

CHAT COMMERCE TRENDS REPORT

How Conversational Chat is Fueling the Travel Industry





Hi, Robyn! Have you packed your bags yet? Time for the trip of a lifetime!

Your boarding pass is right [here!](#)



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Introduction

The Chat Commerce revolution has arrived. Over 5 billion people use chat applications regularly to stay in touch with friends and family. Now, they're also using these apps to engage with brands, handle sales and support concerns, and even carry out travel transactions. Businesses all over the world are now going the extra mile and providing their consumers with a variety of new features — directly through chat.

As the global leader in Chat Commerce, Clickatell has been helping companies modernize their marketing by using chat apps to build rich relationships with their customers. Customers and companies alike are saving time on day-to-day operations, thanks to the onset of the mobile messaging era. With Chat Commerce, brands are doing more than providing a wildly convenient way to reach consumers and solve problems—they're opening up unexplored revenue channels that boost business metrics to new heights.

To better understand the market dynamics in the US – including how US consumers are already using chat apps – we partnered with Dimensional Research, a leading independent US-based research firm, to ask smartphone users how they like to communicate and make purchases with travel companies.

This research report examines the findings of a survey of more than 1,000 US consumers who own a smartphone, and dives into trends around chat app usage, chat behavior, and consumer expectations on how businesses should employ these solutions.

The findings clearly demonstrate that consumers have embraced chat to converse and engage with leading brands, and are eager for travel companies to adopt more personalized and user-friendly conversation options. If you're interested in how chat will impact the trajectory of travel and the future of your business, read on.



About the Research

Research Goal

This study was conducted by Dimensional Research on behalf of Clickatell in July 2022 to capture the latest data on digital Chat Commerce trends in the travel industry.

Methodology

Independent sources of consumers were invited to participate in an online survey. Questions were asked on topics related to how they like to communicate and make purchases with travel companies. The survey was fielded between July 14 – 21, 2022.

Participants

A total of 1,016 qualified individuals completed the survey. All were consumers in the US who use a smartphone and included participants from a mix of ages and genders.

Terminology

“Mobile messaging” is used to describe communicating via SMS/text and chat apps such as Apple iMessage, WhatsApp, Google Messages, Facebook Messenger, Instagram Chat etc., on a mobile phone or other mobile devices.

Key Findings

87% of consumers want to use mobile messaging to chat with travel companies for a variety of reasons, from booking updates to upgrade notifications.

Gen Z, Millennial, and Gen X travelers are most interested in mobile messaging with travel companies.

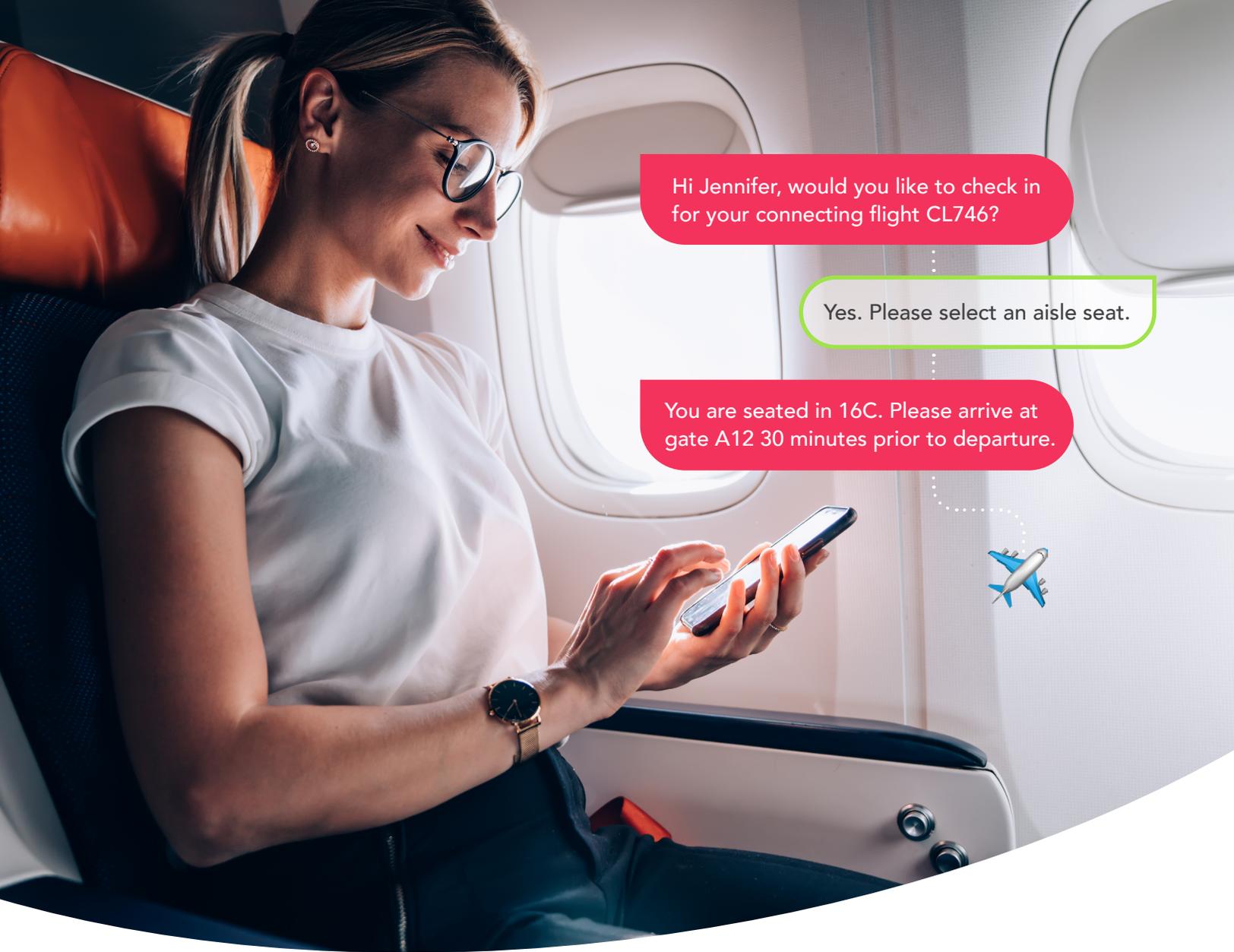
Most consumers prefer mobile messaging over other communication channels, including email, phone, and website chat.

95% of consumers say it's important to have a personalized experience when receiving booking updates, especially for flight delays, gate changes, early or late check-in, and upgrades.

Nearly half of consumers (48%) are most interested in receiving quick notifications like booking updates (check-in notifications, seat upgrades, flight status) from travel businesses.

Frequent travelers are most engaged with mobile messaging.

*Certain options may add up to more or less than 100% because of rounding.



Hi Jennifer, would you like to check in for your connecting flight CL746?

Yes. Please select an aisle seat.

You are seated in 16C. Please arrive at gate A12 30 minutes prior to departure.



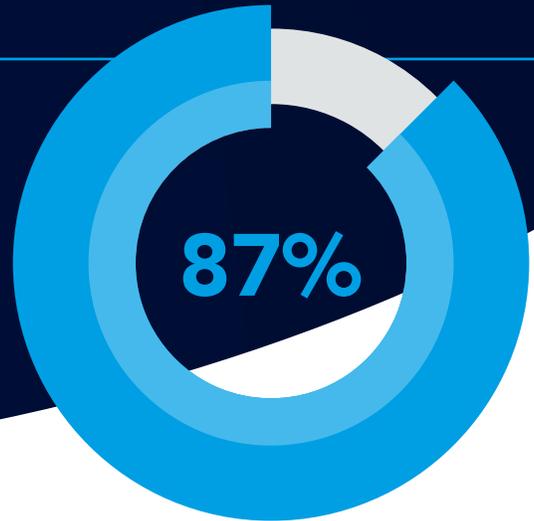
Chat Commerce Trends in the Travel Industry

The travel industry is one of the most active sectors when it comes to Chat Commerce. Mobile messaging can provide customers with a more efficient travel booking experience and answer common questions about flights, hotels, and rental cars, in little to no time at all.

In the coming sections, you'll discover a number of trends that shape how travel companies are using chat, what elements of chat are most valuable to consumers, and which groups are most likely to engage with your travel-related businesses through this platform.

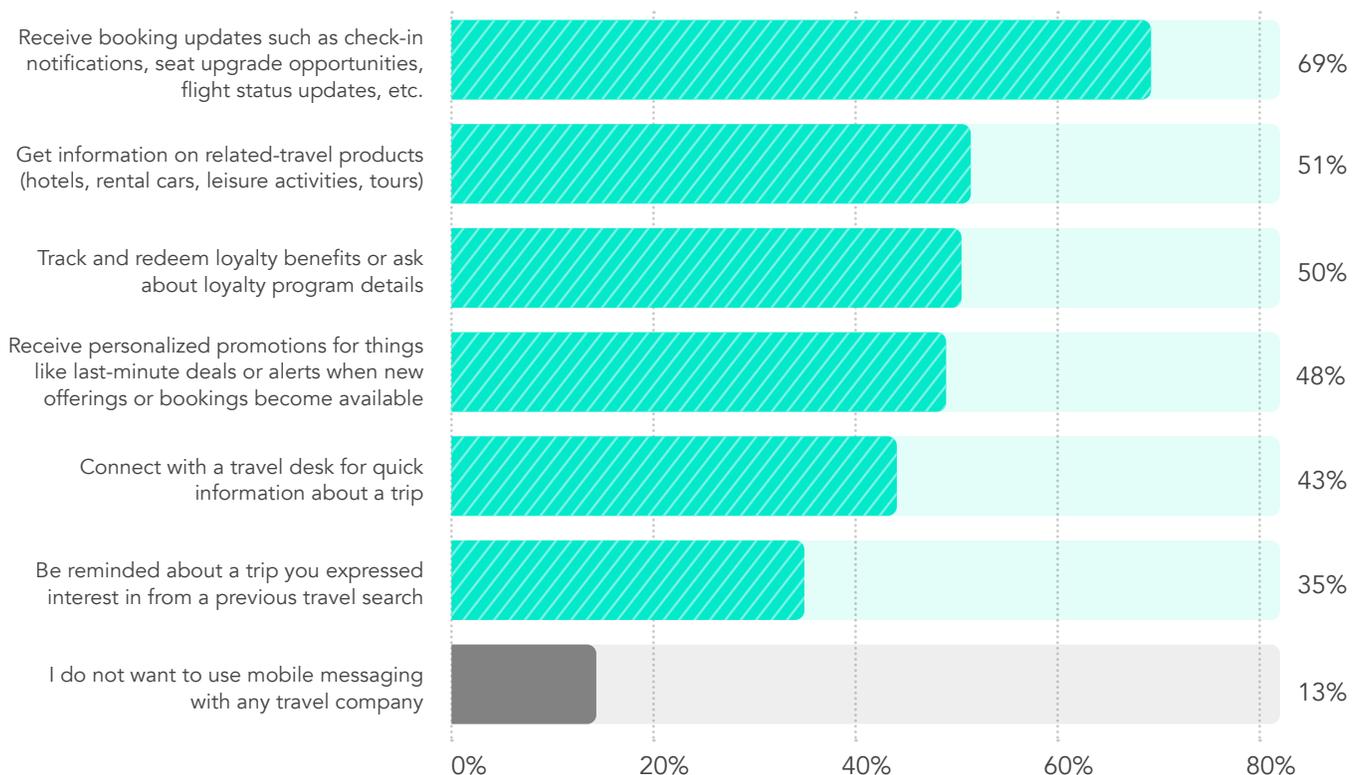
As you'll see, many of the trends are influenced by traveler demographics. Nearly every industry is experiencing a shift in customer preferences and behavior, driven by factors like technology adoption, generational differences, and evolving expectations. Travel is no exception.

87% of consumers want to use mobile messaging to chat with travel companies for a variety of reasons, from booking updates to upgrade notifications.



Messaging is quickly becoming the preferred way for customers to communicate with companies, and travel businesses are no exception. The data shows that 87% of consumers want to use mobile messaging with travel companies. The top three reasons were: to receive booking updates (69%), to get information about related-travel products like hotels, rental cars and leisure activities (51%), and to track and redeem loyalty benefits (50%). This suggests that mobile messaging is valued as a way to gain quick and accessible answers to questions and simplify travel plans.

Which of the following things would you like to do with a travel company (hotel, airline, rental car company, etc.) via mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.

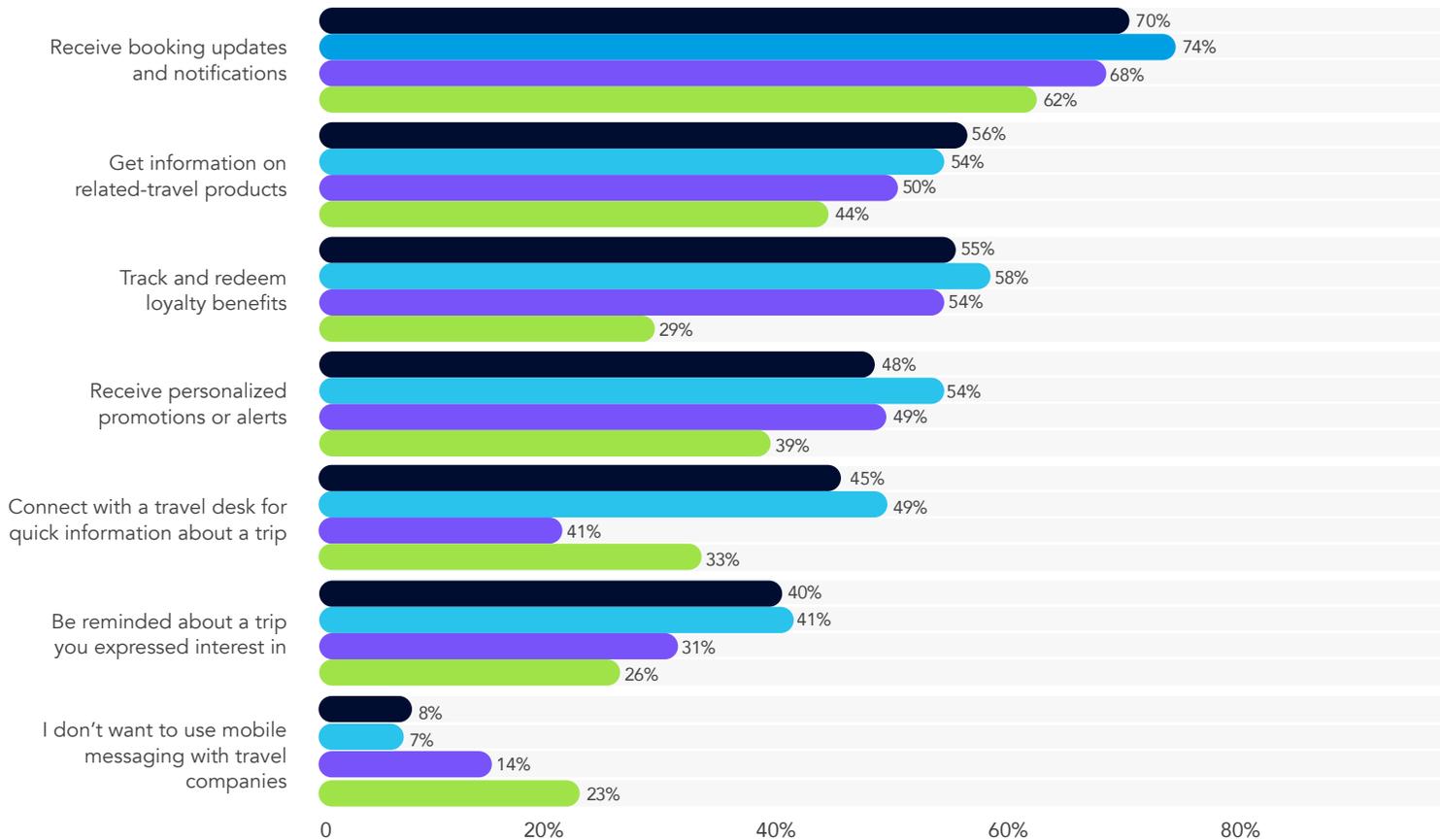


Certain age groups are more likely to be receptive to mobile messaging from businesses. Claiming the obvious majority in this survey, Millennials (ages 27 to 41) are most likely to want to receive mobile messages from travel companies. Gen X (ages 42 to 57) and Gen Z (27 and under) are also interested in receiving mobile messages. Baby Boomers (57+) are the least likely to use mobile messaging. Across the board, all consumers, regardless of age, prefer to receive booking updates and notifications over other types of travel messages.

