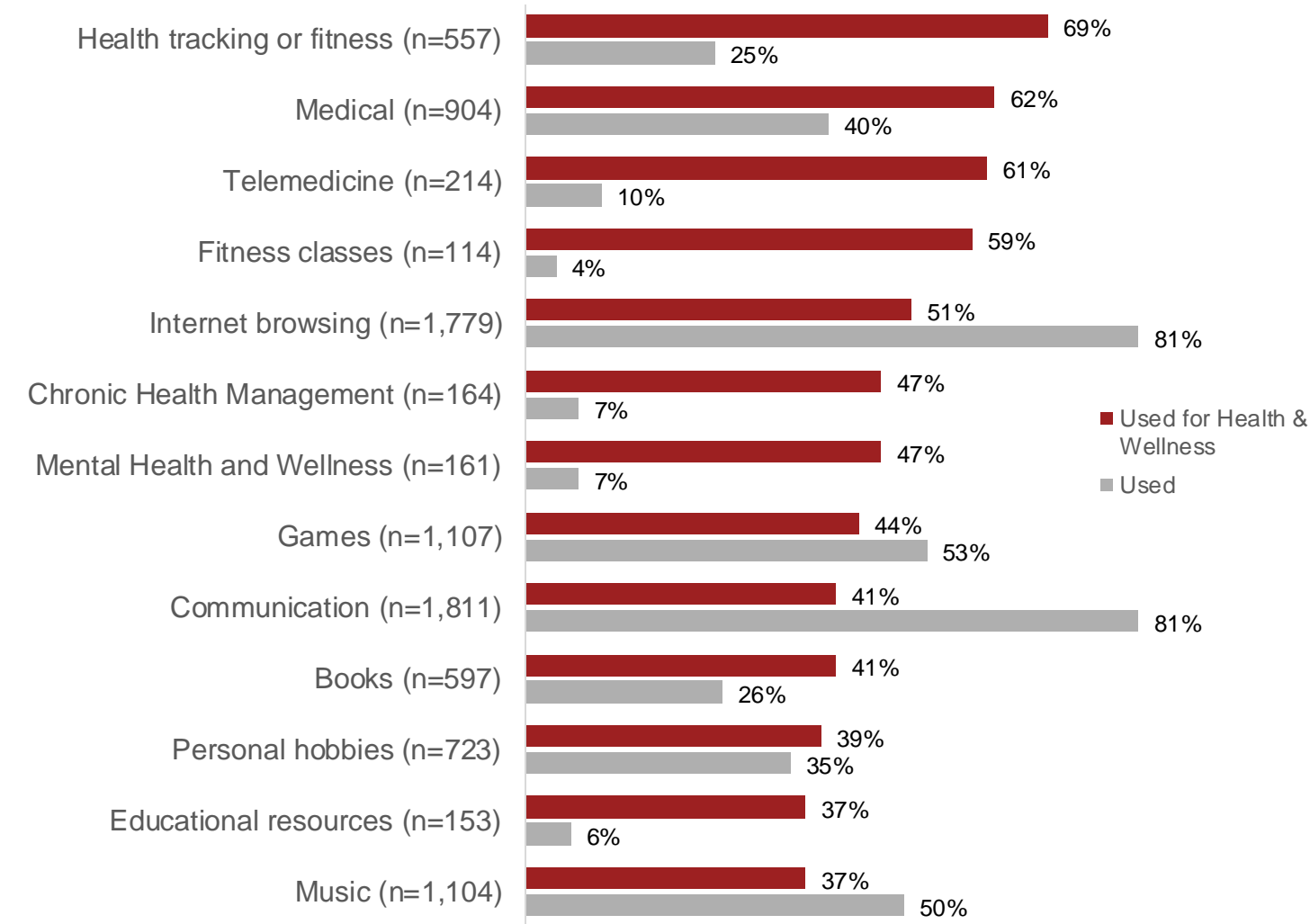
Older adults with chronic health issues are using several, health-specific, digital services to help them monitor, maintain or improve their health and wellness.

A medical service such as GoodRX, LifeAlert, and access to medical records tops the list of services used, along with health or fitness tracking. Also ranking high in use are telemedicine and chronic health management services such as Glucose Buddy and SmartBP.

Base: Respondents 50-plus with one or more chronic issues (n=2,232) and uses the digital service
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q83_2025. Now, reviewing the various digital services you indicated using in the past 3 months, which ones, if any, do you use to help you maintain or improve your personal health and wellness?

Top digital services used for health and wellness
Among adults age 50+ who have one or more chronic health issue

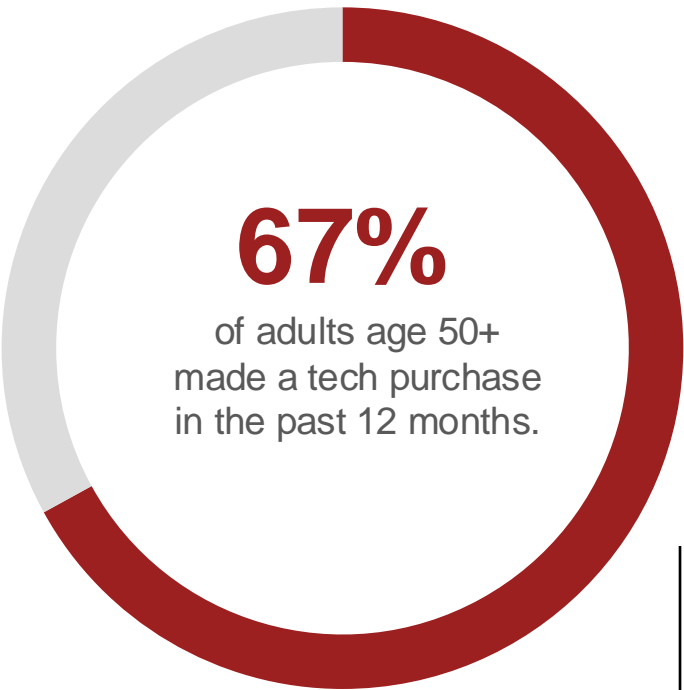
Top 13 digital services used





TECH SPENDING

Tech spending has remained strong in 2024 among adults age 50-plus.

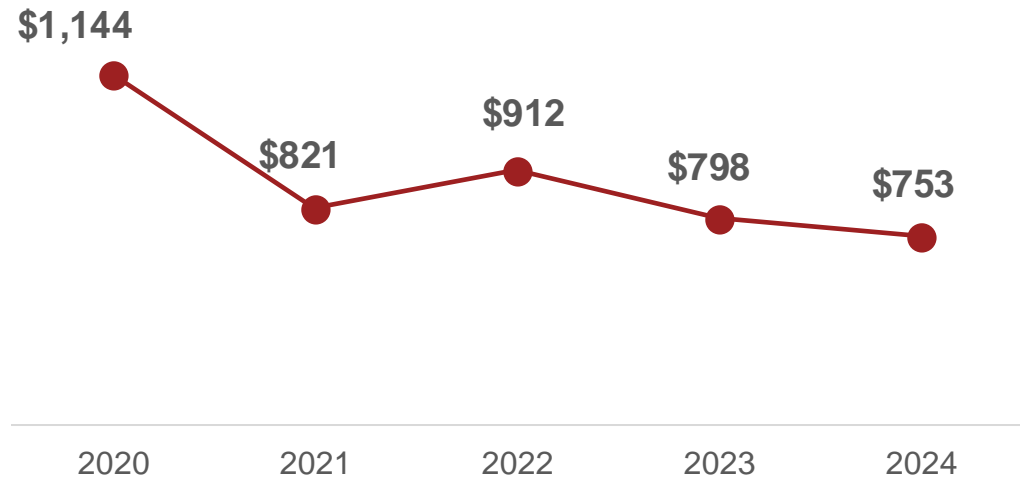


\$90.9B
Estimated tech spend value*

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
Q30. Which specific technology products did you purchase in the past year (September 2023 – September 2024), for yourself and/or your household?

People age 50-plus spent \$753 on tech in the past year, on average. This is at parity with 2023 spending.

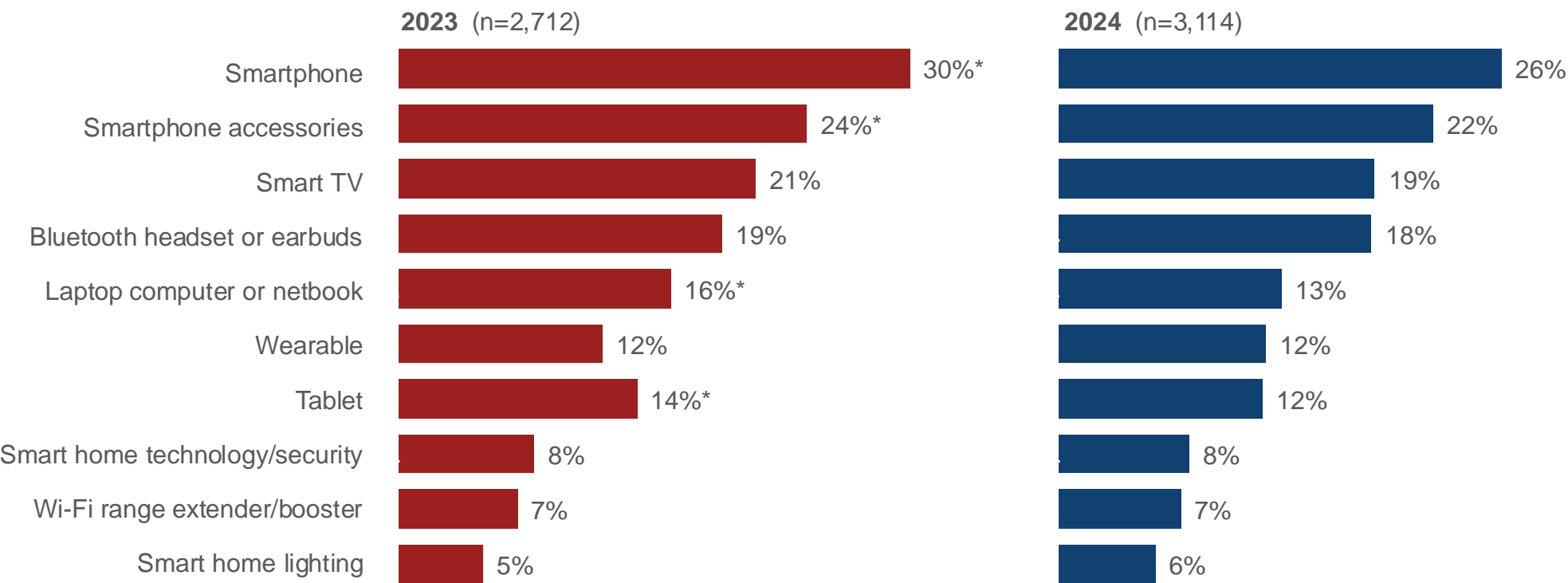
Total tech spend in the past 12 months
Among adults age 50+, 2020 to 2024



Base: varies
Q31. And thinking about all of the different tech items you purchased in the past 12 months (September 2023 – September 2024), approximately, how much did you spend in total?
*AARP calculation 120,785,069 adults age 50-plus x \$753

Consumers age 50-plus continue to buy the primary tech devices year over year, with the Wi-Fi extender and smart home lighting replacing home assistant and desktop computer among the top 10 purchases in 2024.