Gen Z, Millennials, and Gen X are highly interested in mobile messaging with travel companies.

Which of the following things would you like to do with a travel company (hotel, airline, rental car company, etc.) via mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.

By Generation



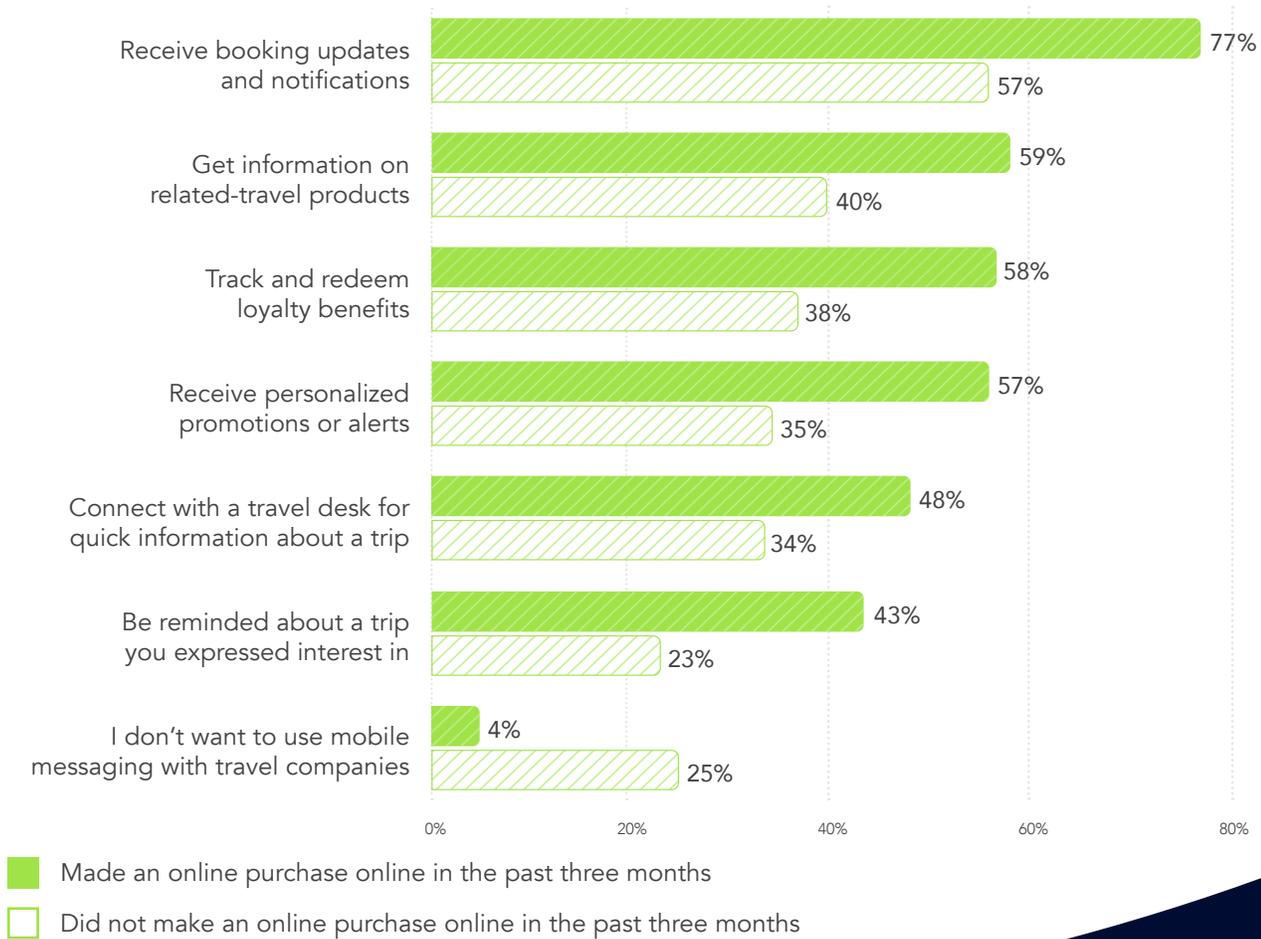
- Gen Z (27 and under)
- Millennial (ages 27 to 41)
- Gen X (ages 42 to 57)
- Baby Boomer (57+)

Consumers who have made an online travel purchase in the past 3 months are far more interested in mobile messaging than those who have not. This is a significant finding, as it suggests that mobile messaging may be a key factor in driving travel bookings, boosting related upsells and enhancing customer service in the future. It also suggests that people who have recently made an online travel purchase are more receptive to communications directly related to their trip compared to communications about ancillary services or information.

Consumers who have made an online travel purchase in the past 3 months are far more interested in mobile messaging.

Which of the following things would you like to do with a travel company (hotel, airline, rental car company, etc.) via mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.

Online travel purchase in past three months



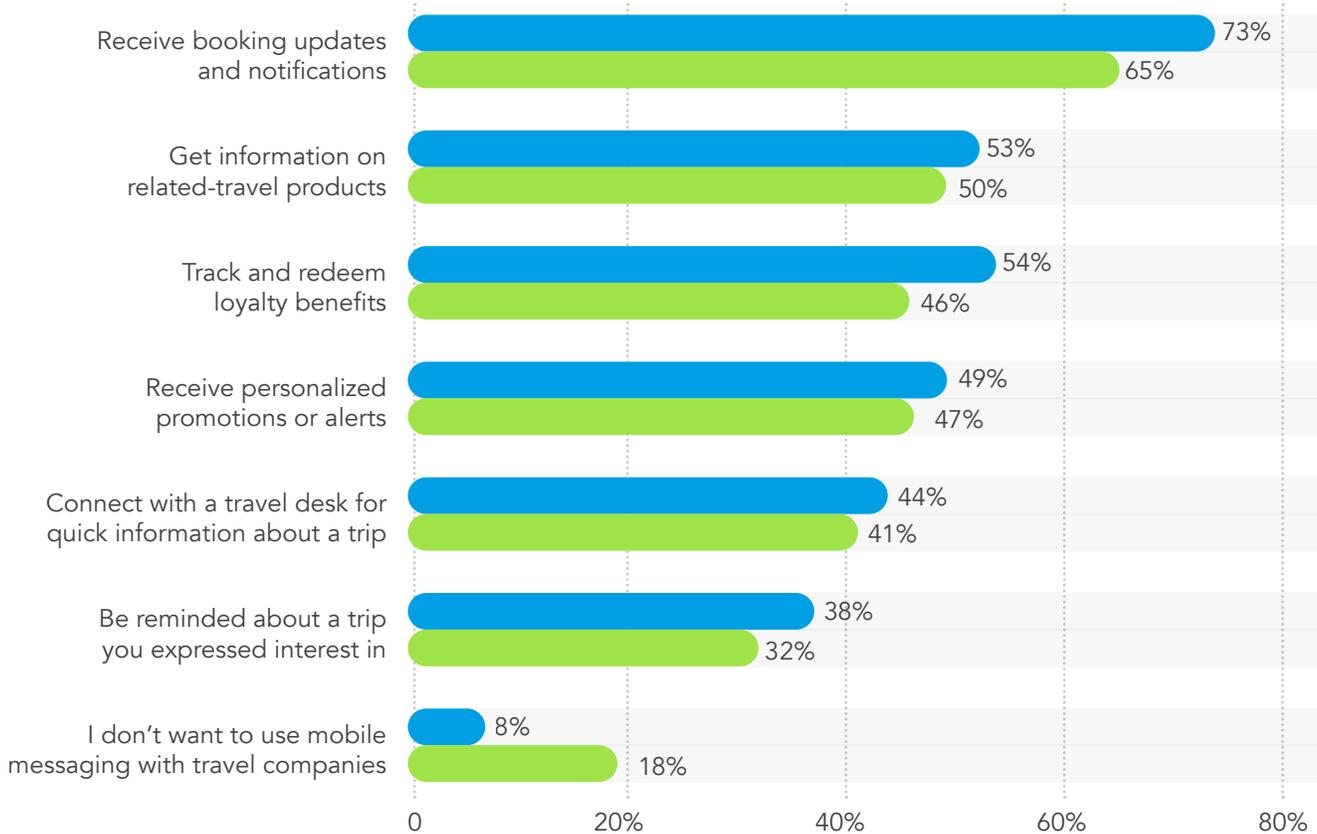
Both iPhone and Android users want to use mobile messaging for a variety of travel use cases.



Both iPhone and Android users are interested in mobile messaging, though iPhone users have slightly higher interest. Regardless of smartphone type, consumers show a definite interest in booking updates and notifications over adjacent message topics.

Which of the following things would you like to do with a travel company (hotel, airline, rental car company, etc.) via mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.

By Type of Smartphone



iPhone



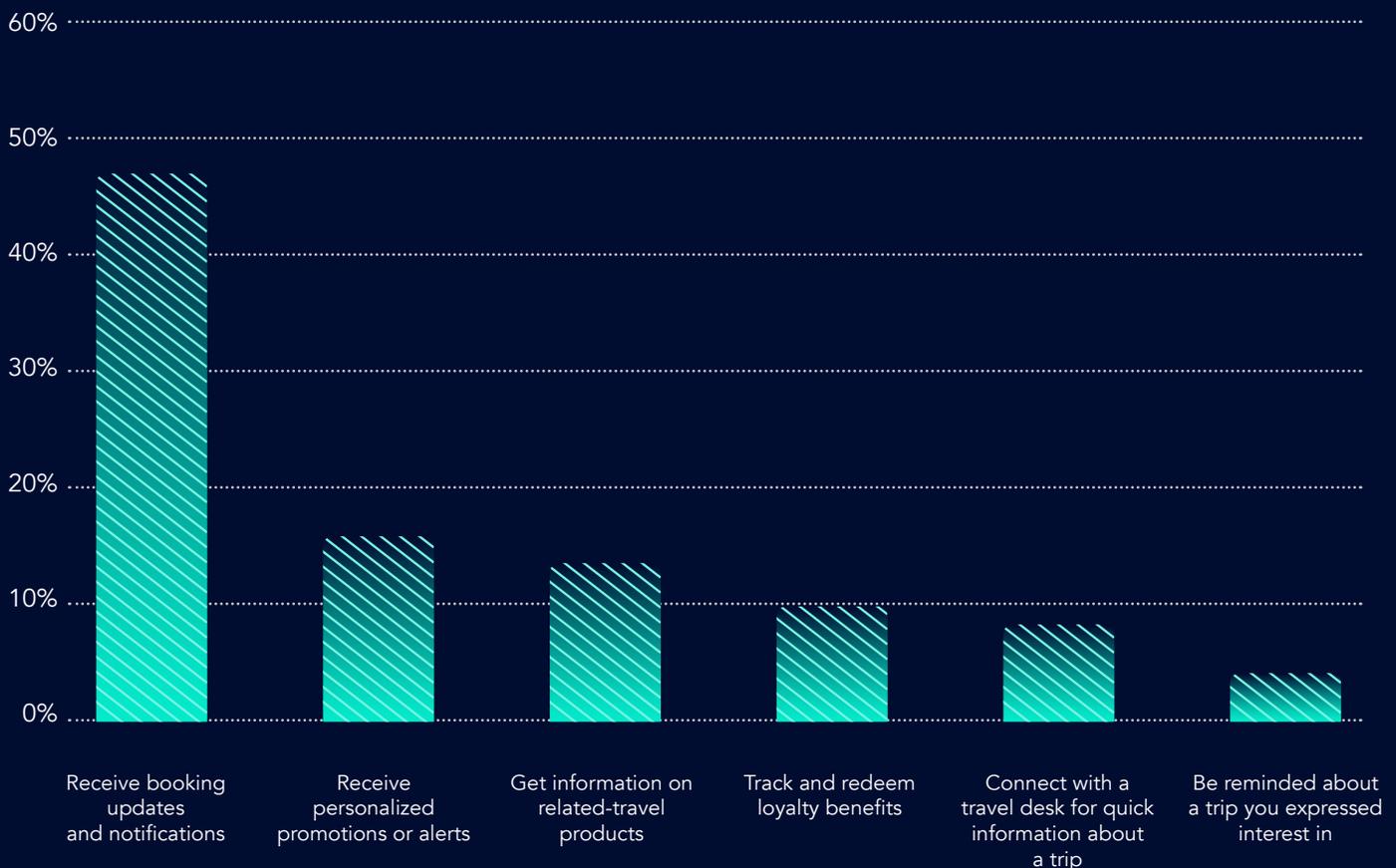
Android

Booking updates are the most preferred use for mobile messaging.

48% of consumers would like to receive booking updates (such as flight changes, hotel reservation confirmations and upgrade opportunities) via mobile messaging. While there is still some interest in receiving communications about related products or services, help desk information, and potential shopping opportunities, the bulk of consumer interest lies in messages directly related to their purchase.



Which would you MOST like to do with a travel company via mobile messaging? Choose the one answer that most closely applies.



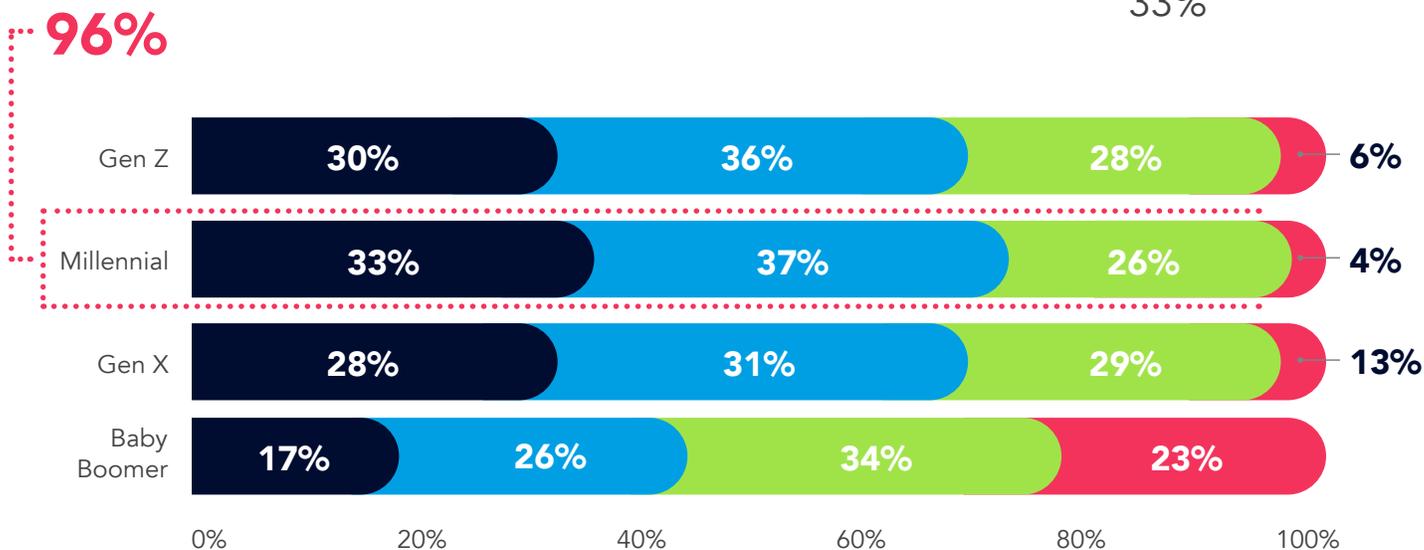
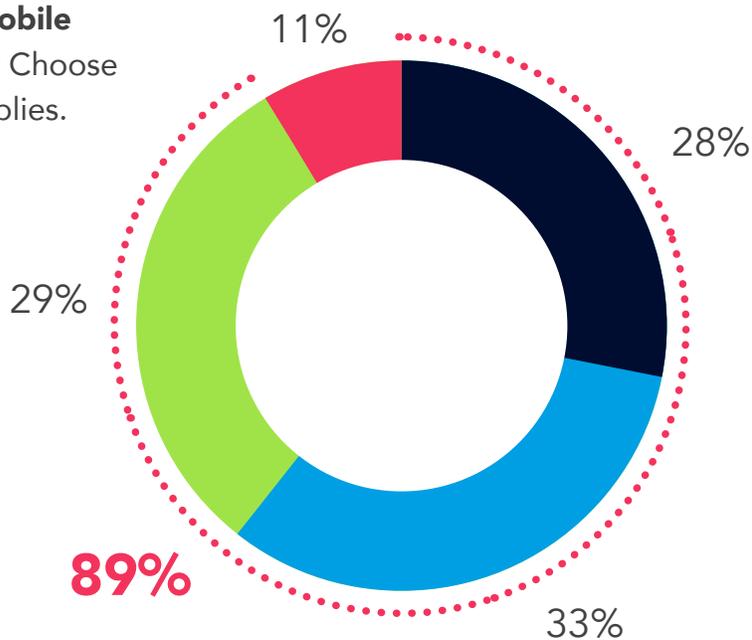
Overall interest is high, especially among Millennials (96%).



Millennials (ages 27 to 41) are far more interested in mobile messaging with travel companies than any other age group. 96% of Millennial respondents are at least somewhat interested in text communications. Gen Z consumers (27 and under) follow closely, with 94% of respondents expressing interest. Gen X consumers (ages 42 to 57) and Baby Boomers (57+) are still interested but to a lesser degree, with 88% and 77% expressing interest, respectively.

How interested are you in using mobile messaging with a travel company? Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not at all interested

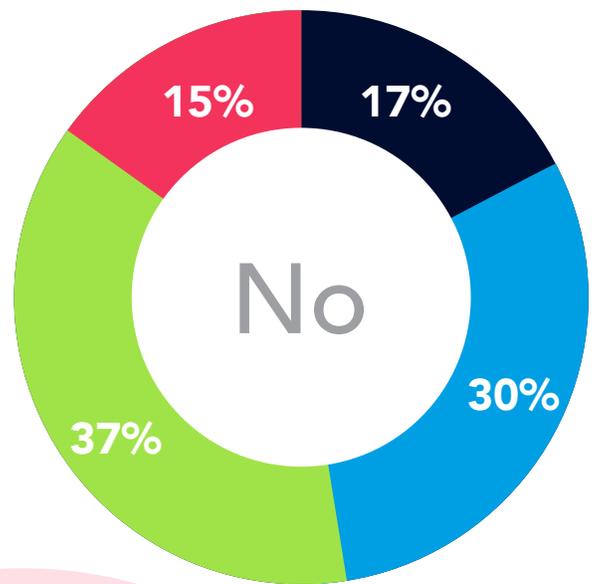
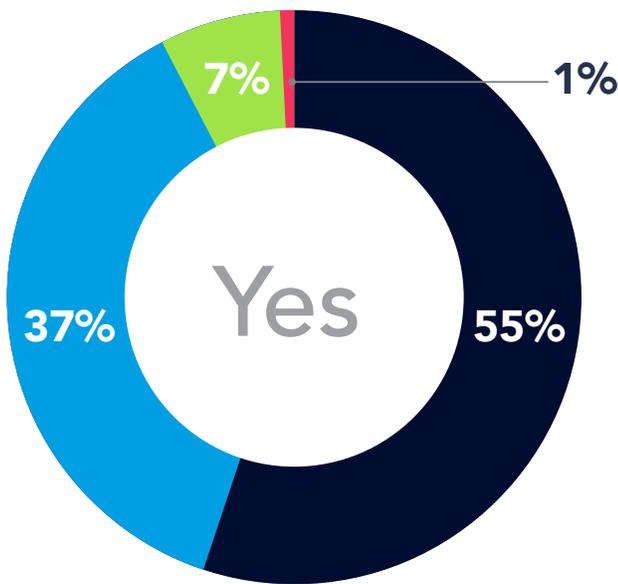


Interest is highest among consumers who have experience using a **payment link** for a purchase.

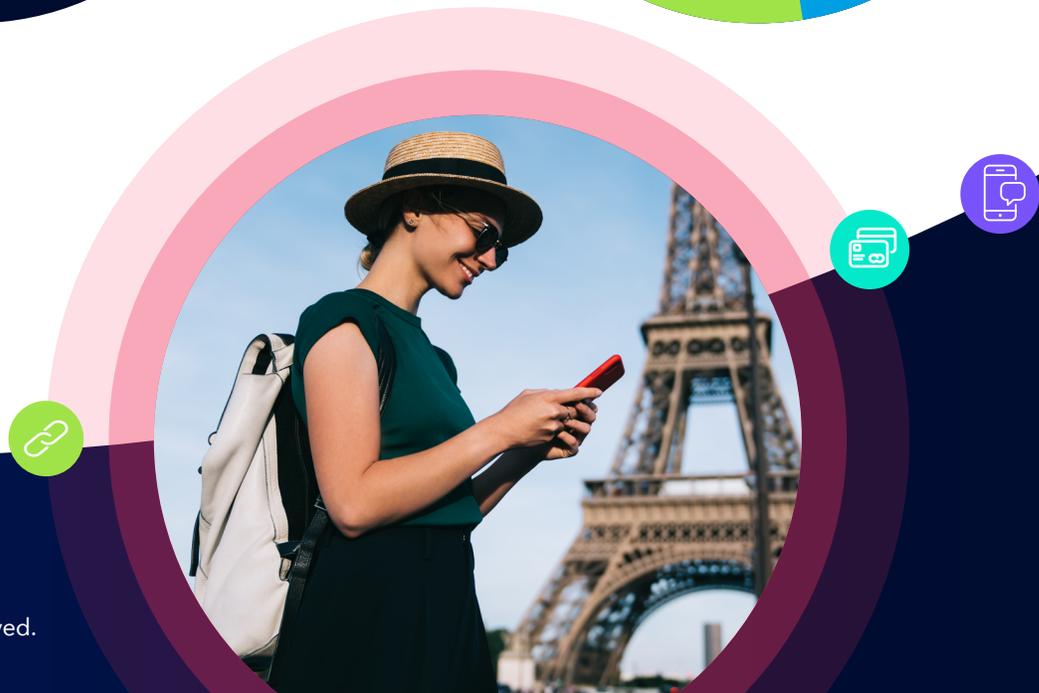
When it comes to messaging with a travel company, interest is highest among consumers who have already used a mobile payment link to make a purchase. An overwhelming majority of iPhone users (99%) and 84% of Android users who have made a purchase with a payment link are at least somewhat interested in mobile messaging.

How interested are you in using mobile messaging with a travel company? Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

Made a purchase with payment link



- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not at all interested

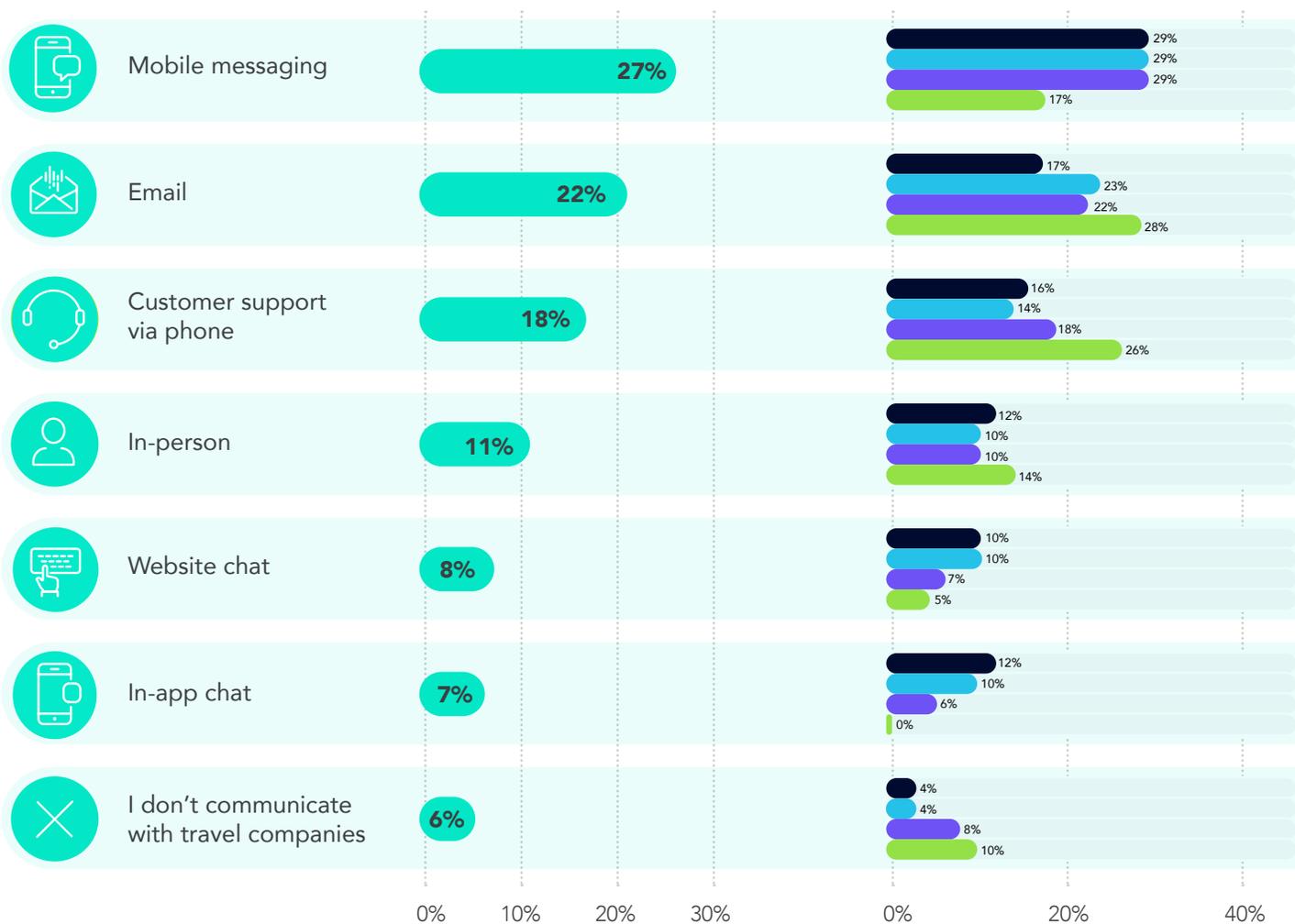


Gen Z, Millennials and Gen X all place mobile messaging as their top way to communicate.

While messaging is the preferred method of communication for all age groups, it is particularly important to Gen Z and Millennials. Mobile messaging is fast, convenient, and easy to use. Unlike email or website chat, messaging allows for a two-way exchange that feels more like a natural conversation.

Which way do you most prefer to communicate with a travel company?

Choose the one answer that most closely applies.