Percent who purchased the following tech items
Among adults age 50+, 2023–2024



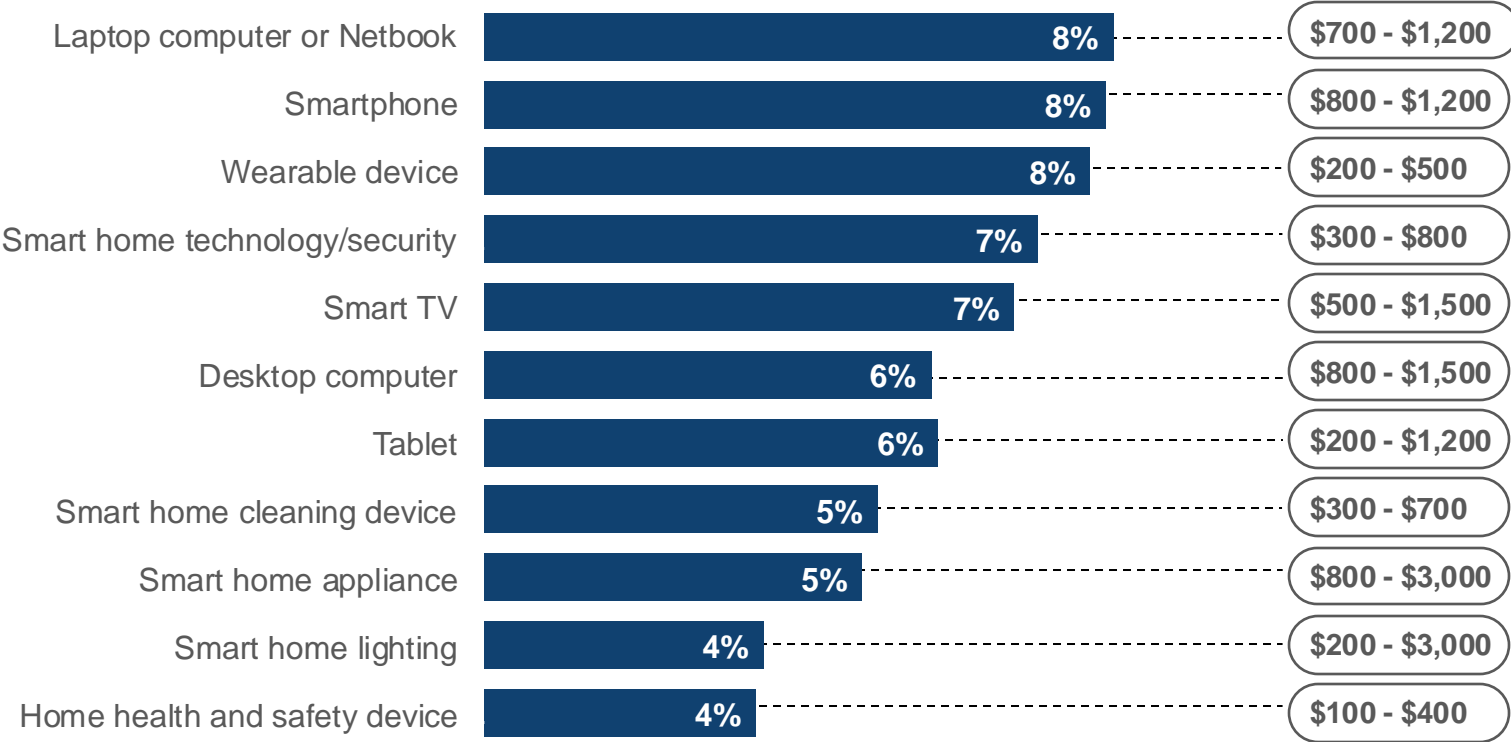
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q30. Which specific technology products did you purchase in the past year
(September 2023 – September 2024), for yourself and/or your household?

Two in five held off on making a tech purchase due to finances.

Premium technology purchases topped the list of items older consumers wanted but postponed buying. Although budget-friendly alternatives are often available, consumers likely choose to delay their purchases rather than settle.

Tech purchases wanted but not purchased in 2024
Among adults age 50+

Average cost of items not purchased, 2024



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q31b_2025. Is there a tech product you would have liked to purchase in the past year, but decided not to, because of the financial pressures or inflation?

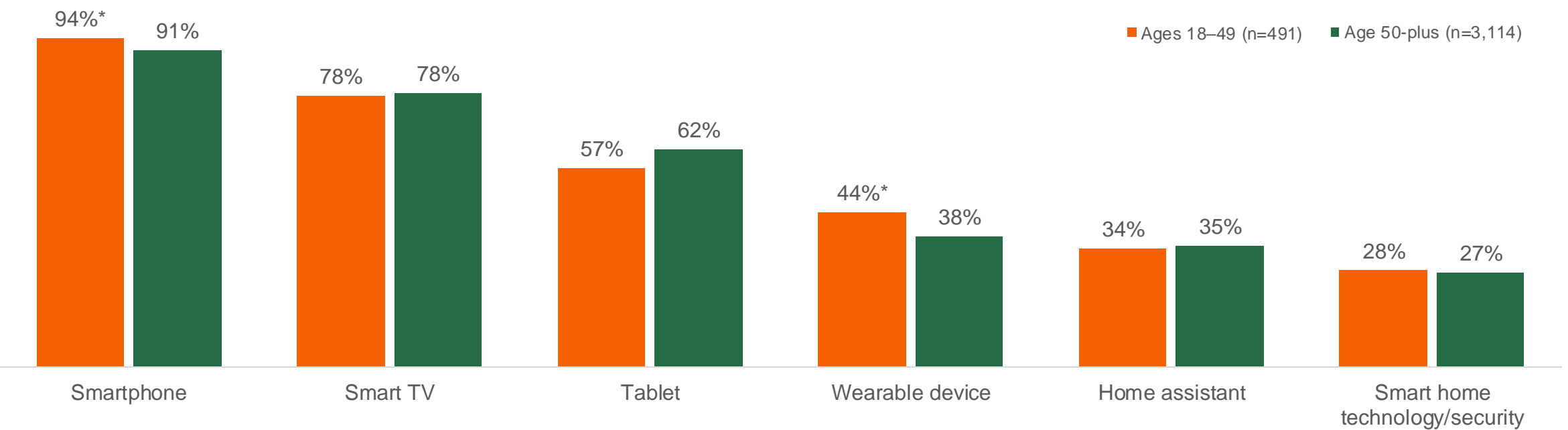


TECH OWNERSHIP

Older adults continue to keep pace with younger consumers in their ownership of the primary technology devices.

The gap in ownership of a wearable device by age has narrowed with a significant increase in ownership among adults aged 50-plus, up from 34% in 2023 to 38% in 2024.


Percent of adults who own the following technology devices
By age range

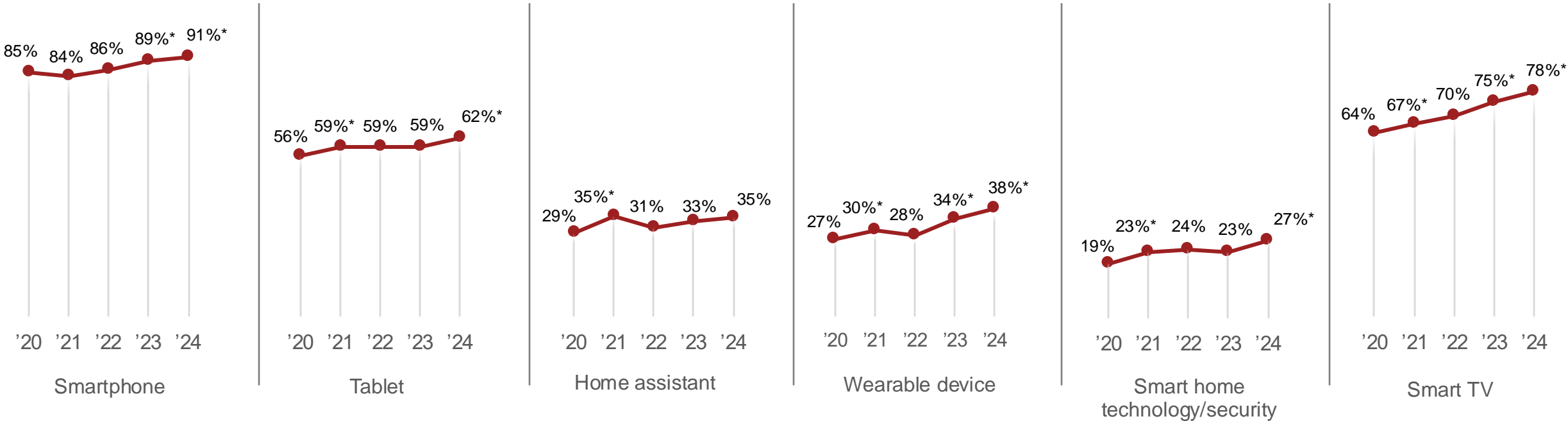


Base: Total Respondents
Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own? Q6. Do you currently own a smart TV?

Adults aged 50-plus own an average of 7 tech devices. Ownership of all primary devices increased significantly, except for home assistants.

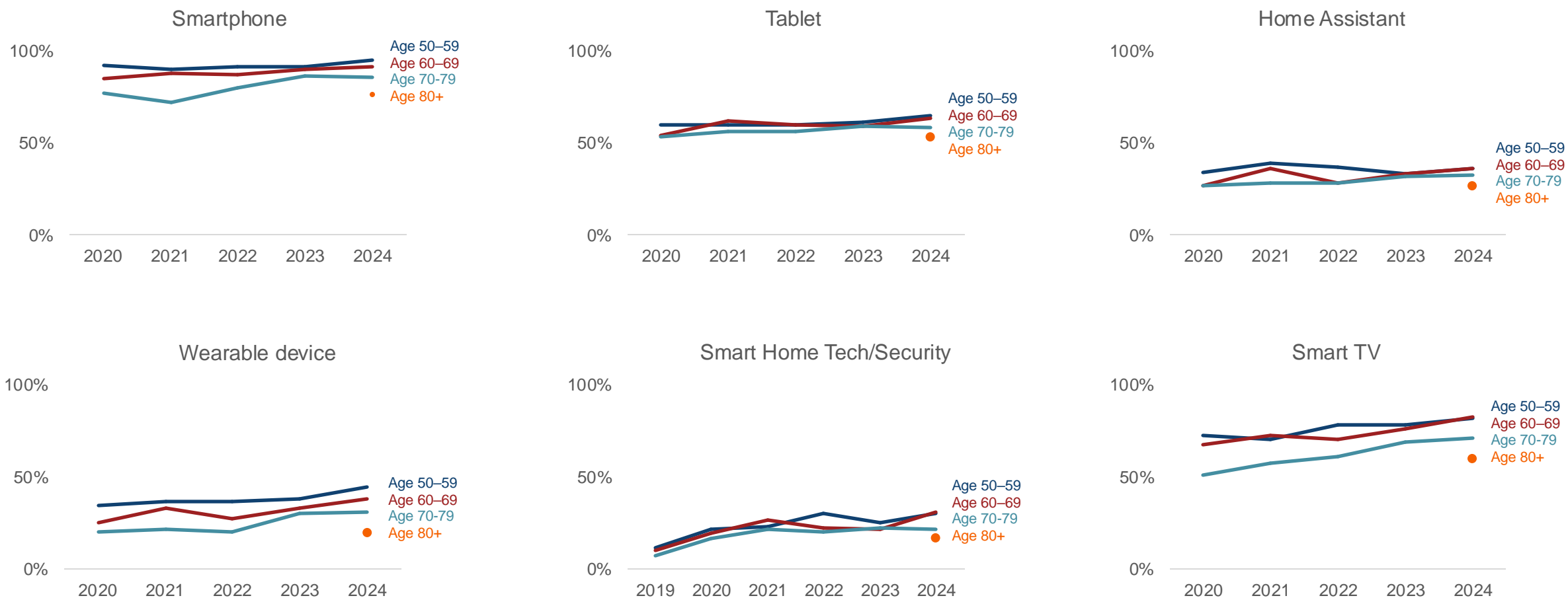
Percent of adults age 50+ who own the following technology devices
2020 (n=2,256), 2021 (n=2,063), 2022 (n=2,095), 2023 (n=2,712), and 2024 (n=3,114)

99% 
Own at least one primary device in 2024



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
QTech1/Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own? Q6. Do you currently own a smart TV?

Those driving the increase in ownership include both the 50-59 and 60-69 adults this year, while new figures on adults age 80-plus show adoption rates are now available.