- Gen Z (27 and under)
- Millennial (ages 27 to 41)
- Gen X (ages 42 to 57)
- Baby Boomer (57+)

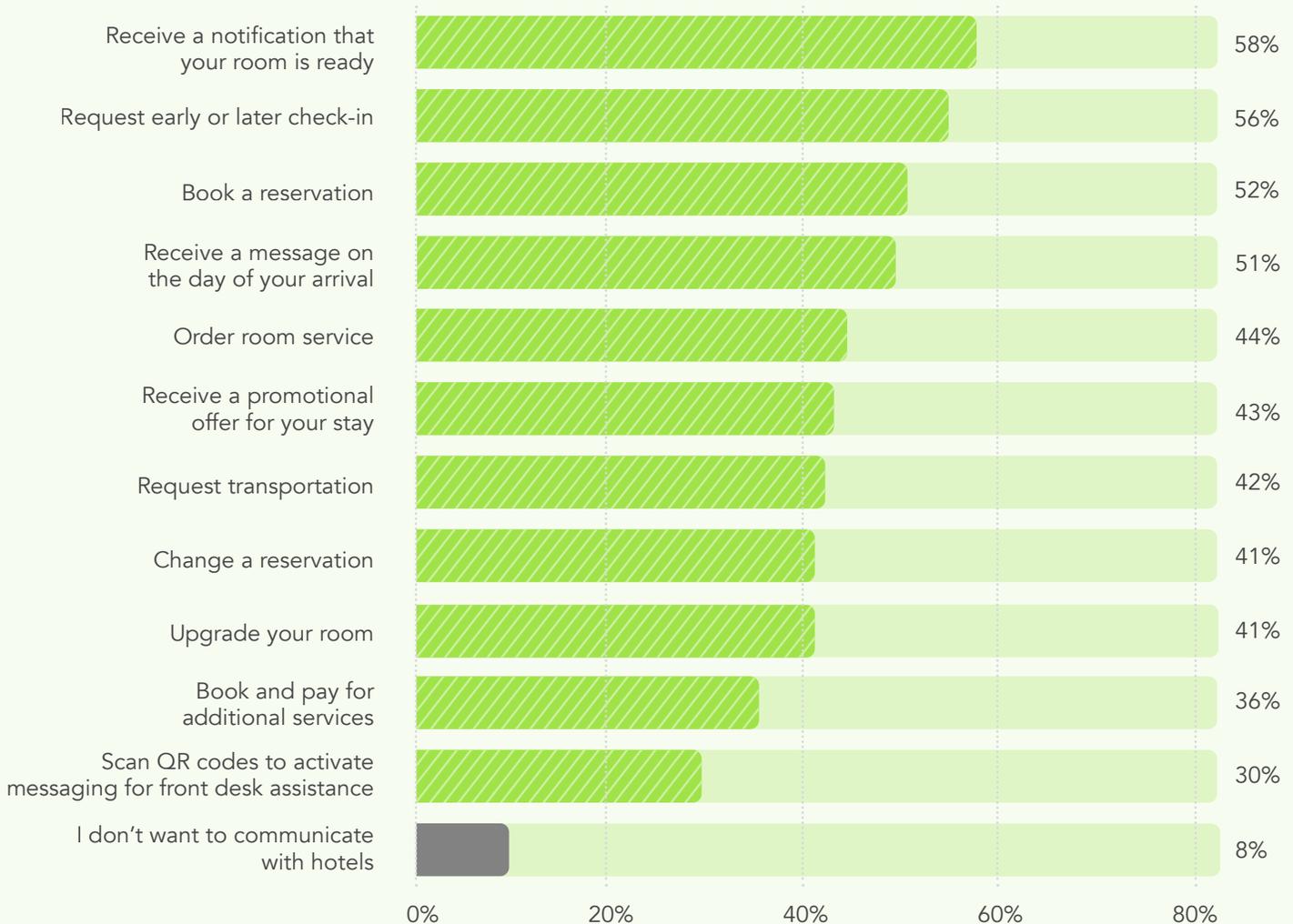
When it comes to communicating with hotels via chat, consumers are most interested in receiving notifications when their room is ready (58%), requesting early or late check-in (56%), and booking reservations (52%). Other interests include wanting to receive important hotel information (51%), order room service (44%), or gain access to promos and other offers (43%). This data indicates that there is a clear opportunity for hotels to use mobile messaging to improve the guest experience and drive hotel bookings.

92% of consumers want to use mobile messaging with hotels.



Which of the following would you like to do with a hotel via mobile messaging?

Choose all that apply.

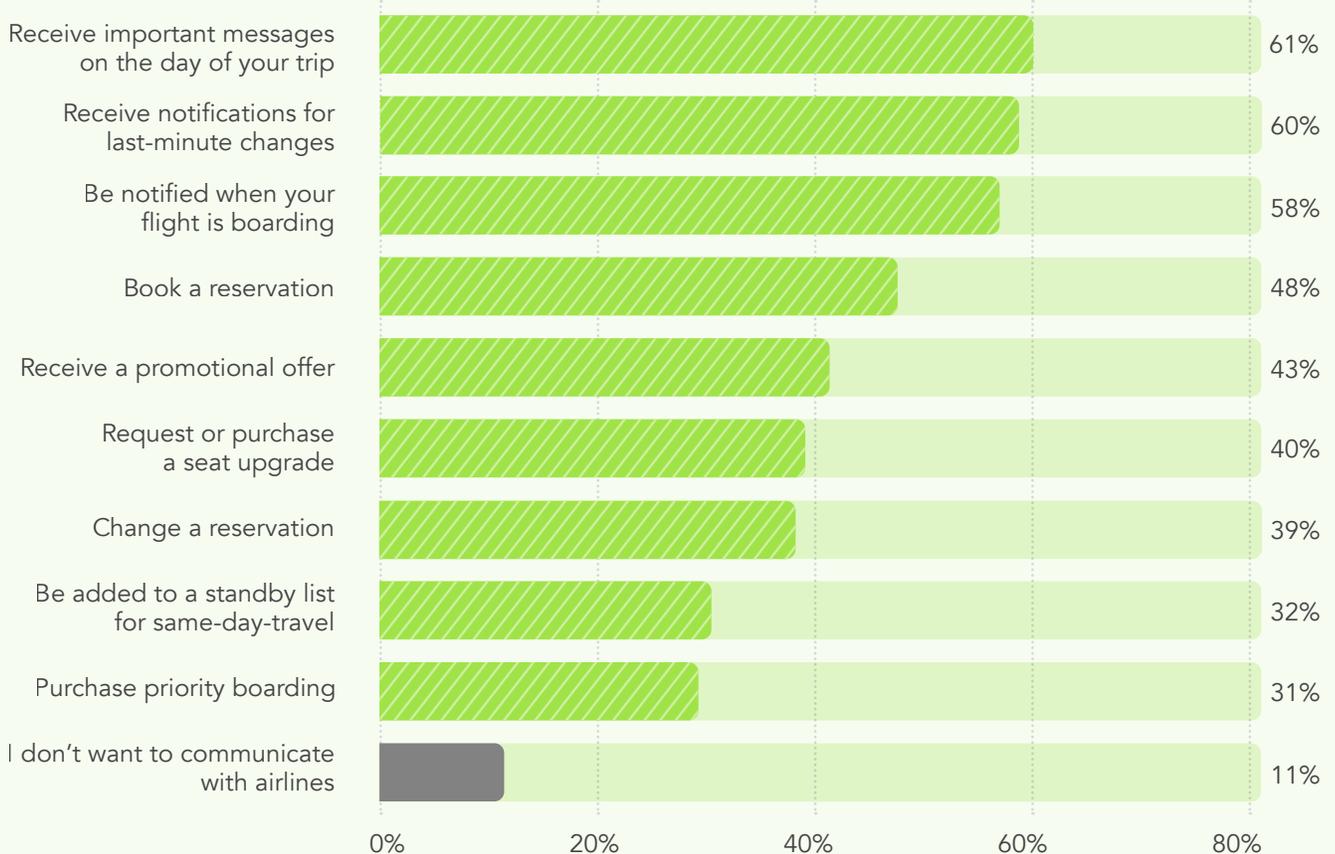


Customers are most willing to engage with airlines via chat for three reasons: To get important flight information on the day of their trip (61%), receive notifications about last-minute flight changes (60%), and receive boarding announcements (58%). Interestingly, these top preferences are directly related to customers' existing travel arrangements—a trend we've now seen a few times throughout this study.

89% of consumers want to use mobile messaging with airlines.



Which of the following would you like to be able to do with an airline via mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.

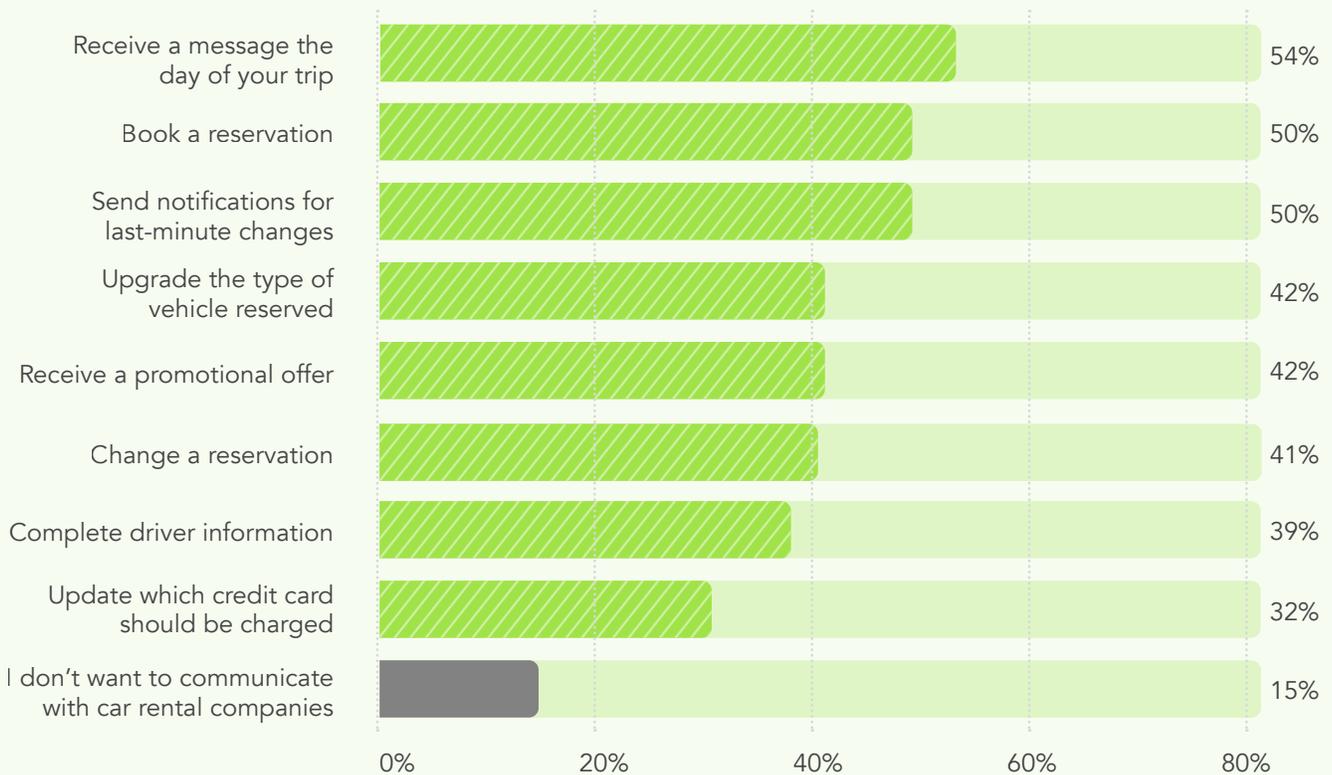


The top reasons customers want to use chat with rental car companies are to get day-of updates with important car rental information (54%), to book a reservation (50%) and to receive notifications about last-minute changes to their reservation (50%). Thanks to mobile messaging, rental car companies have the opportunity to streamline customer service and turn what has traditionally been a cumbersome process into a much smoother one.

85% of consumers want to use mobile messaging with rental car companies.



Which of the following would you like to be able to do with a rental car company via mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.



89% are interested in personalized experience with a travel company, especially Millennials.

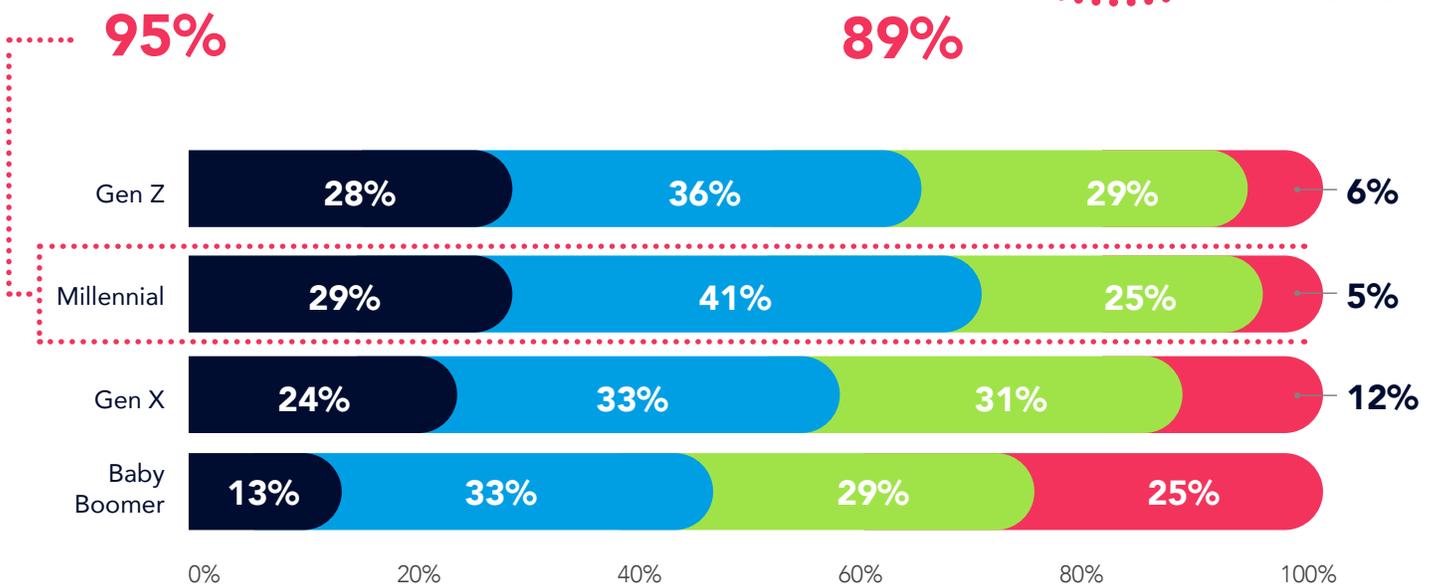
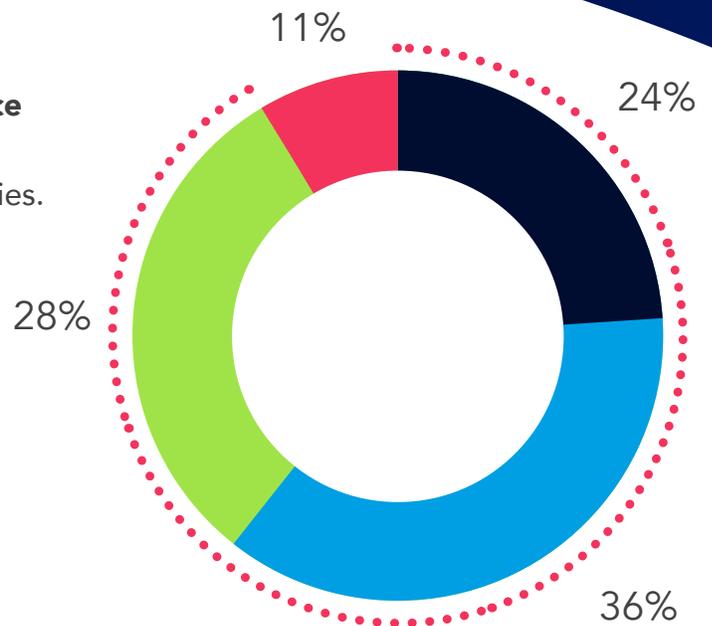
Millennials are the most likely age group to want a personalized mobile messaging experience with a travel company (95%), followed by Gen Z (93%), Gen X (88%) and Baby Boomers (75%).