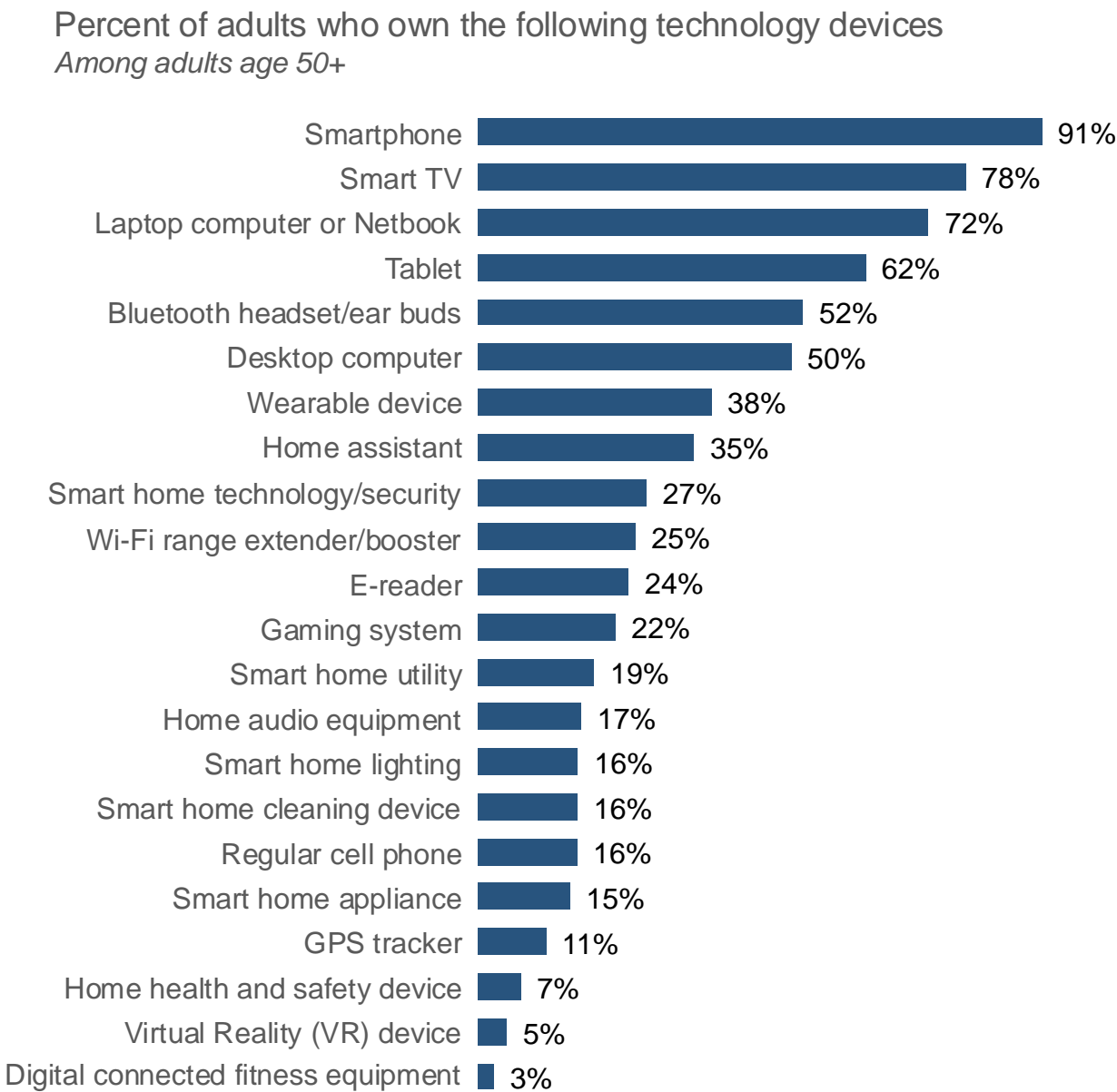


Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
QTech1/Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own? Q6. Do you currently own a smart TV?

While smartphones and smart TVs remain the most common owned tech devices among adults 50 and older, half or more also own laptops, tablets, desktop computers, and headsets.

Most of the top owned devices are used daily.

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own?
Q6. Do you currently own a smart TV?

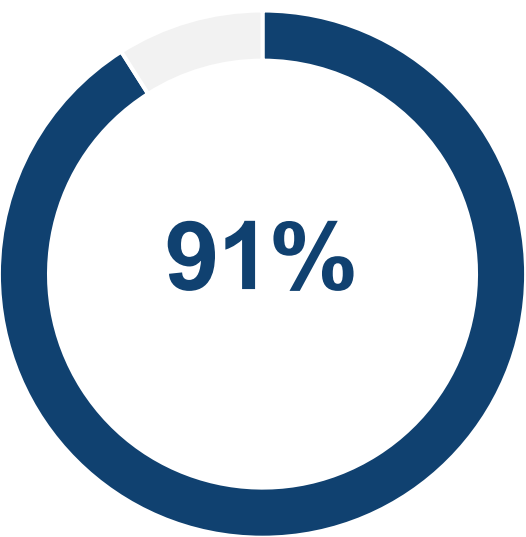




DIGITAL SERVICES

The vast majority of older adults own a smartphone.

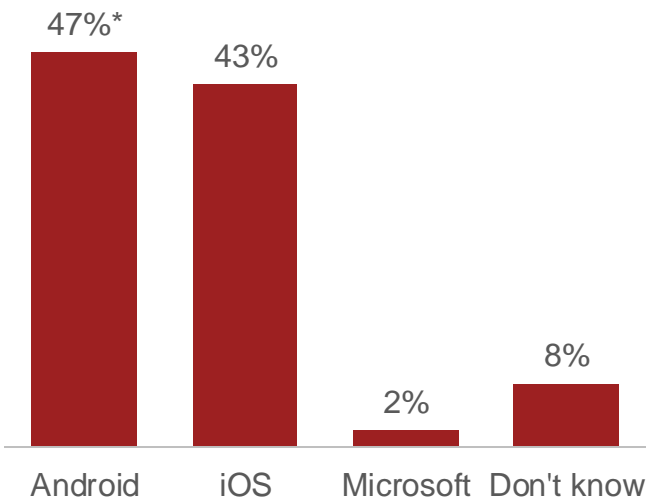
Percent who own a smartphone
Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
Q2. Which of the following items do you have/own?

Android use is significantly higher than iOS use among adults age 50-plus.

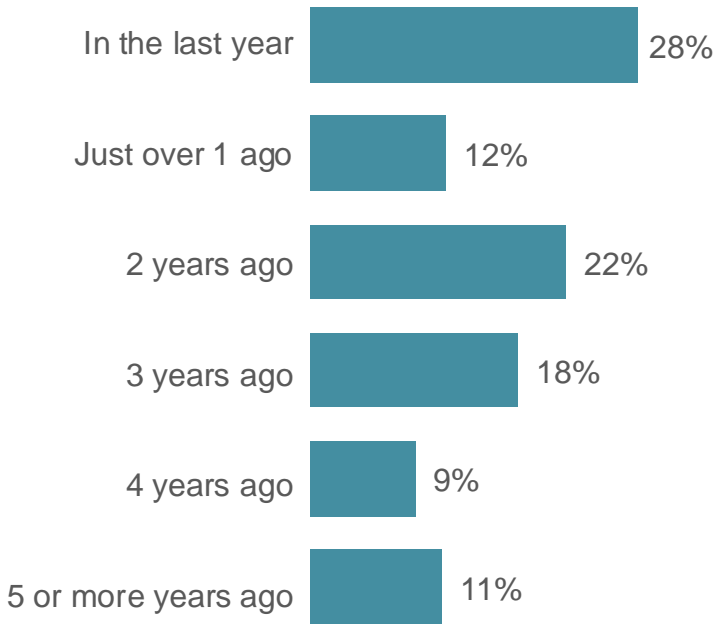
Percent who use the following operating system on smartphone
Among adults age 50+ who own a smartphone



Base: Respondents 50-plus who own a smartphone (n=2,796)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q30c_2025. Which operating system does your smartphone use?

Most smartphones have been upgraded in the past 2 years.

How long ago smartphone was purchased
Among adults age 50+ who own a smartphone



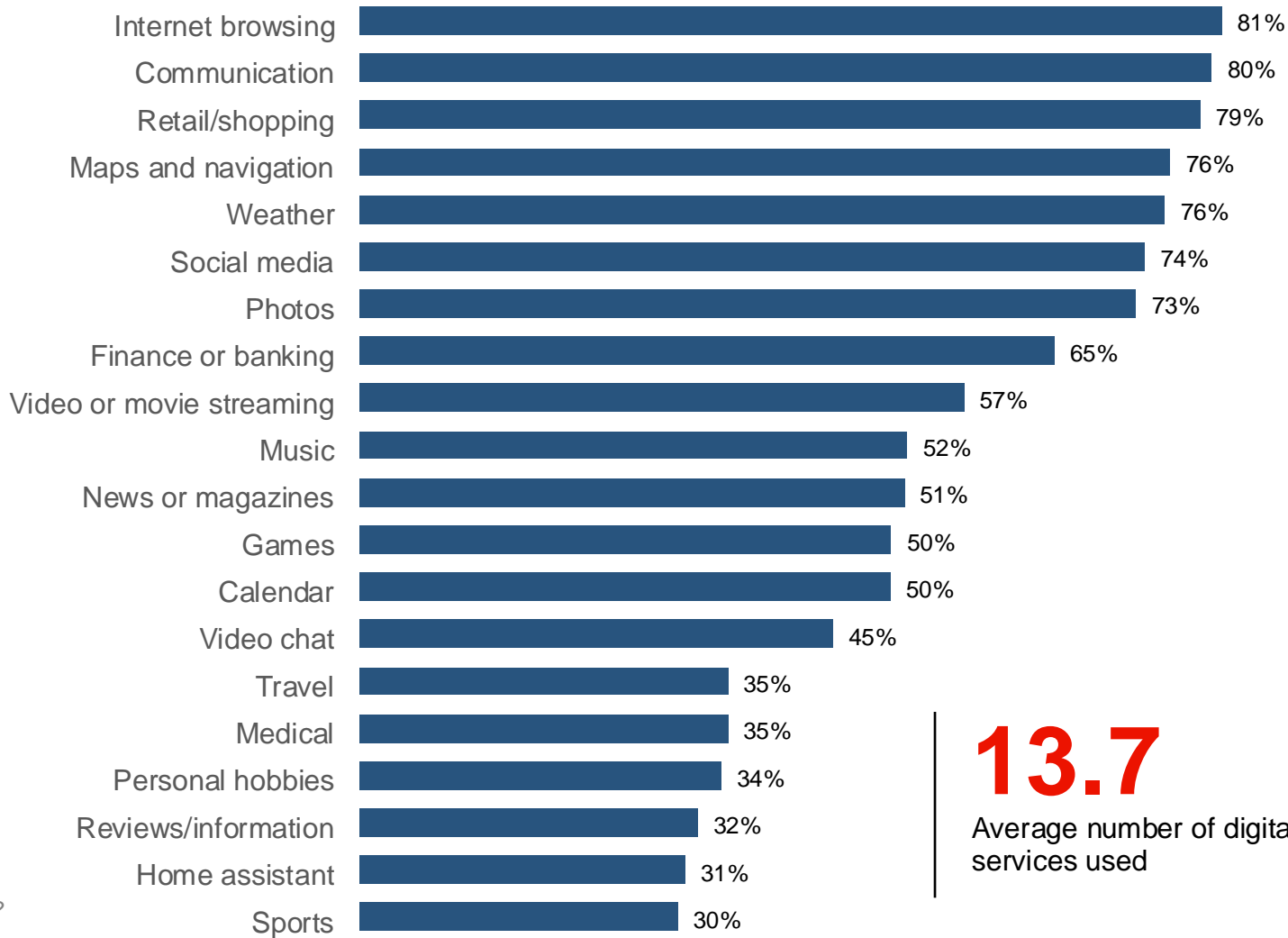
Base: Respondents 50-plus who own a smartphone (n=2,796)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q30b_2025. Earlier you mentioned you have/own a smartphone, please indicate approximately how long ago it was purchased.

Digital services have become indispensable for adults age 50-plus in managing their homes, finances, social lives, and interacting with the world around them.

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
Q4_2024. Which of the following types of information or activities do you engage with online **in the past 3 months**, via a website or a mobile app? These are also referred to as digital services.

Percent who engaged with the following digital services in the past 3 months
Among adults age 50+

Top 20 digital services used

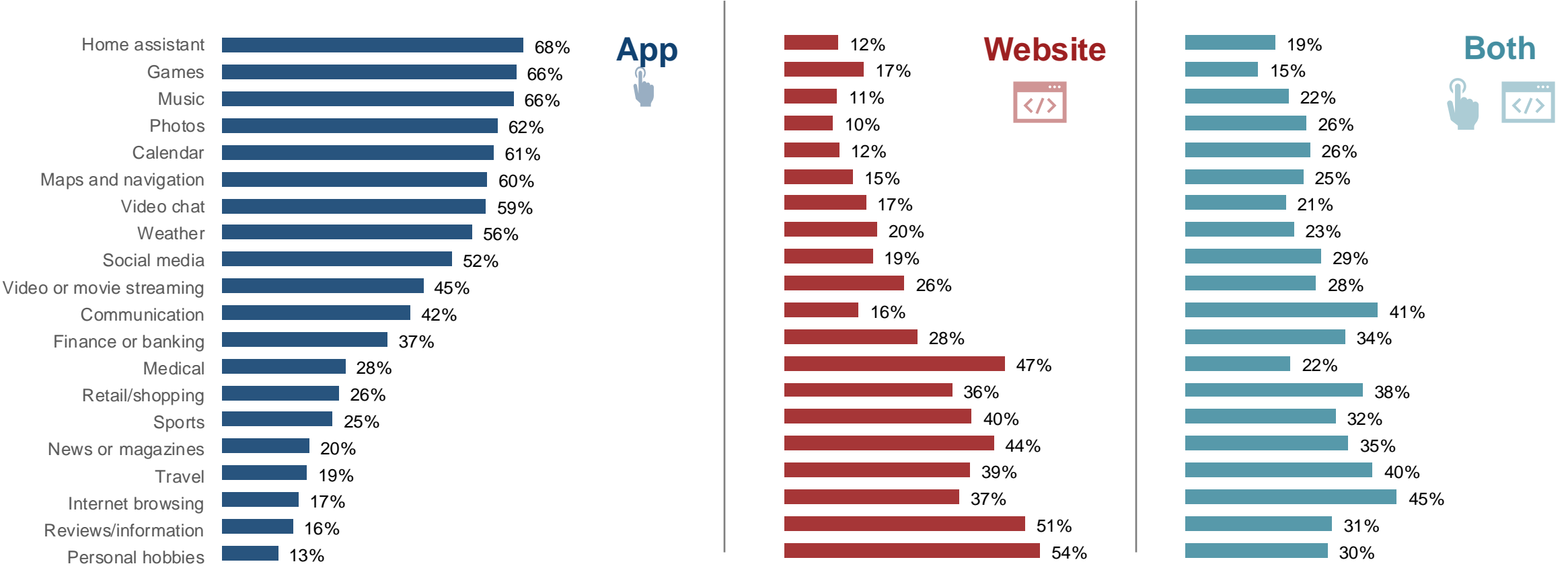


13.7

Average number of digital services used

Consumers bounce between app and website for shopping, browsing, and communications compared to other digital services with a platform preference.

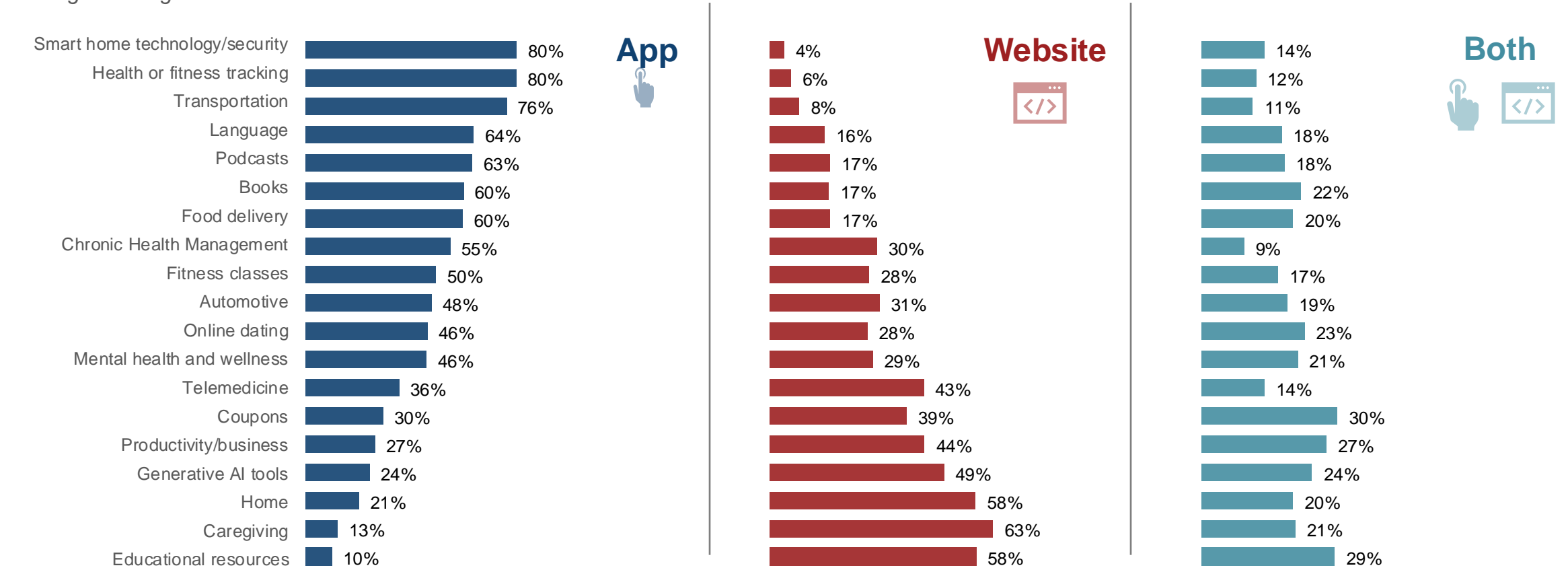
Percent access via an app or website (Top 20 digital services used)
Among adults age 50+ who use service



Base: Respondents 50-plus who use service, size varies
Q10_2024. Now more specifically, for those types of digital services you engaged with recently, please indicate if you typically access it via a website or an app on your mobile device.

Niche digital services such as caregiving, educational resources, and home resources are more likely to be accessed via the website as opposed to an app.

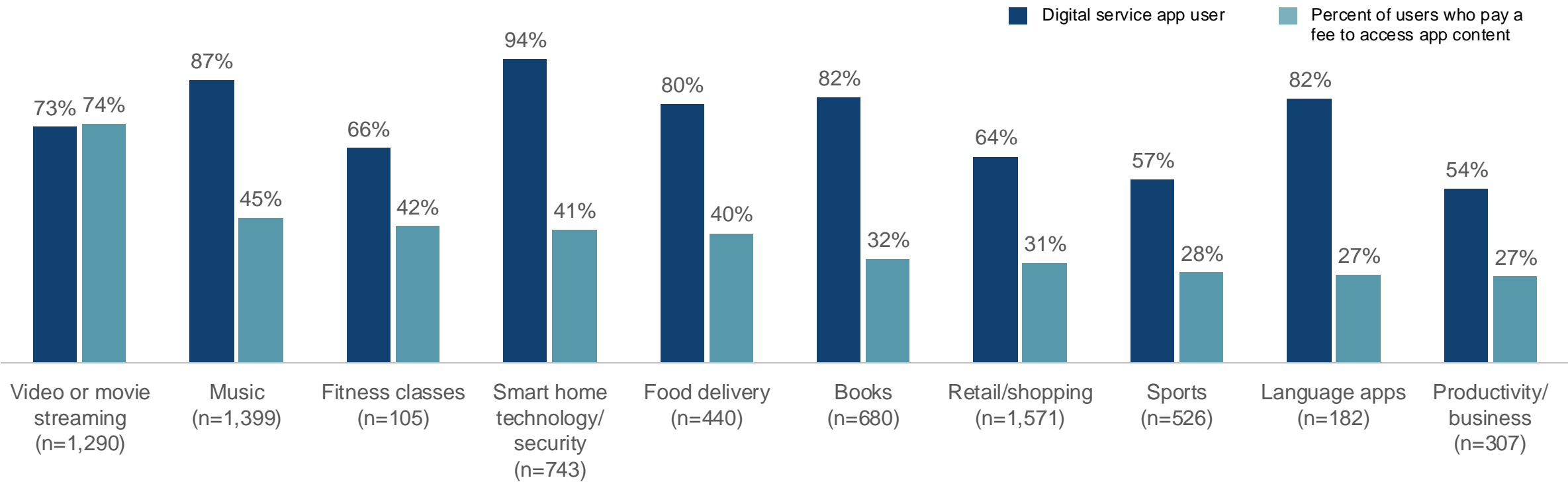
Percent access via an app or website (Bottom 19 digital services used)
Among adults age 50+ who use service



Base: Respondents 50-plus who use service, size varies
Q10_2024. Now more specifically, for those types of digital services you engaged with recently, please indicate if you typically access it via a website or an app on your mobile device.

Video streaming remains the most common type of app associated with a fee, followed by music, fitness classes, smart home tech, and food delivery.

Top 10 apps pay a fee for
Among adults age 50+ who use service via app

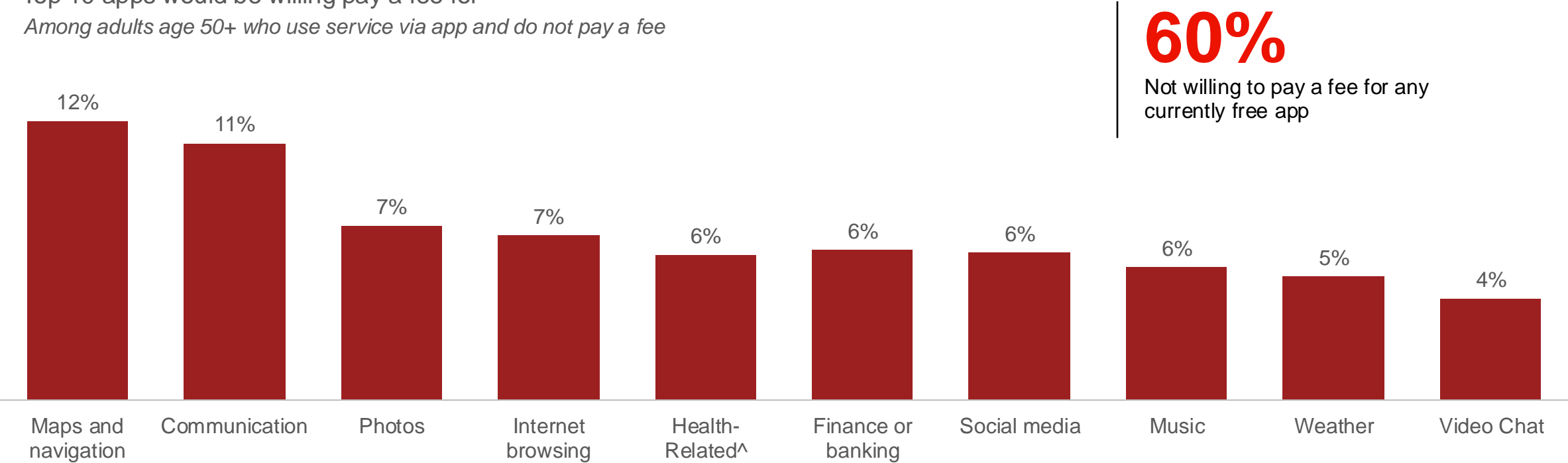


Base: Respondents 50-plus who use service via app
Q10b_2024. Below are the types of apps you said you engaged with recently. Please select all those you pay a fee for access to content available through the app.

The majority of older adults are not willing to pay a fee for any app they currently get for free.

Among those who are, maps and communication tools top the list.

Top 10 apps would be willing pay a fee for
Among adults age 50+ who use service via app and do not pay a fee



Base: Respondents 50-plus who use service via app and do not pay a fee (n=2,756)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q 10e_2025. Of those digital services apps you currently use but do not pay a fee for, which ones would you be willing to pay a reasonable monthly fee for in order to have continued access to it?

[^] Health-Related refers to health/fitness tracking, medical, mental health, chronic health management, telemedicine, and fitness classes.