How interested are you in using mobile messaging to have a personalized experience with a travel company?

Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

- Extremely interested
- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not at all interested



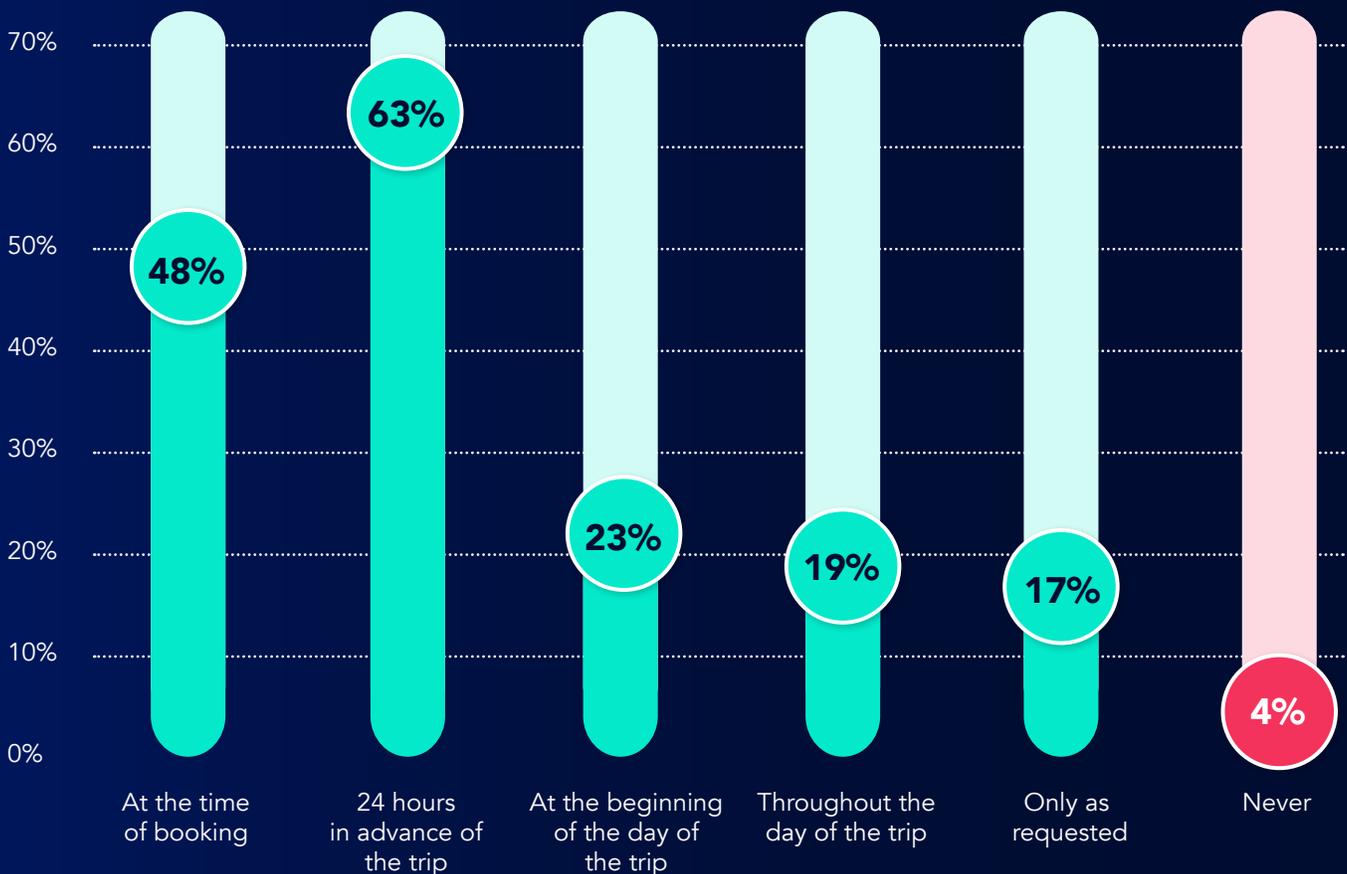
PREFERENCES REGARDING PERSONALIZED COMMUNICATIONS

Customers want (and expect) mobile messages to start early on in their travel journey and continue through their trip duration.

This indicates that customers expect to receive consistent communication at different touch points throughout their journey. Airlines, hotels, and rental car companies should consider which messages would be most relevant and useful at each stage in order to provide the best possible experience.

**(Almost half)
48%**
**of consumers expect
mobile messages
to begin at the
time of booking.**

After you make your initial purchase with a travel company, when would you expect the company to send you a mobile message about possible upgrades or trip add-ons?
Choose all that apply.



8 in 10 say it is more convenient to use travel desk via mobile messaging compared to other channels.

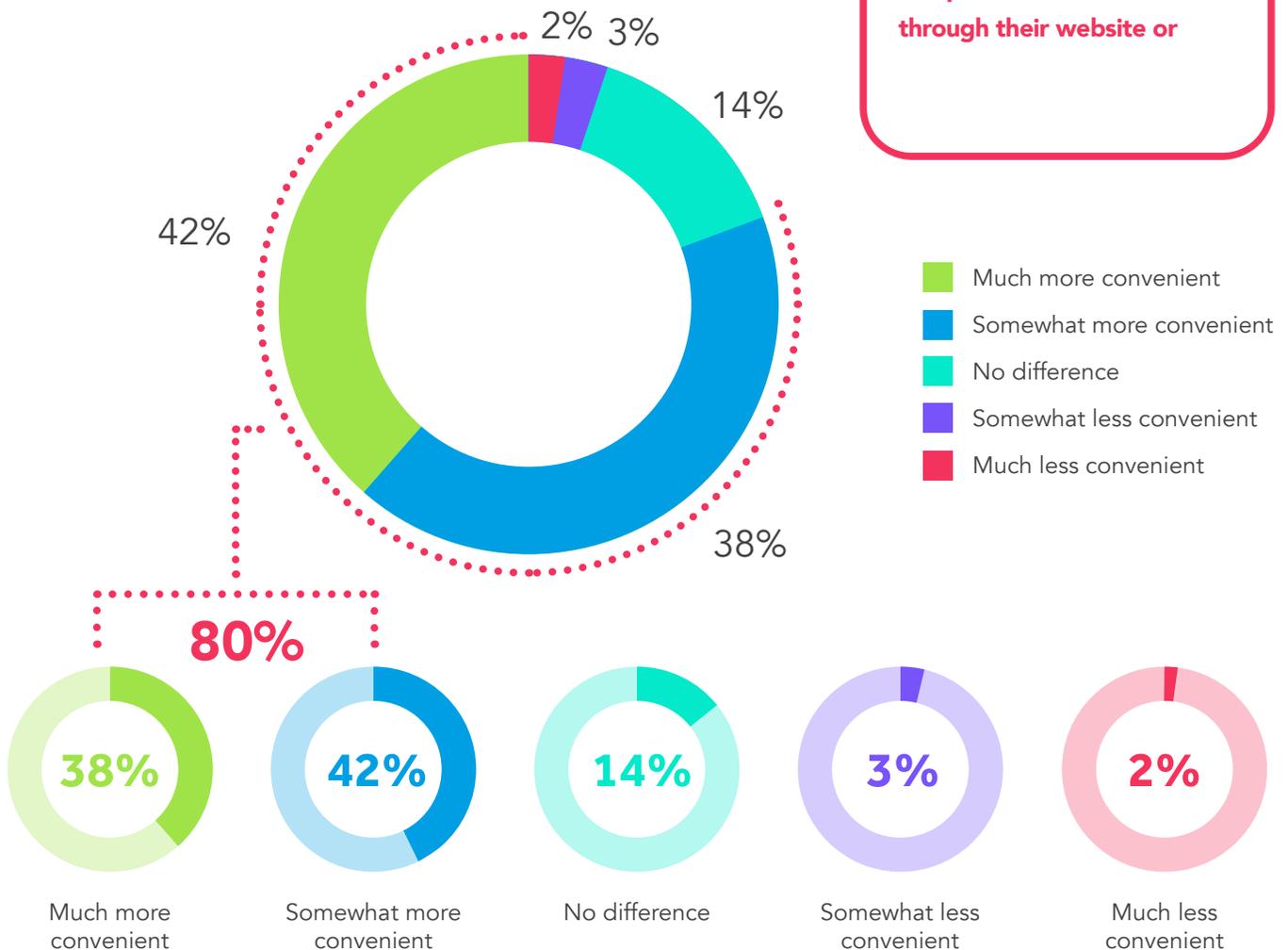
The vast majority of customers find it more convenient to use a travel desk via mobile messaging than any other channel. This is likely due to the fact that mobile messaging allows customers to communicate with businesses on their own terms and in real-time.

How convenient would it be to communicate or make a purchase with a travel desk via mobile messaging compared to other methods (i.e. logging in to a website or app, phone, email, etc.)?

Choose the one answer that most closely applies.



A "travel desk" allows you to access information or ask questions about a trip. Travel companies often offer this through their website or



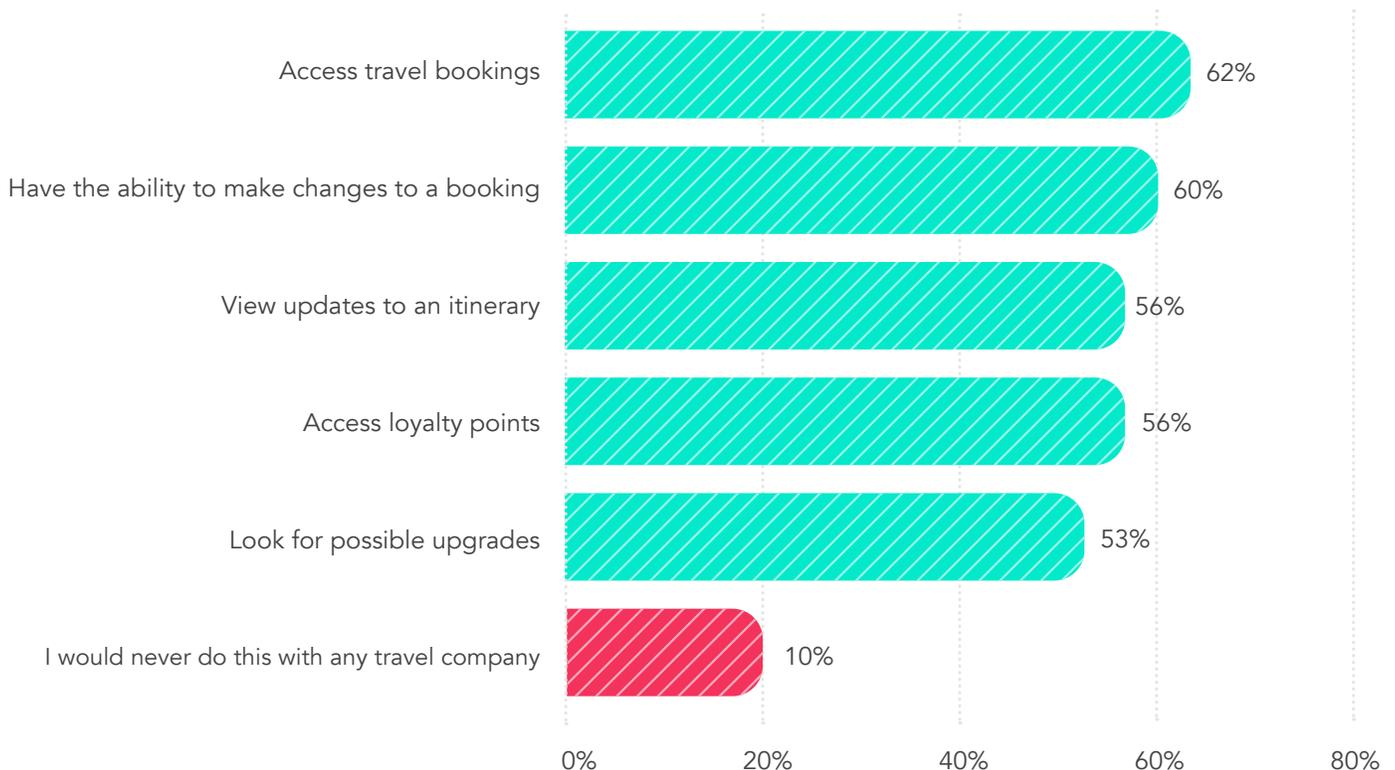
90% say they would like to do things with travel companies through a personalized link.

90% of customers are interested in using personalized links to book travel arrangements and access information about their trip. This suggests that customers are open to using new technologies, as long as they make the booking process easier and more efficient.



Mobile messaging allows travel companies to personalize how they communicate with customers. This includes being able to offer products or services that are based on your purchase habits and sent directly to your mobile device.

Which of the following things would you like to be able to do through a personalized link sent from a travel company via mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.

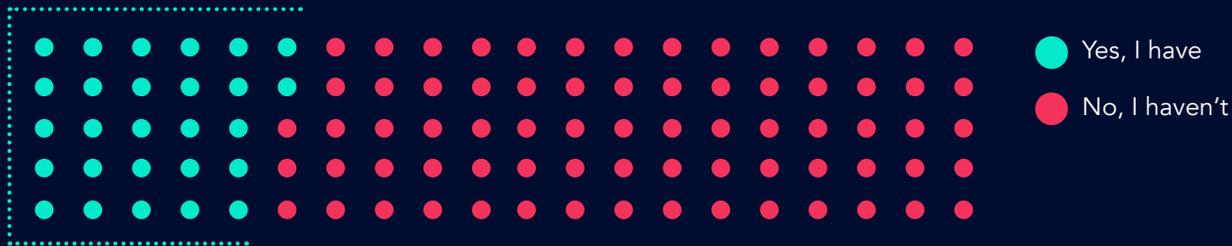


PREFERENCES REGARDING PERSONALIZED COMMUNICATIONS

While the majority of customers have not made a purchase via a mobile messaging payment link from a travel company, more than **a quarter have (27%)**. Considering our earlier learning - that consumers who have already used a mobile payment link are generally more interested in using mobile messaging - there is a high potential for businesses to leverage payments to acquire new customers and drive sales.

Have you ever made a purchase (airline ticket, hotel reservation, seat upgrade, etc.) with a payment link that a travel company sent to you via mobile messaging?