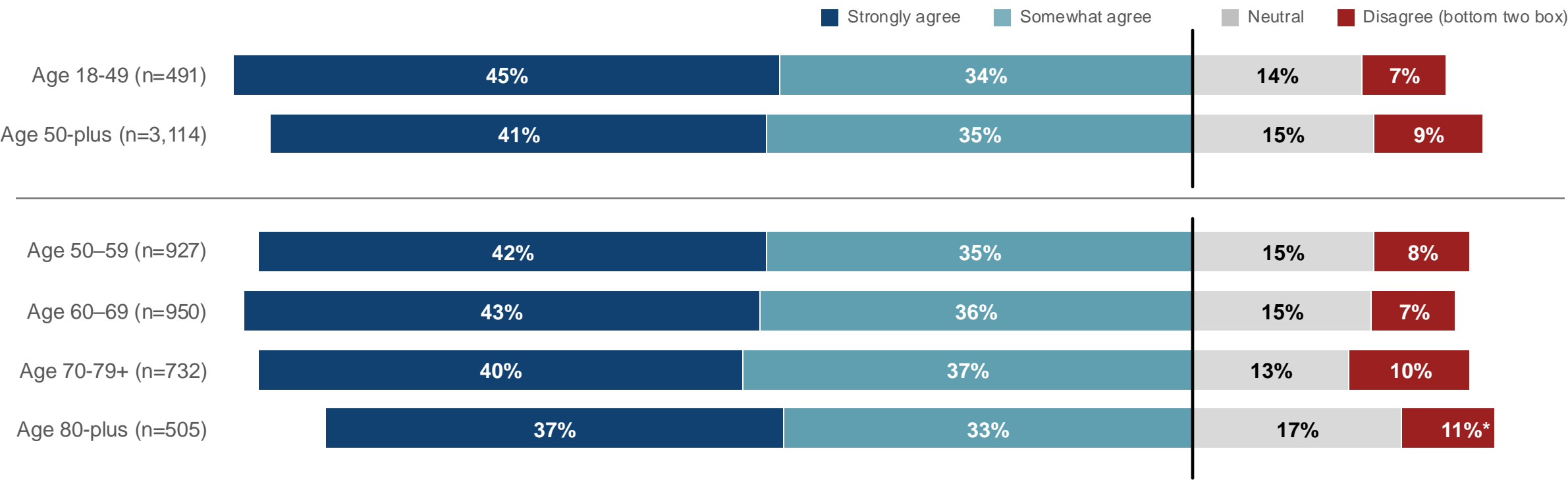
TECH AND SOCIAL CONNECTION

Technology shapes the way people build and maintain connections.

This is true for adults of all ages.

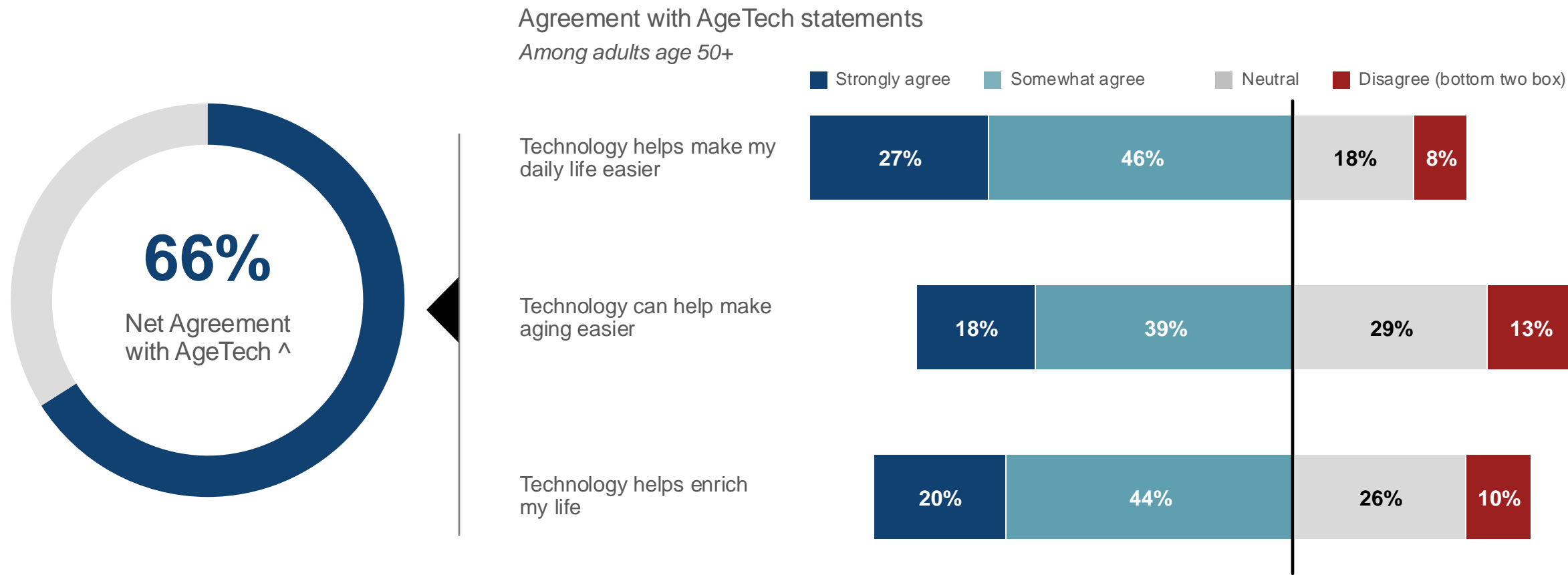
Agreement with “I rely on technology to stay connected and in touch with friends and family”

Among adults by age range



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q11. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement.

Two in three older adults view technology positively, seeing it as enriching their lives and making both daily tasks and aging easier.



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q23b_2025. And please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

^ This is the calculated NET of agreement across the 3 questions.

Social media continues to play a vital role for entertainment, personal enrichment, and connection.

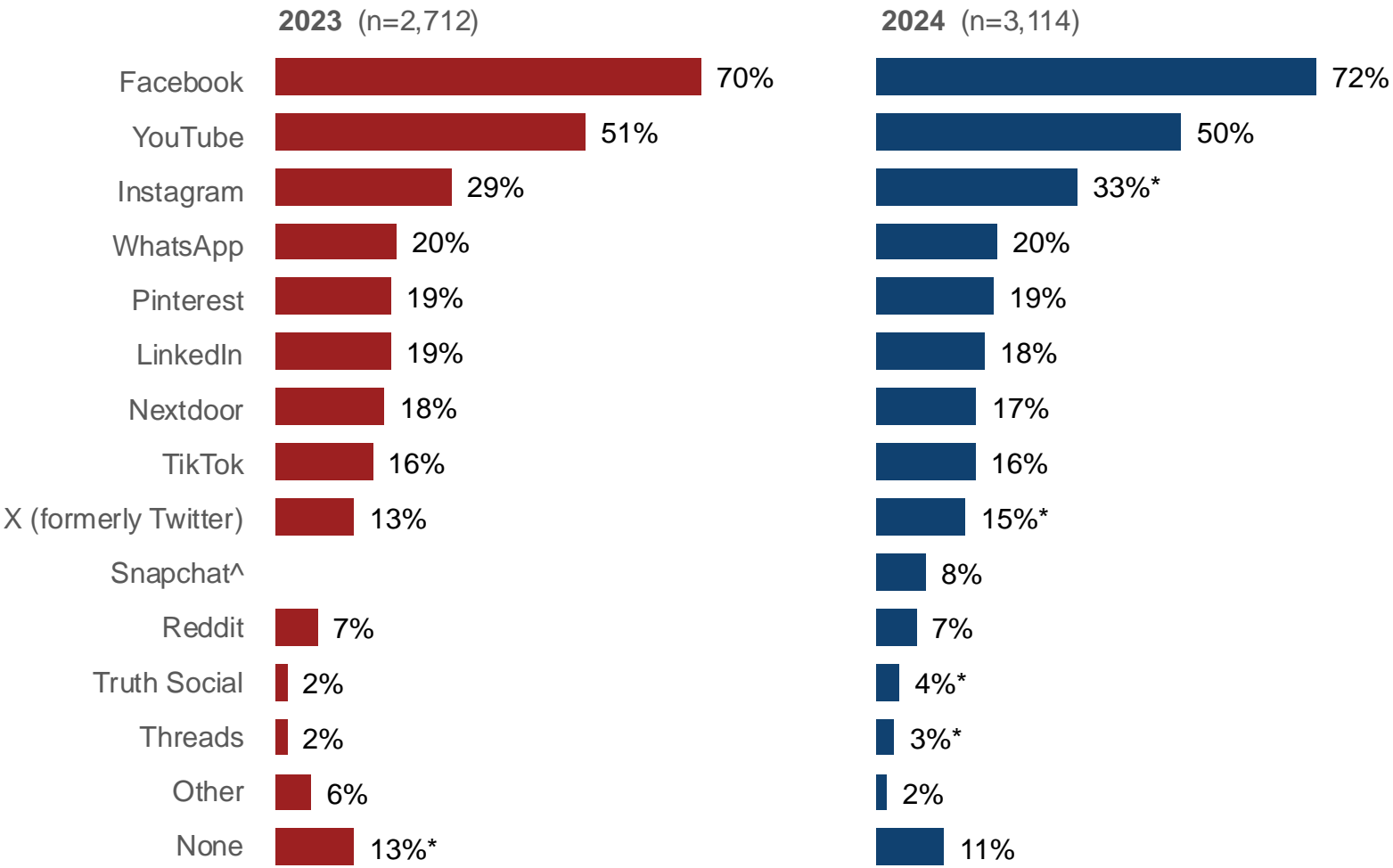
Facebook and YouTube remain the most popular, while Instagram sees more followers flock to the platform page.

X bounces back to the 15% reported in 2022, while Truth Social and Threads also see moderate increases.

Compared to 2021, more adults are using social media than ever before; none=15%.

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q12b. Which of the following social media platforms do you use?

Percent who use the following social media platforms
Among adults age 50+, 2023 and 2024









^New answer option in 2024

Netflix loses its long ranking position as top streaming platform to Amazon Prime.

The most used streaming platforms remain the same year over year. There are no significant increases or decreases in number of subscribers reported across the top 6 platforms. That said, Amazon Prime moves slightly ahead of Netflix in 2024 with 63% of older adults saying they subscribe to this platform.

Base: Respondents 50-plus who watches streamed content
Q9. Which of the following streaming services do you currently subscribe to?

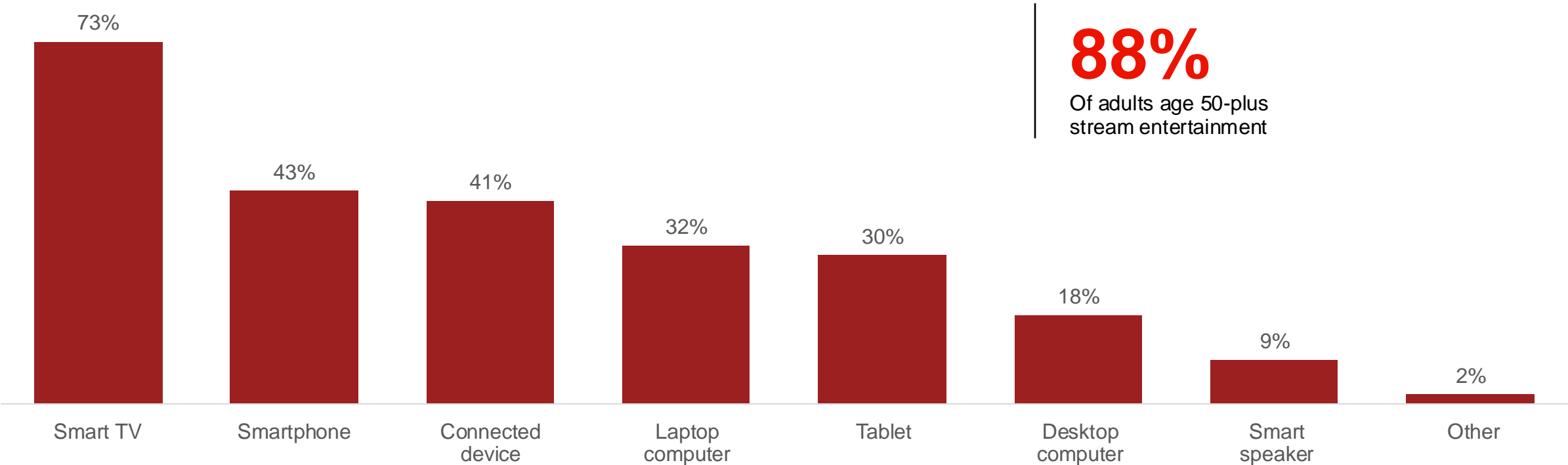
Percent who subscribe to the following streaming platforms
Among adults age 50+ who stream entertainment, 2023 and 2024

	2023 (n=2,387)	2024 (n=2,727)	<div>3.5</div> <div>Average number of subscriptions</div>
	61%	63%	
	62%	60%	
	34%	35%	
	26%	29%	
	27%	27%	
	26%	27%	

Adults are avid streamers, using a variety of devices to catch the latest entertainment, at home and on the go.

Adults age 50-plus report an increased use of their smartphone for streaming year over year, up from 33% in 2023.

Percent of adults who use the types of devices to stream entertainment
Among adults age 50+ who stream

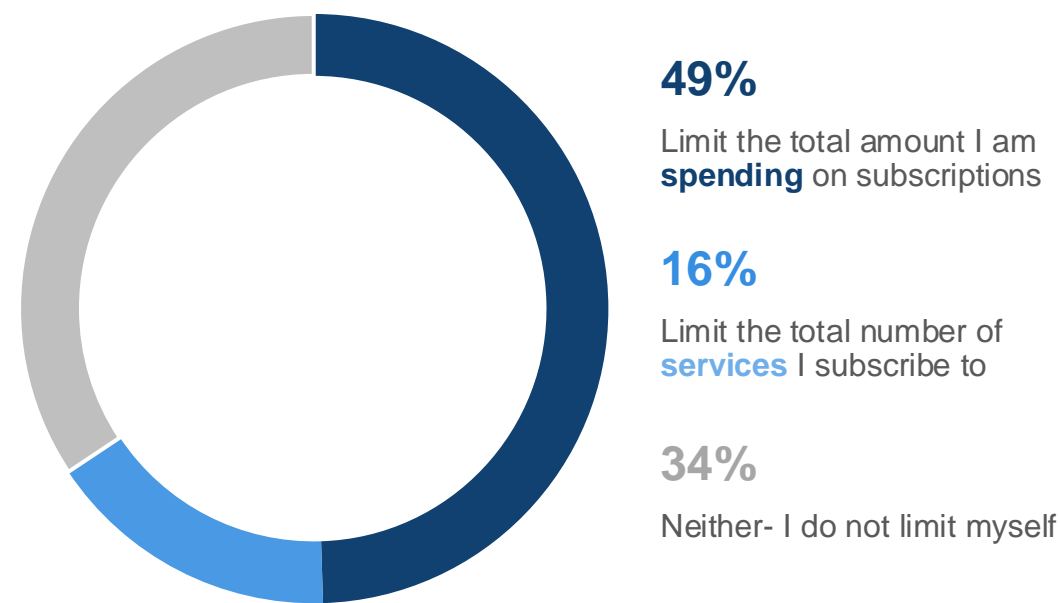


Base: Respondents 50-plus who use any streaming service (n=2,740)
Q7b_2023. Which types of devices do you use in the home for streamed entertainment, such as shows, movies, series, and/or videos?

The total amount spent on streaming services is more important than the number of streaming services subscribed to.

One-third of older adults place no limits on their streaming.

Types of personal limits placed on streaming services
Among adults age 50+ who stream entertainment



Base: Respondents 50-plus who watches streamed content (n=2,727)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q9f_2025. When you think about the variety of streaming services available for subscription, which of the following do you use to place limits on yourself, if any?

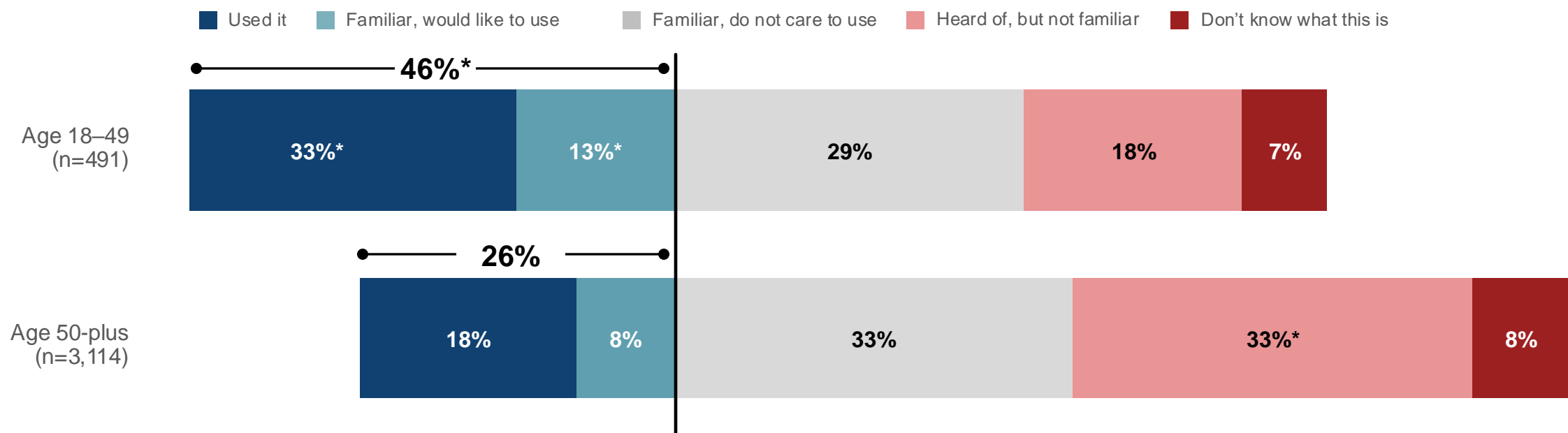


AI'S PROMISING PITCH

Generative AI’s awareness and use has grown at a rapid rate since its release to the public in November 2022².

Generative AI use has doubled in the past year among adults aged 50-plus, up from 9% in 2023 to 18% in 2024. Awareness has grown as well, with 9 in ten adults saying they at least know what generative AI is.

Experience with Generative AI
Among adults by age range

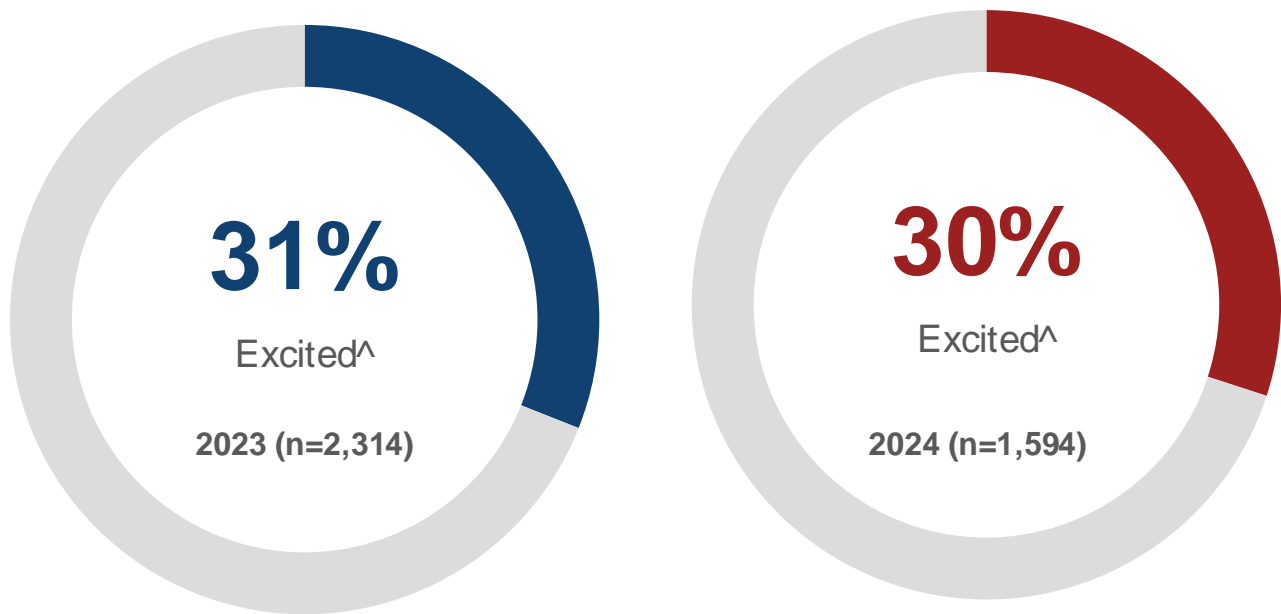


Base: Total Respondents
Q73_2024. What best describes your experience with Generative AI?
² <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2023/05/19/a-short-history-of-chatgpt-how-we-got-to-where-we-are-today/>

While some are excited about the potential of AI making their life easier and more enjoyable, many older adults remain indifferent about it.

The degree of excitement for generative AI among older adults remains steady year over year.

Percent excited about Generative AI
Among adults age 50+ who heard of GenAI, 2023 and 2024



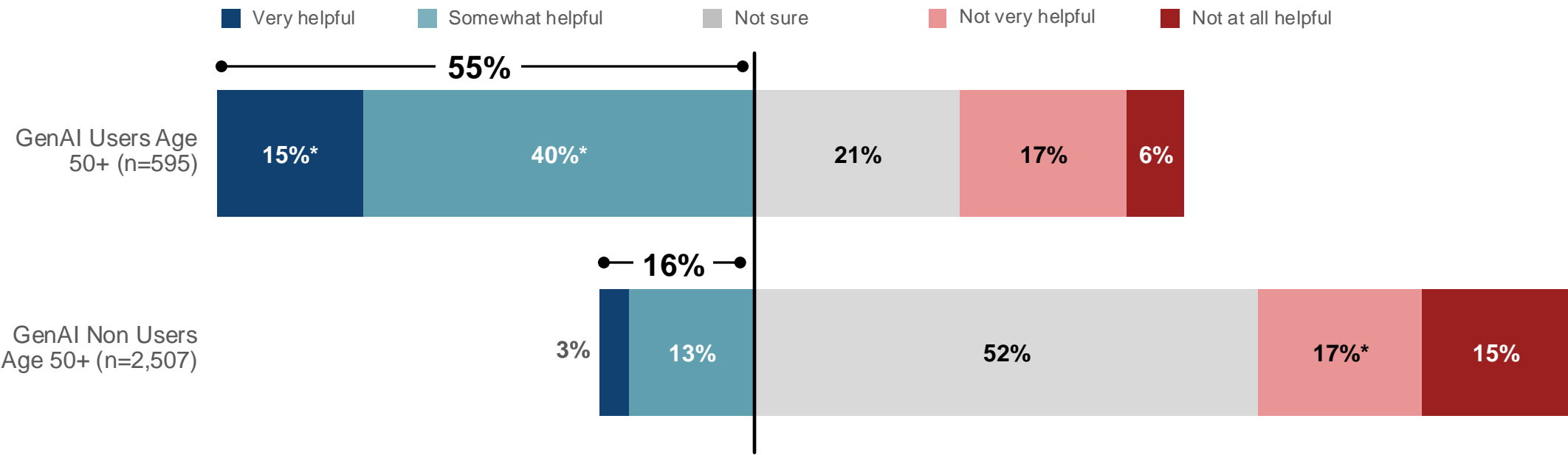
Base: Heard of Generative AI
Q75_2024. How excited are you about the potential benefits of Generative AI in making your life easier and more enjoyable (e.g., personalized recommendations, virtual health assistants)? [2024 – half sample asked]



^Extremely/very/somewhat excited (T3B) on a 5-point scale

Those with experience using AI see it as helpful while those without direct experience remain skeptical of its potential.

Anticipated helpfulness of Generative AI in making life easier and more enjoyable
Among adults age 50+

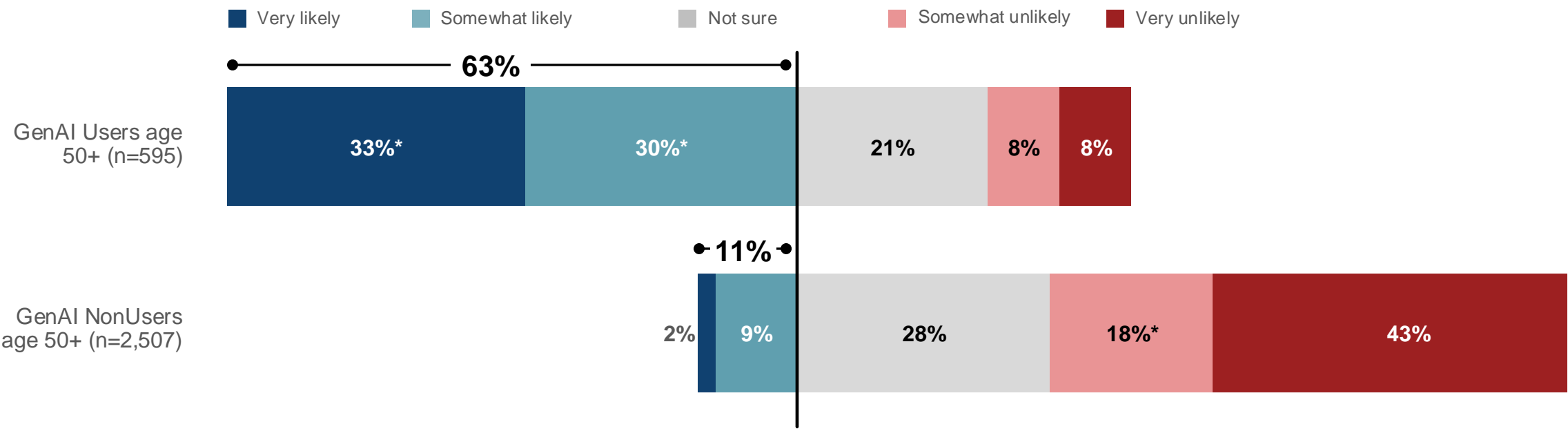


Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q75b_2025. How helpful has/do you anticipate generative AI been/will be in making your everyday life easier and more enjoyable?