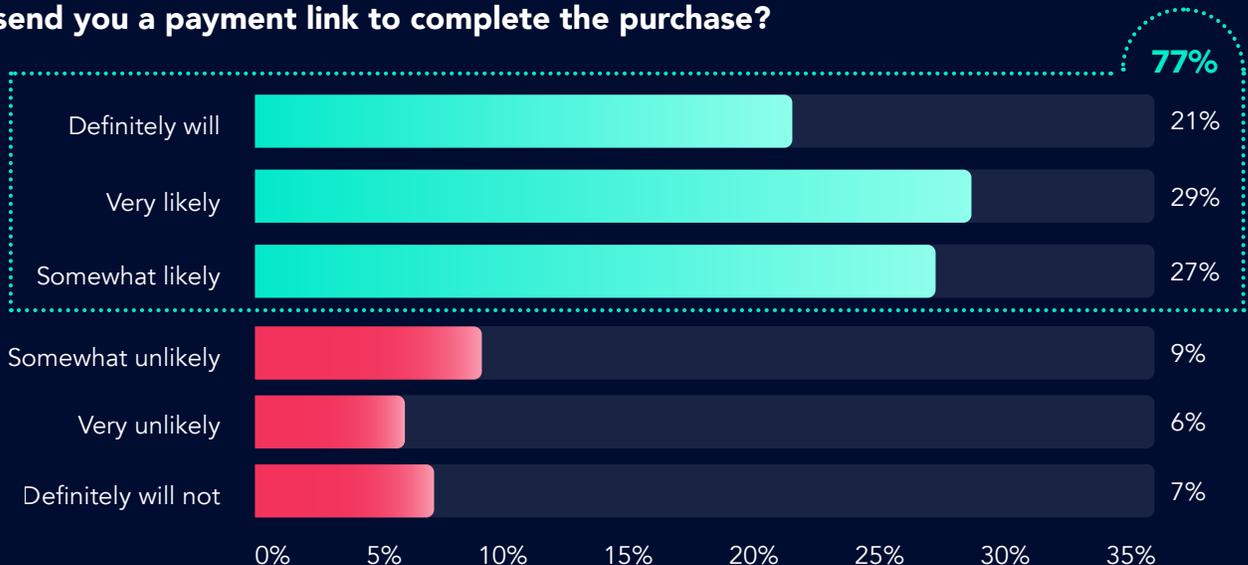
More than a quarter of consumers have made a purchase via a mobile messaging payment link from a travel company.



77% are likely to make a purchase through a mobile messaging payment link.

Businesses can leverage this interest to increase sales by offering mobile messaging as a convenient payment option.

How likely are you to make a purchase with a travel company via mobile messaging if they send you a payment link to complete the purchase?



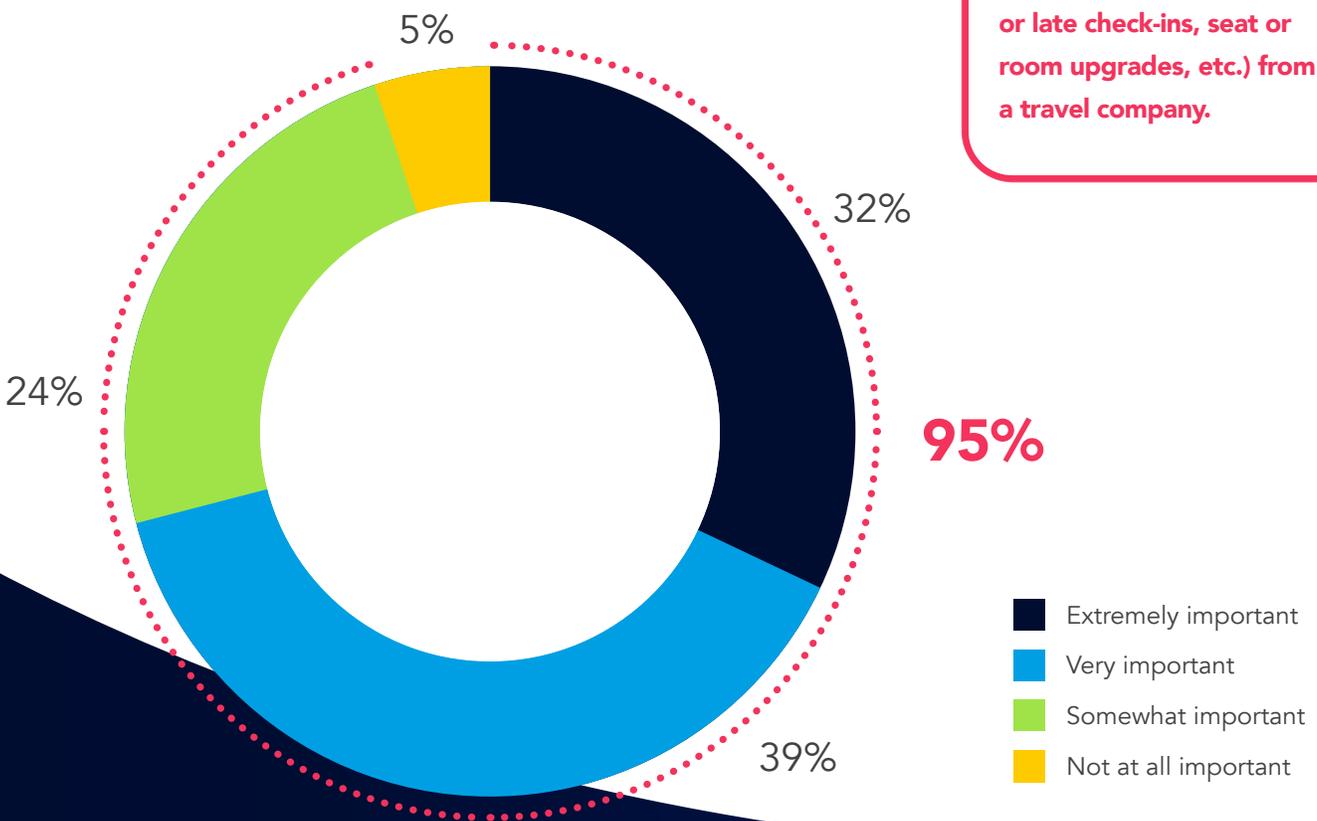
95% say it is important to have a personalized experience when receiving booking updates.

Customers want to receive updates about their travel plans that are personalized to their needs and preferences. This indicates that businesses should focus on providing a customized experience in order to stand out from the competition.

Mobile messaging provides the perfect platform to do this, as it allows businesses to gather data about customer preferences and then use that information to send targeted and relevant messages.

How important is it for you to have a personalized experience when receiving booking updates from the travel companies you use most often? Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

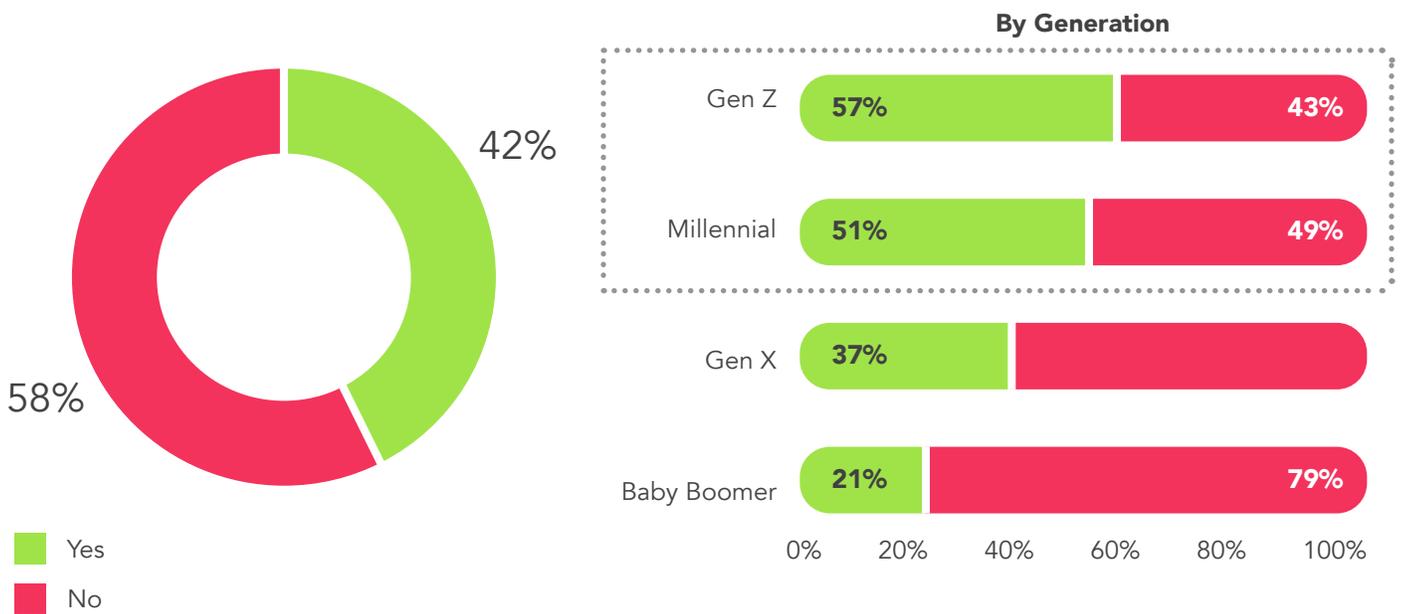
Think about the different types of booking updates you can receive (flight delays, gate changes, early or late check-ins, seat or room upgrades, etc.) from a travel company.



Gen Z (57%) and Millennials (51%) are far more likely, than older generations, to have used a mobile link or code to validate their identity with a travel company. This suggests that younger customers are more open to newer methods, such as mobile messaging, that can simplify the booking process.

Younger generations are far more likely to have used a payment link or code to validate identity with a travel company.

Have you ever used a link or code from a travel company to validate your identity through mobile messaging?

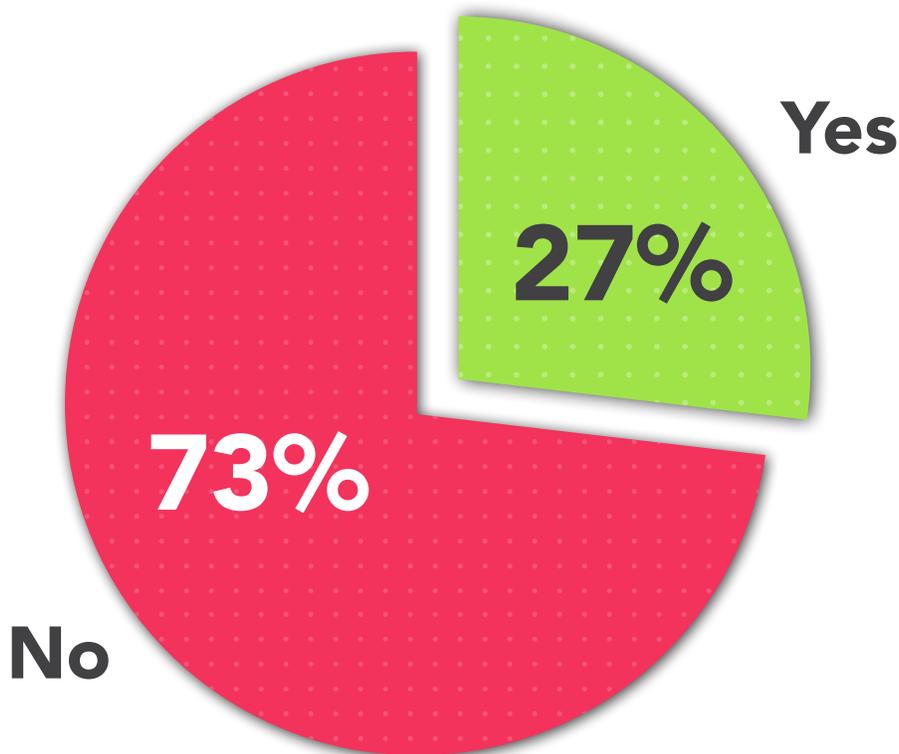


More than a quarter of consumers have made a purchase via a mobile messaging link with a travel company.



While the majority of customers have not made a purchase via a mobile messaging payment link from a travel company, more than a quarter have (27%). Considering our earlier learning—that consumers who have already used a mobile payment link are generally more interested in using mobile messaging—there is high potential for businesses to leverage payment links to acquire new customers and drive sales.

Have you ever made a purchase (online ticket, hotel reservation, seat upgrade, etc.) with a payment link that a travel company has sent to you via mobile messaging?



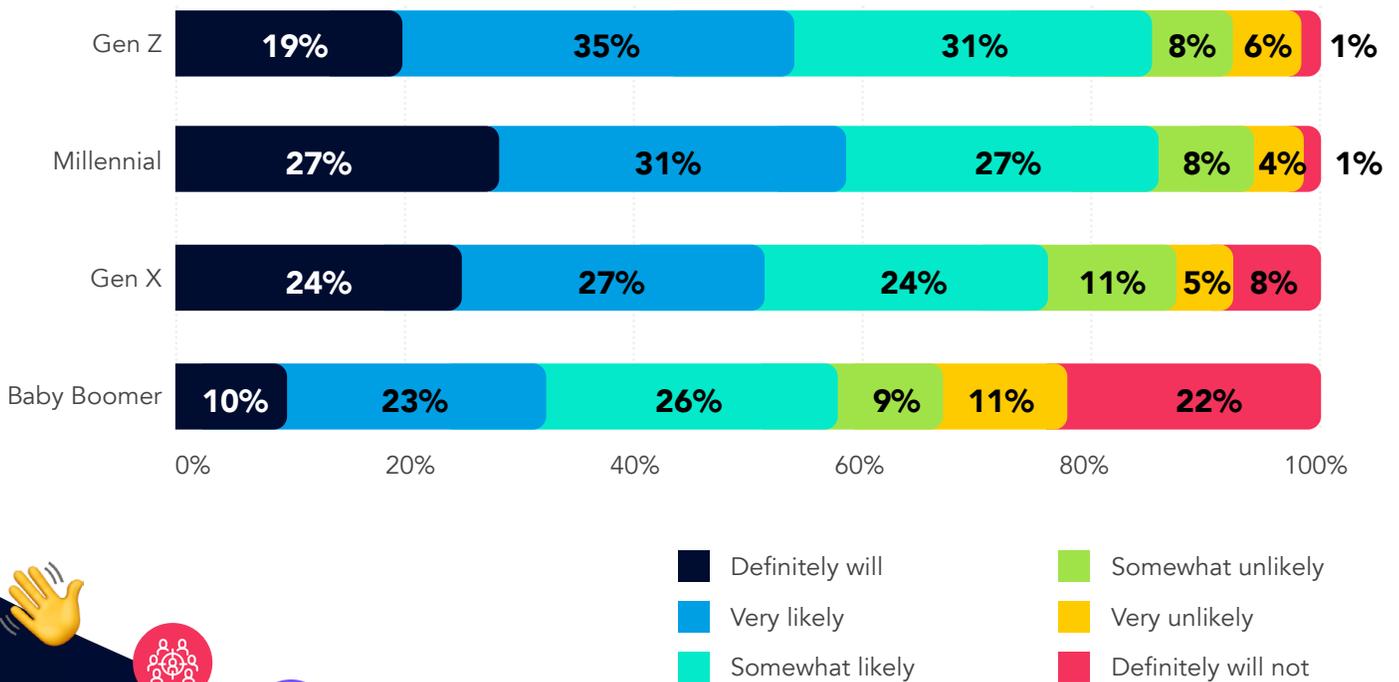
There is a notable difference between generations when it comes to using mobile messaging for travel-related purchases. 85% of Gen Z and 85% of Millennials are likely to use mobile messaging to make a purchase with a travel company, compared to 75% of Gen X and just 59% of Baby Boomers.