The majority of current AI users expect to use it again in the next 6 months.

Current non-users will take some prodding before they give AI a chance.

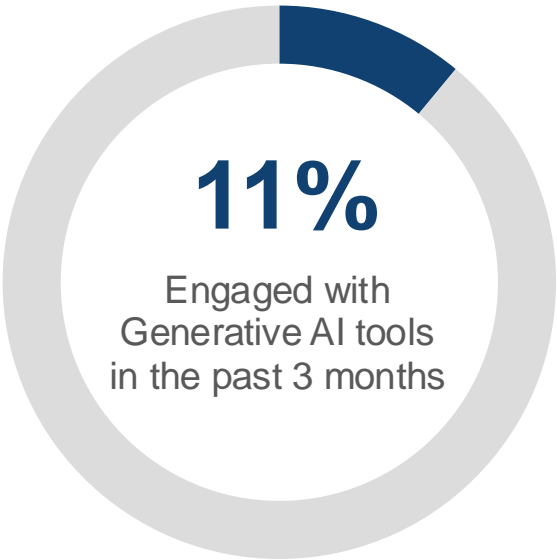
Likelihood of using Generative AI in the next 6 months
Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q75c_2025. How likely are you to use generative AI in the next 6 months to assist you in personal needs?

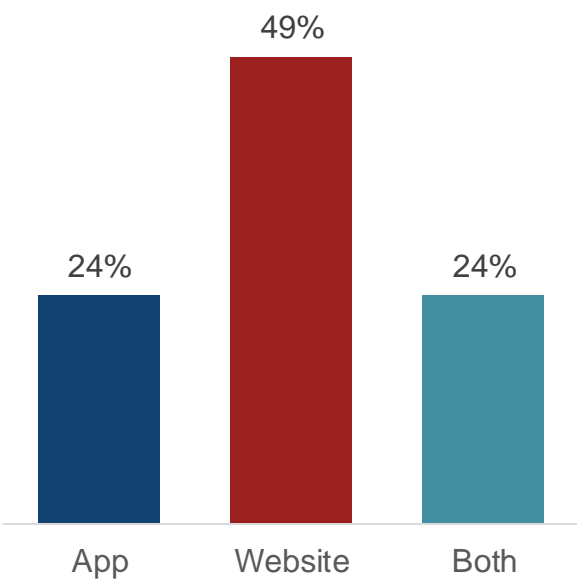
Among those who have engaged with generative AI in the past 3 months, most have done so through a free tool via a website.

Percent who engaged with Generative AI tools in the past 3 months
Among adults age 50+



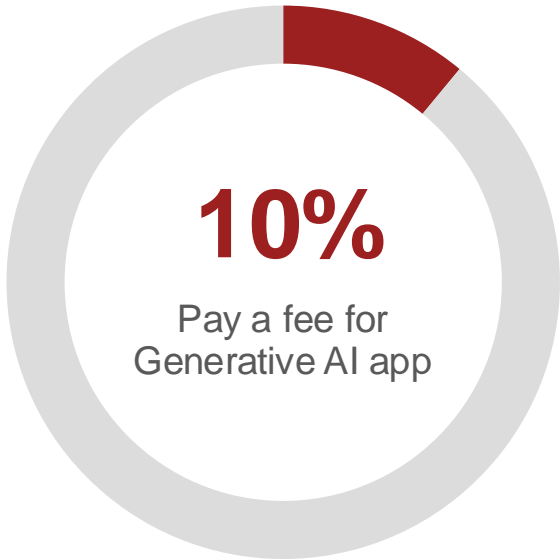
Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (3,114)
Q4_2024. Which of the following types of information or activities do you engage with online **in the past 3 months**, via a website or a mobile app? These are also referred to as digital services.

Percent access Generative AI tools via an app or website
Among adults age 50+ who used GenAI



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents who use AI service (n=321)
Q10_2024. Now more specifically, for those types of digital services you engaged with recently, please indicate if you typically access it via a website or an app on your mobile device.

Percent who pay a fee for Generative AI app
Among adults age 50+ who used GenAI via app



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents who use AI service via app (n=160)
Q10b_2024. Below are the types of apps you said you engaged with recently. Please select all those you pay a fee for access to content available through the app.

Generative AI is commonly used as a research tool, to assist with job tasks, and to provide inspiration for new ideas.

Examples of Generative AI Uses

Research



- “Obtain clear concepts about a topic I am not familiar with. Obtaining reliable information about a company that I am interested in. **Researching a topic that I am interested in.**”
- “**Researching subjects, including healthcare and new technology information.** Writing up information for presentations to colleagues and friends.”
- “**AI can help me search for where I can get the best deal** when searching for a car or major appliance. Hope to use it for financial purposes: **find the best credit** card that offers cash back, etc. Or **research the best doctor** for a certain medical procedure.”
- “Provide punch line for a joke. **Provide step by step procedure** for cleaning the carbs on a specific motorcycle. **Provide obsolete part number** for engine wiring harness no longer supported by manufacturer.”
- “**What to see when vacationing in a place, information about a company/stock,** improving a writing.”

Job assistance



- “I subscribe to ChatGPT. I use it to **compose business letters**, ask questions I am curious about, **summarize documents**, and replace searches that I would previously have used google search to do.”
- “**I use Chat GPT in my business as a REALTOR,** specifically for marketing myself or a property.”
- “I have used AI a lot **for helping with technical tasks at work,** and this will be increasing.”
- “**Generating ads for business.** Generating ads for sales on Ebay. In industrial control systems that I design.”
- “I am a teacher, I have **used it for creative writing prompts and creating fun images to support lessons.**”
- “In **job search activities to gain feedback on potential job positions** that fit my experience and to draft summary information that utilizes current expectations (e.g., LinkedIn About summary).”

Idea inspiration



- “I used ChatGPT to **give me ideas for inspiring phrases I could send my departing coworker.** I used it as a jump-off point for writing my own, specific message in my own words.”
- “**Ideas for color of curtains in a room. Activity ideas for a toddler.** Chatting about anxiety. Generating a draft of an offer letter.”
- “Writing a show for our Theater group, **coming up with lyrics for songs, the possibilities are endless.**”
- “Learn, make workout plans, create recipes, **create business plan examples, writing prompts to help writers block, and ask about ideas.**”
- “**Making pictures to print, thinking of game ideas,** therapy/educational activity ideas.”

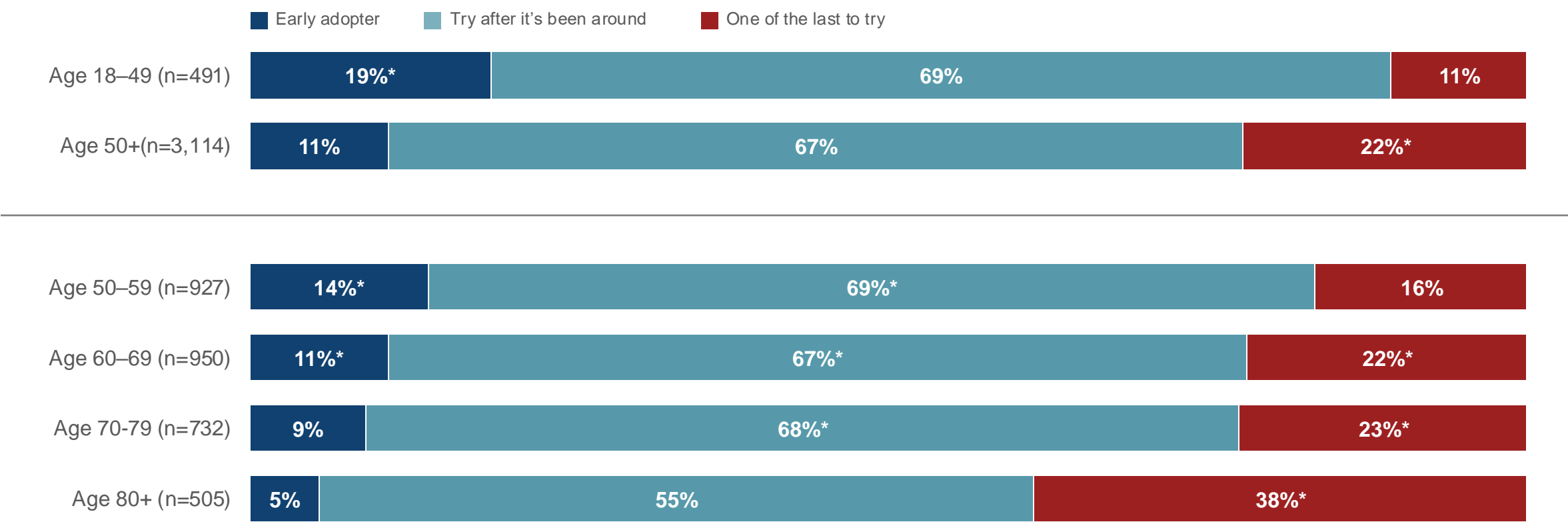
Q75d_2025. Please use the space below to provide us with a few examples of how you [have used generative AI/anticipate using generative AI in the future].

A photograph of an older man with a white beard and sunglasses, wearing a grey flat cap and a blue and white patterned sweater. He is sitting in a wicker chair outdoors, holding a smartphone in his hands and looking at the screen. The background shows a garden with potted plants and a wooden structure.

BARRIERS TO ADOPTION

Despite growing interest in new technology, adults age 50-plus remain likely to wait and see before they will engage with new technology.

Behavior toward new technology
Among adults by age range



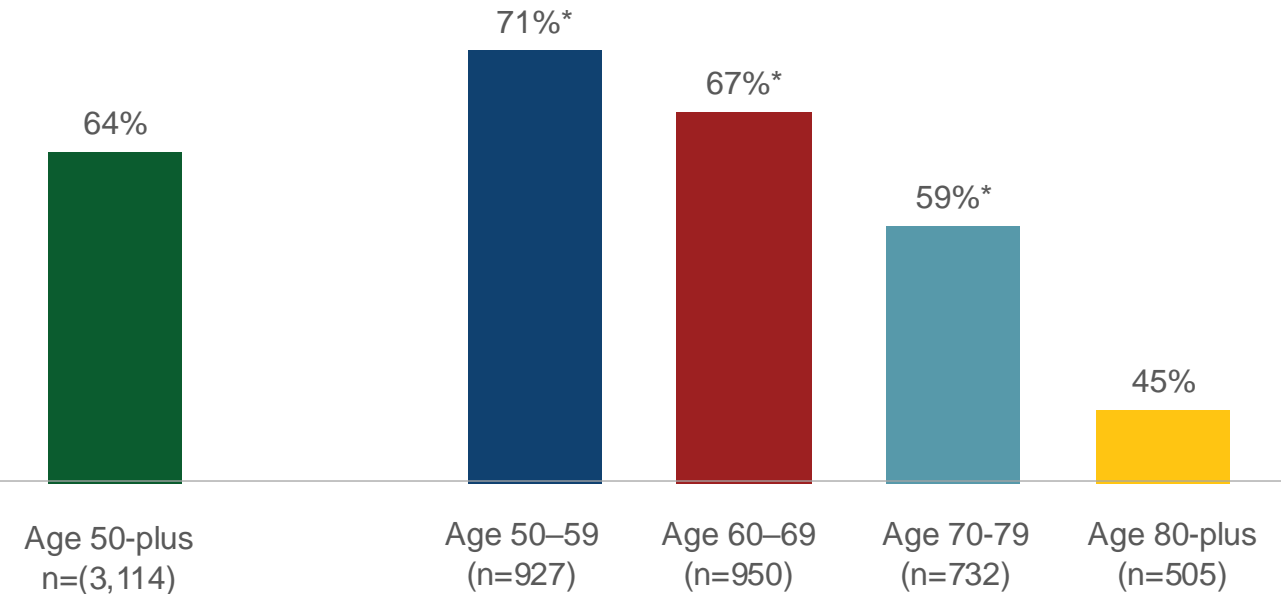
Base: Total Respondents
Q28. Which of the following best describes how you engage with new technology?