Younger generations are more accustomed to using chat apps as a primary means of communication. Therefore, it makes sense that they would also be more likely to use chat for commerce purposes.

Younger generations are much more likely to use a mobile payment link.

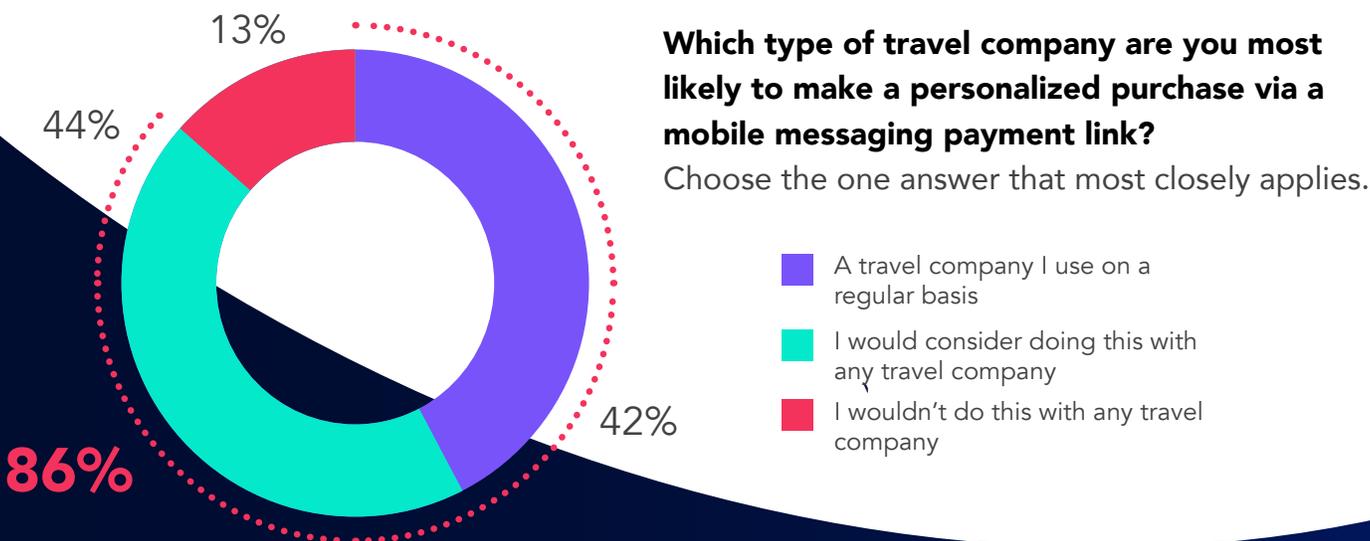
How likely are you to make a purchase with a travel company via mobile messaging if they send you a payment link to complete the purchase?

Choose the one answer that most closely applies.



86% would likely make a personalised purchase via a mobile messaging payment link with any type of travel company.

The majority of consumers (86%) would likely make a purchase, such as a flight or hotel booking, via a mobile messaging payment link sent by a travel company. This suggests that customers are open to using chat for commerce purposes and that businesses should consider offering this payment option to drive sales.

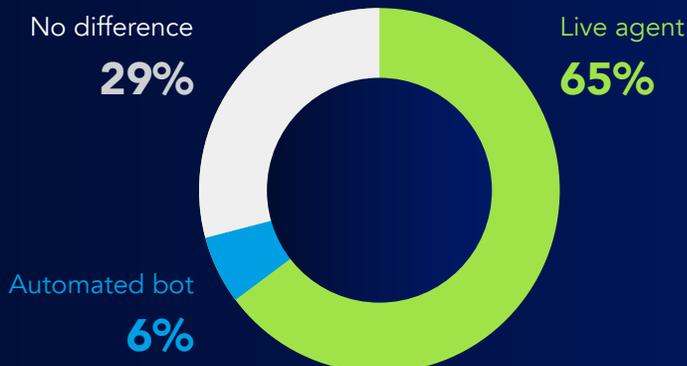


Two thirds say they are more willing to purchase through a payment link with a live agent.

While the majority of consumers are open to using a mobile messaging payment link, they are even more likely to make a purchase through a payment link after speaking with a live agent (65%). Adding this payment option supports the efforts of help desk agents and boosts consumer confidence in making purchases via mobile messaging.

Would you be more willing to make a purchase with a travel company through a payment link after chatting with a live agent or automated bot via mobile messaging?

Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

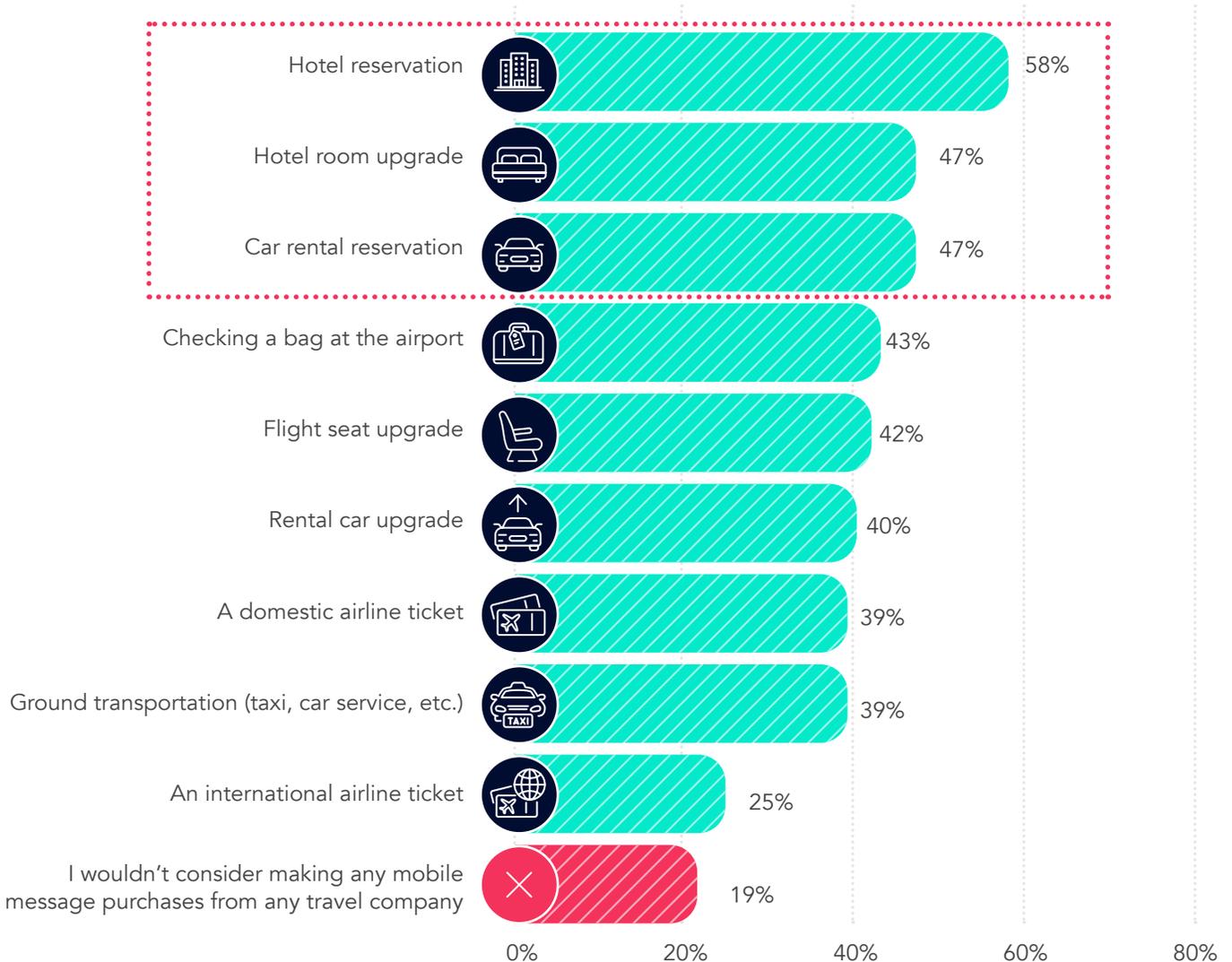


COMPLETING PURCHASES VIA MOBILE MESSAGING PAYMENT LINK

When asked what types of purchases they would be open to making with a travel company via a mobile messaging payment link, consumers put hotel bookings at the top of the list (58%). This was followed by hotel room upgrades (47%) and car rental reservations (47%). Only 19% of consumers would not consider a mobile message purchase.

Hotel purchases top the list of what consumers would consider making with a travel company payment link.

Which of the following types of purchases would you consider making with a travel company via a payment link sent through mobile messaging? Choose all that apply.



COMPLETING PURCHASES VIA MOBILE MESSAGING PAYMENT LINK

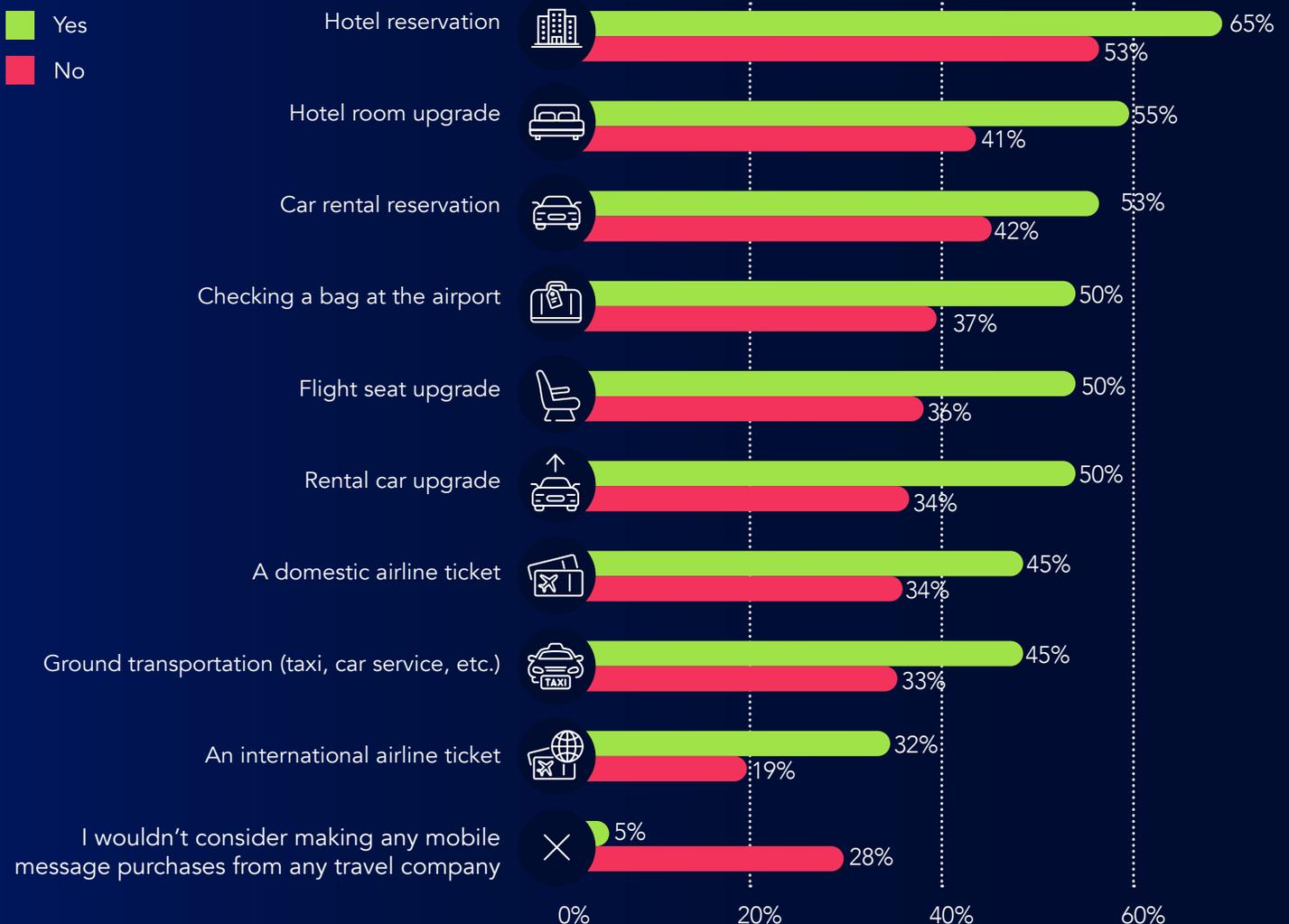
This information suggests that once customers have used a chat-based link or code, they are much more likely to use mobile chat links for other tasks or transactions.

Which of the following types of purchases would you consider making with a travel company via a payment link sent through mobile messaging?

Choose all that apply.

Consumers who have used a link or code to validate identity are much more likely to use a payment link.

By Used Link or Code Through Mobile Messaging



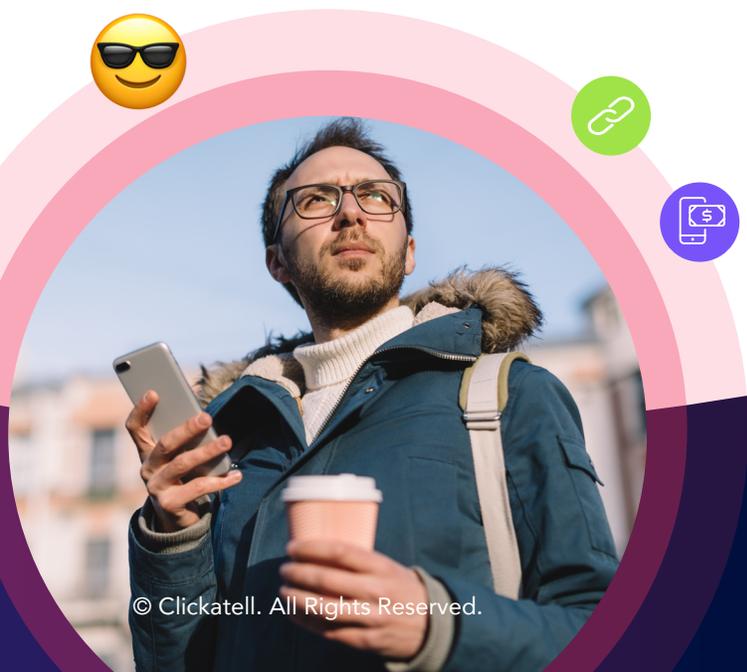
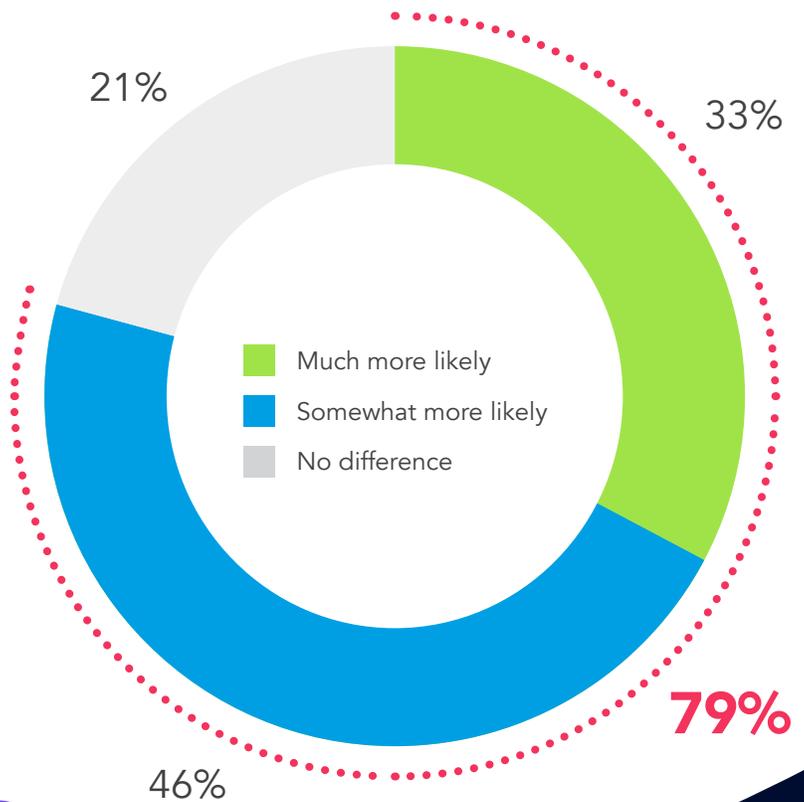
75% say they are more likely to complete a purchase if an incentive is offered via payment link.

When asked what would make them more likely to complete a purchase via a mobile messaging payment link, the majority of consumers (79%) said they would be more likely to do so if offered an incentive.

Would you be more likely to go back and complete the purchase if the company contacts you via mobile messaging to remind you AND offers an incentive (like a discount or upgrade) if you complete the purchase using the payment link included in the message?

Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

Imagine that you searched online for something related to travel (airline ticket, hotel room, car rental, etc.), but didn't make the purchase.



Younger generations and iPhone users are likely to do this.

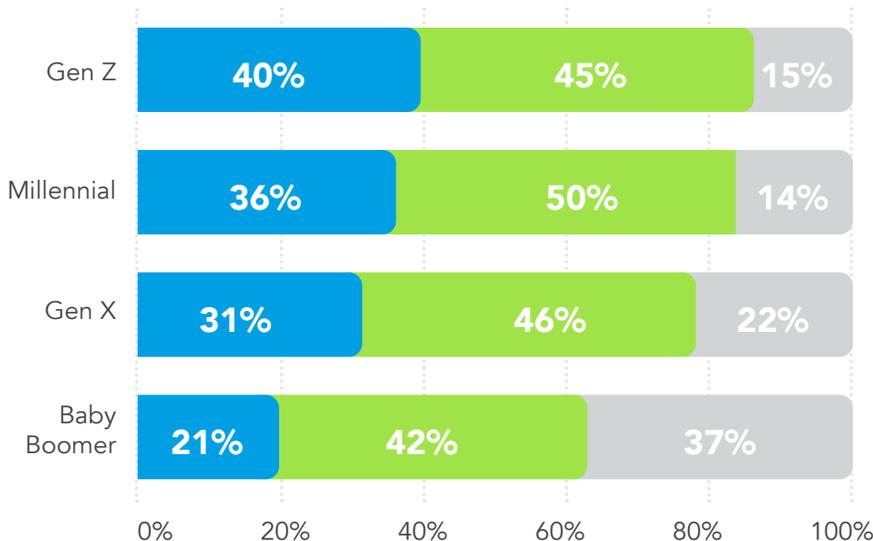
Overall, Millennials (86%), Gen Z (85%), and iPhone users (84%) are among the most likely consumers to complete a previously abandoned purchase if the company contacts them via mobile messaging and offers them an incentive.

Imagine that you searched online for something related to travel (airline ticket, hotel room, car rental, etc.), but didn't make the purchase.

Would you be more likely to go back and complete the purchase if the company contacts you via mobile messaging to remind you AND offers an incentive (like a discount or upgrade) if you complete the purchase using the payment link included in the message?

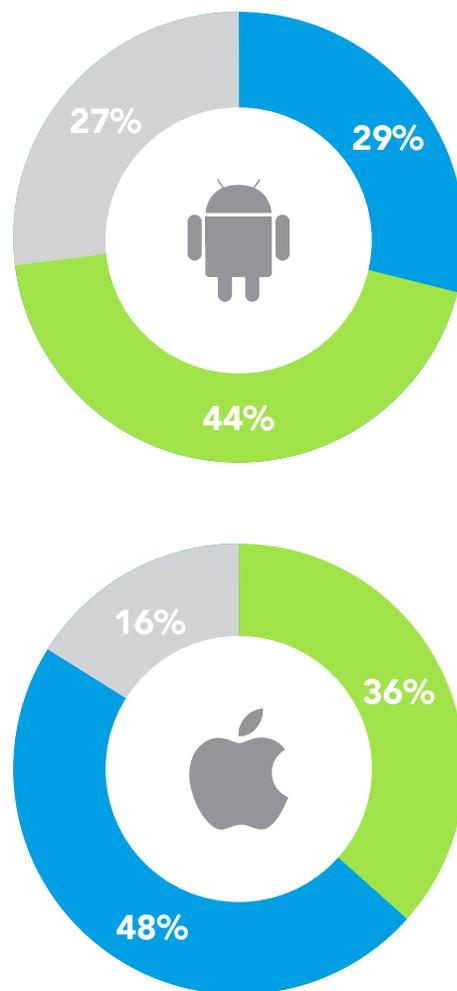
Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

By Generation



- Much more likely
- Somewhat likely
- No difference

By Type of Smartphone

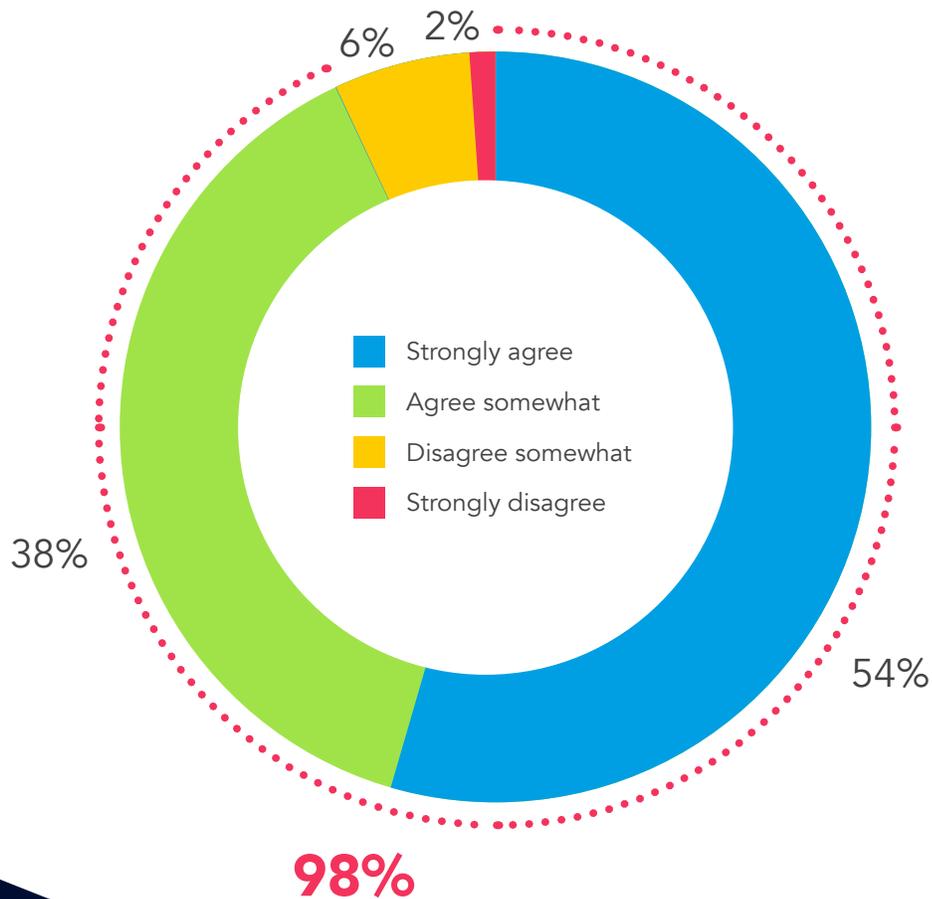


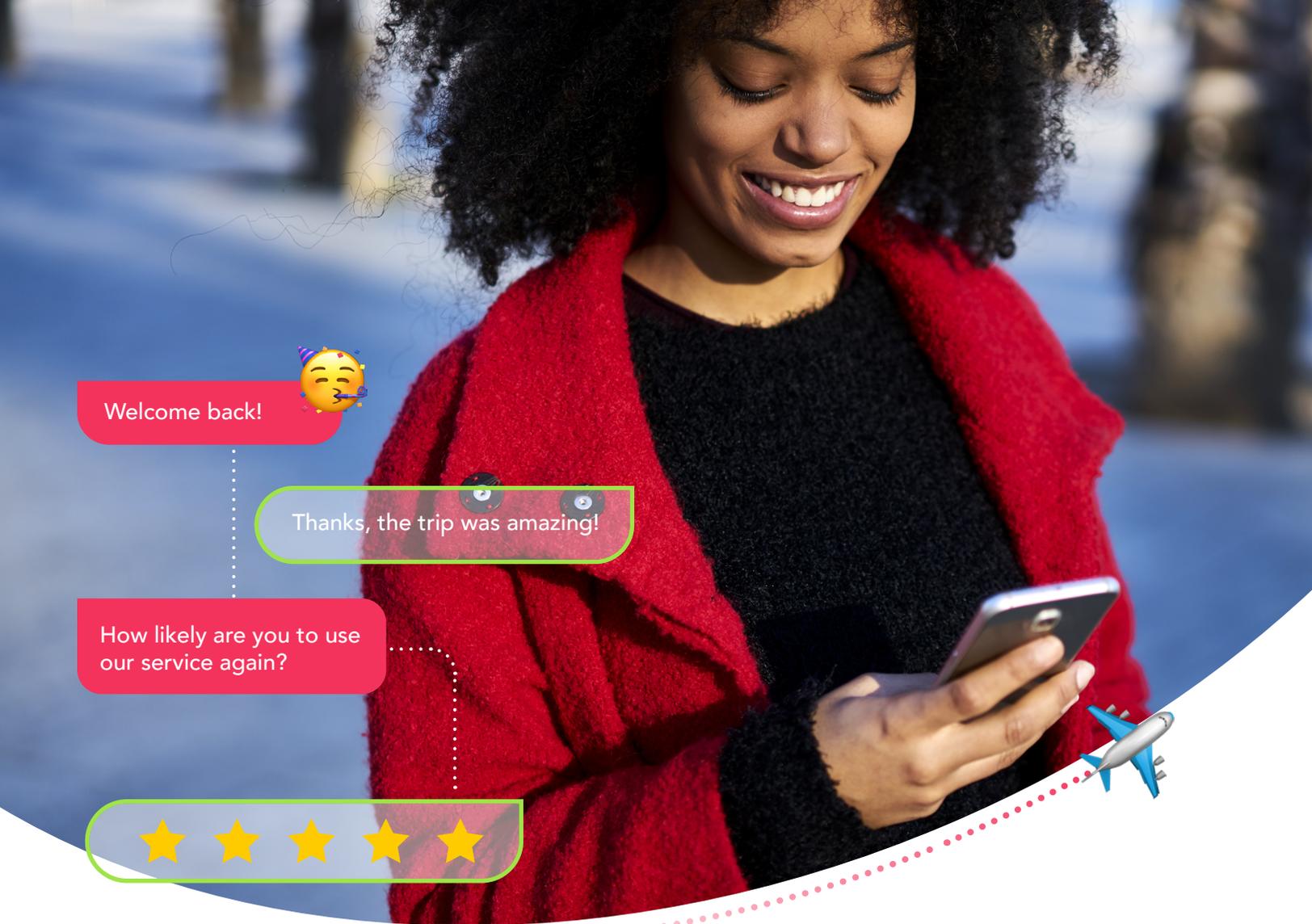
A streamlined customer journey, convenience and relevance are the major cornerstones of a good Chat Commerce experience.

Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statement:

If I need to contact customer service I don't want to have to start the conversation again before I can get an answer and make the purchase.

Consumers agree that they don't want to have to start a new conversation to make a purchase.





Welcome back!



Thanks, the trip was amazing!



How likely are you to use our service again?



Conclusion

The findings of this study suggest that Chat Commerce is set to become an increasingly important part of the travel industry. The majority of consumers are interested in using it, and those who have used it generally rate their experience positively.

As the research shows, there is a growing demand for businesses to use mobile messaging to provide a better customer experience—especially when it comes to creating a streamlined customer journey and offering highly relevant travel information.

To meet these expectations, businesses should consider implementing Chat Commerce solutions that offer a range of features, such as automated customer service, real-time notifications, and the ability to make bookings and purchases directly through the chat interface.

With [Clickatell](#), travel companies can meet these modern expectations for mobile messaging.

To learn more about how Clickatell can help your business meet the demands of today's mobile consumer, [contact us](#) today.



ABOUT DIMENSIONAL RESEARCH

Dimensional Research® provides practical market research for technology companies. We partner with our clients to deliver actionable information that reduces risks, increases customer satisfaction, and grows the business. Our researchers are experts in the applications, devices, and infrastructure used by modern businesses and their customers.



ABOUT CLICKATELL

At Clickatell, we believe in creating a better world through technology and have democratized commerce in chat to make it accessible for everyone, everywhere. Chat works on any phone and helps consumers connect with brands to manage their daily lives and buy products with a simple text or message. Chat Commerce has proven popular with our customers around the world experiencing millions of monthly conversations and transactions, and it's growing. No need for cash, phone calls, in-person interactions, and apps. Clickatell is creating the next big thing in digital commerce with Chat Commerce. Clickatell is headquartered in Silicon Valley, CA with offices in Canada, South Africa, and Nigeria. More information about the company can be found at clickatell.com.





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