Two-thirds of adults age 50-plus believe they have the skills necessary to take full advantage of being online.

This confidence diminishes with age, so ‘taking full advantage’ is likely a rather narrow set of tools and services rather than a broad understanding of technology.

Percent of adults who agree and strongly agree that they have the digital skills necessary to fully take advantage of being online

Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents

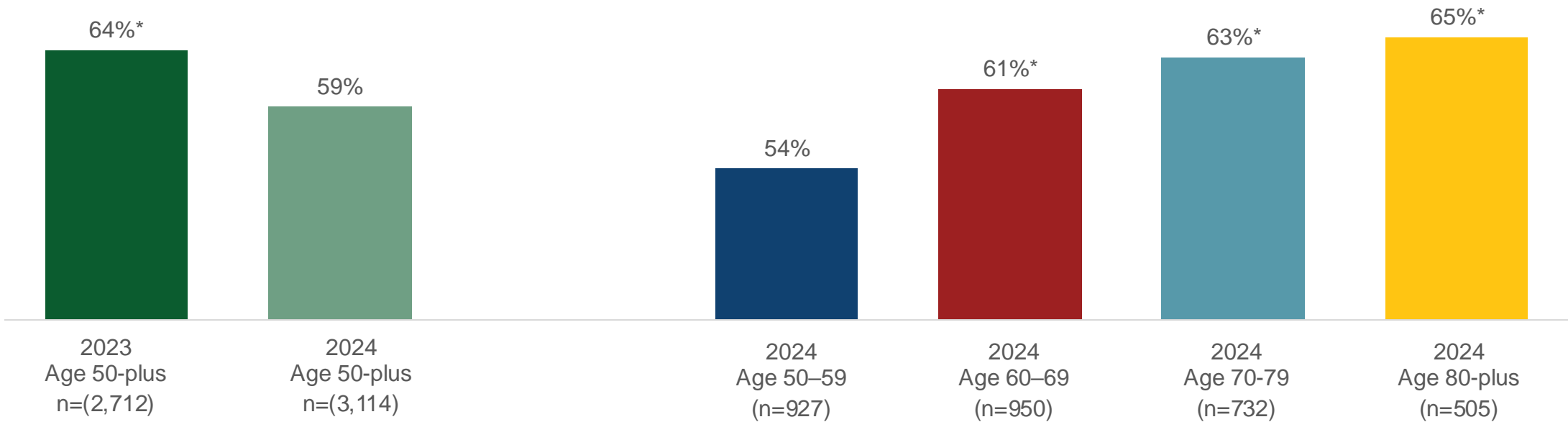
Q23a_d. Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following: I have the digital skills necessary to fully take advantage of being online.



Most adults continue to feel technology is not designed with their age in mind, but there is evidence it might be getting better.

The visibility of older adults in media has improved, with images showing older adults using tech devices increasing from 4% in 2018 to 33% in 2023.³ This shift towards more inclusive representation may be making an impact; the percentage of adults who feel technology isn't designed with their age in mind has dropped - marking a significant decrease from previous years.

Percent who feel technology is not designed with their age in mind
Among adults age 50+



Base: Total 50-plus Respondents
Q28b. Do you feel like technology today is being designed with your age in mind?

³ Gross, Sonya, and Lauren Goodson. Media Landscape: Age Representation in Online Images and Video. Washington, DC: AARP Research, September 2024. <https://doi.org/10.26419/res.00852.001>

Trust and privacy have risen to the top of the list of barriers to tech adoption.

This is followed by concerns around a product’s ease of use, their ability to set it up and get the support they need should they have issues, cost, and lastly value.

Base: Total 50-plus Respondents (n=3,114)
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q28f_2025. Below are the aspects of tech purchasing again. Please place them in rank order from the one that creates the most stress and uncertainty for you to the one that creates the least. Ranked First.

Barriers that cause the most amount of tech purchase stress – ranked first
Among adults age 50+



Trust & Privacy (Data Privacy)

29%

- What personal data does it collect?
- Is my personal data secure?
- Any known privacy or identity theft issues?



Design & User Experience (Ease of Use)

20%

- Is it easy to use?
- Was it designed for people like me?
- Did they ask people like me to test it?



Installation & Adoption (Set-up & Support)

19%

- How do I integrate it into my life?
- How difficult is it to set up?
- Who can help me if I run into problems?



Cost & Acquisition (Cost & Where to Buy It)

16%

- Can I afford it?
- How do I buy it?
- How do I select the right product?



Awareness & Interest (Relative Value)

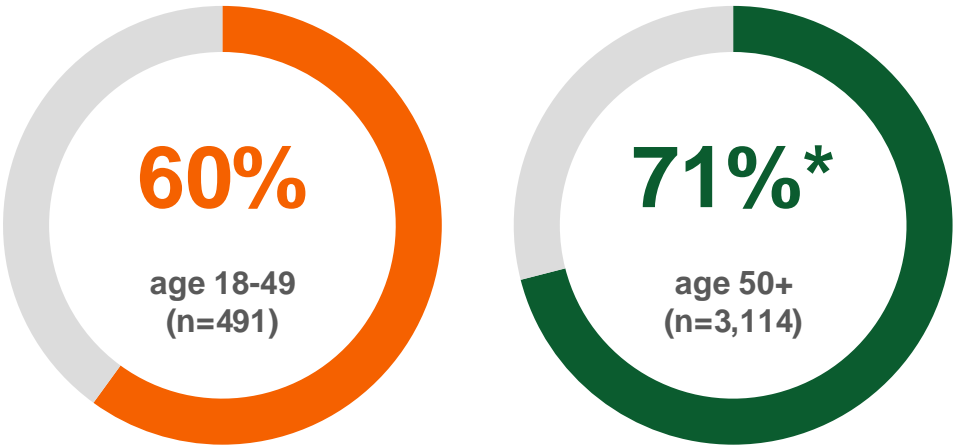
12%

- Why should I be interested in this product?
- What new products exist?
- Should I care?

The concept of a tech support service specifically for older adults is well received, though many expect it to be free with their product purchase.

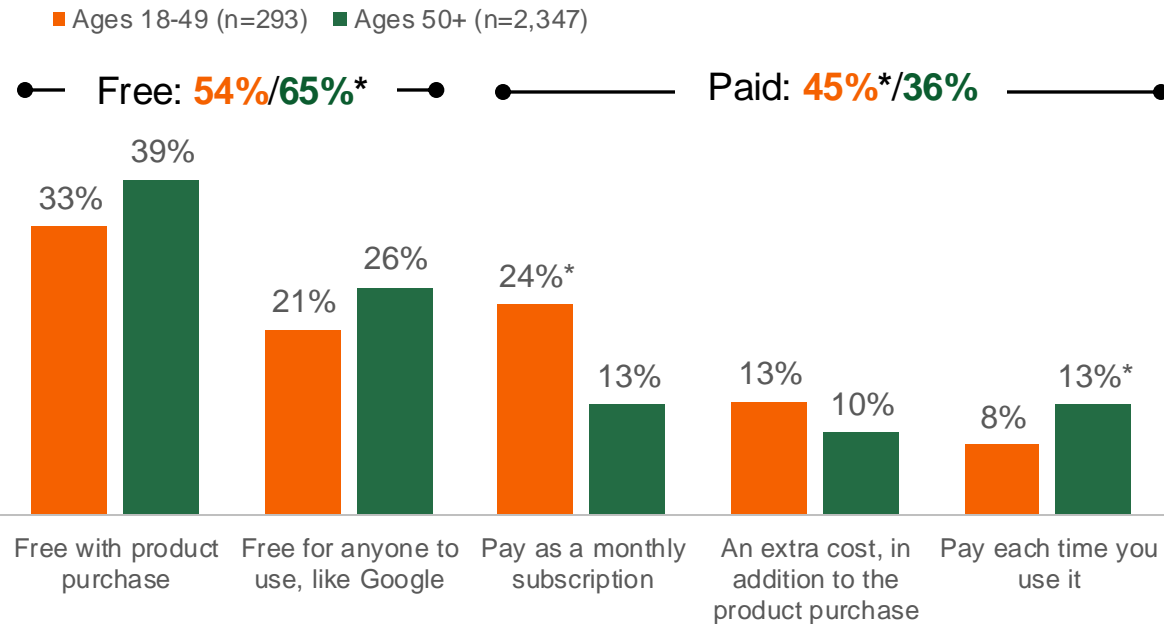
That said, there are some 18–49-year-olds who might expect to pay for tech support service through a monthly subscription.

Percent interested in tech support service
Among adults by age range



Base: Total Respondents
[NEW QUESTION 2024] Q24_2025. How interested would you be in a tech support service specifically designed for older adults?

Cost expectations of tech support service
Among adults interested in tech support service by age range



Base: Total Respondents interested in tech support service
NEW QUESTION 2024] Q24c_2025. What might you expect the cost of this service to be?



IMPLICATIONS

Implications

The latest research shows that tech adoption among adults aged 50-plus is evolving, with many integrating smart home devices and health-focused digital services in their lives to meet their needs for independence and well-being. This trend highlights the **growing recognition of how these technologies can improve daily life.**

Increased uptake in digital services for managing daily tasks and staying socially connected points to a strong demand for tools that enrich older adults' lives while maintaining simplicity. The doubling of AI use highlights an opportunity to offer solutions that align with the motivations of this demographic—**supporting their needs for independence, peace of mind, privacy, and ease of use.**

However, barriers to broader technology adoption persist, particularly regarding usability, privacy, and support. Older adults still feel that much technology isn't designed for them, although this perception is slowly improving.

To close the adoption gap and serve an increasingly tech-savvy older population, the industry must address specific motivations and usability concerns and **embrace a more inclusive approach to product design, support services, education and exposure to drive greater adoption and satisfaction.**





METHODOLOGY

Methodology: Quantitative Survey, n=3,605

Objective: Annual survey exploring technology use and attitudes among the 50-plus around device ownership, digital services used, interest in new technologies, connecting with friends and family, and barriers to adoption.

NEW IN 2024: Caregiver tech, mobility tech and additional Generative AI questions.

Methodology: Online survey using NORC's research panel + Dynata

Qualifications: age 18+, U.S. Population

Sample: n=3,605 TOTAL; n=3,114 50-plus

Interviewing Dates: September 3 – September 30, 2024

Language of Interview: English and Spanish

Weighting: Weighted according to demographics for US adults age 18+, 50-plus, 18-49

Questionnaire length: The survey was approximately 23 minutes in length online



Note: Unweighted base sizes are presented throughout the report.

Respondent profile

	Age 18–49	Age 50-plus	Age 50–59	Age 60–69	Age 70-79	Age 80+
Base:	491	3,114	927	950	732	505
Gender						
Men	48%	47%	48%	47%	47%	42%
Women	52%	53%	52%	53%	53%	58%
Education						
Less than HS	9%*	4%	5%*	4%	2%	3%
HS graduate	26%	29%	23%	30%*	31%*	42%*
Vocational/tech school/some college/ associates	27%	28%	28%	29%*	28%	23%
Bachelor's degree	26%	21%	25%*	21%*	19%*	12%
Post grad study/professional degree	12%	18%*	20%	16%	19%	19%
Ethnicity						
White, non-Hispanic	53%*	69%	62%	68%*	76%*	79%*
Black, non-Hispanic	13%	11%	12%	11%	10%	9%
Other, non-Hispanic	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Hispanic	22%*	13%	17%*	13%*	10%	8%
2+ race/ethnicity, non-Hispanic	3%*	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Asian, non-Hispanic	8%	6%	7%*	6%*	4%	3%
Income						
Less than \$40K	34%*	29%	27%	25%	31%*	36%*
\$40K-\$75K	29%	27%	19%	29%*	34%*	33%*
\$75K+	37%	44%*	54%*	46%*	35%	31%

About AARP

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With nearly 38 million members and offices in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, AARP works to strengthen communities and advocate for what matters most to families with a focus on health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the nation's largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org or follow @AARP and @AARPadvocates on social media.

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