

The 2026 VIBE Report

Visitor Insights & Behaviors in Experiences

United States



Methodology

Survey Methodology

Overview

The TPDB U.S. Attractions Visitor Survey was conducted in April 2026 to understand how American consumers choose, experience, and evaluate leisure attractions across eight categories. The survey was designed, fielded, and analyzed by The Park Database (TPDB).

Sample

A total of 300 U.S.-based adults completed the survey. All respondents were ages 18–64, resided across 40 U.S. states and all four Census regions (South: 101, Northeast: 73, Midwest: 68, West: 51), and were screened to include only those who had visited at least one of eight attraction categories within the past 24 months. Respondents who selected "None of the above" for all attraction categories were excluded. The sample included 166 males and 134 females, with a mean age of 42.

Fieldwork

The survey was fielded online on April 9, 2026, via Pollfish. Median completion time was approximately 2 minutes 15 seconds. All respondents were located in the United States and verified against the panel provider's quality controls.

Screening Criteria

Respondents were screened using a multi-select question (SQ1) asking whether they had visited any of the following attraction types in the past 12 months: Disney theme parks, Universal Studios theme parks, other theme parks (Six Flags, SeaWorld, Dollywood, Herschend, etc.), waterparks, immersive/interactive experiences (immersive art, Meow Wolf, branded pop-ups), family entertainment centers (Topgolf, Dave & Buster's, arcades, trampoline parks, VR), nature/wildlife attractions (zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens), or cultural attractions (museums, performances). Only respondents who selected at least one category proceeded to the full survey. On average, respondents had visited 3.2 of the eight categories.

Weighting

Responses were weighted to adjust for demographic representation. Weights ranged from 0.57 to 3.23, with a mean weight of 1.0. All results reported in this study are weighted unless otherwise stated. Unweighted sample sizes (n) are provided alongside each segmented result to indicate the base for each subgroup.

Segmentation

Results were analyzed across five demographic dimensions: age group (18–24, 25–34, 35–44, 45–54, 55–64), household size (1-person through 5+), household income tier (Under \$30k through \$150k+); U.S. Census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, West), and U.S. state (top 10 states by respondent count).

Limitations

As with any survey research, several limitations should be noted. At a 95% confidence level, a sample of 300 yields a margin of error of ± 5.7 percentage points on any reported proportion, assuming a 50% baseline. For subgroups with smaller sample sizes - such as the 18-24 age band (n=18), where the margin of error widens to approximately ± 23 points - results should be interpreted as directional rather than precise. The survey was fielded via an online panel, which may underrepresent populations with limited internet access. Self-reported spending and visit frequency are subject to recall bias. The screening criterion of having visited at least one attraction in the past 12 months means the sample represents active attraction visitors, not the general U.S. adult population.

Survey Questions

S1. Have you visited any of these attractions during the past 12 months?

- Disney theme parks
- Universal Studios theme parks
- Other theme parks (Six Flags, SeaWorld, Dollywood, Herschend, etc.)
- Waterparks
- Immersive/interactive experiences (immersive art, Meow Wolf, branded pop-ups, Netflix-style experiences)
- FECs (Topgolf, Dave & Buster's, arcades, trampoline, VR)
- Nature/Wildlife attractions (zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens)
- Cultural attractions (museums, performances)
- None of the above

S2. How many people live in your household (including you)?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5+

S3. What is your annual household income (before taxes)?

- Under \$25k
- \$25-49k
- \$50-74k
- \$75-99k
- \$100-149k
- \$150-199k
- \$200-249k
- \$250k+
- Prefer not to say

S4. In the past 12 months, how many times have you visited each type?

- Disney theme parks
- Universal Studios theme parks
- Other theme parks (Six Flags, SeaWorld, Dollywood, Herschend, etc.)
- Waterparks
- Immersive/interactive experiences (immersive art, Meow Wolf, branded pop-ups, Netflix-style experiences)
- FECs (Topgolf, Dave & Buster's, arcades, trampoline, VR)
- Nature/Wildlife attractions (zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens)
- Cultural attractions (museums, performances)
- None of the above

S5. For attractions you have visited, how much did you spend in total?

- Disney theme parks
- Universal Studios theme parks
- Other theme parks (Six Flags, SeaWorld, Dollywood, Herschend, etc.)
- Waterparks
- Immersive/interactive experiences (immersive art, Meow Wolf, branded pop-ups, Netflix-style experiences)
- FECs (Topgolf, Dave & Buster's, arcades, trampoline, VR)
- Nature/Wildlife attractions (zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens)
- Cultural attractions (museums, performances)
- None of the above

S6. For attractions you are familiar with (not necessarily visited), what is its value for money?

- Disney theme parks
- Universal Studios theme parks
- Other theme parks (Six Flags, SeaWorld, Dollywood, Herschend, etc.)
- Waterparks
- Immersive/interactive experiences (immersive art, Meow Wolf, branded pop-ups, Netflix-style experiences)
- FECs (Topgolf, Dave & Buster's, arcades, trampoline, VR)
- Nature/Wildlife attractions (zoos, aquariums, botanic gardens)
- Cultural attractions (museums, performances)

S7. In general, what are your favorite experiences in the context of an attraction? (select up to 3)

- Thrill rides / dark rides / coasters
- Family-friendly / kids-focused activities
- Water rides / slides / pools
- Games / social play / arcade (incl. bowling, golf, trampoline, etc.)
- Food and beverage experiences
- Shopping / merchandise / retail experiences
- Puzzles / escape room / interactive exhibits
- Multisensory / immersive / visually spectacular exhibits
- Theming / landscaping / environment
- Educational / art / culture
- Nature / wildlife
- Other

S8. In general, which of the following do you typically do before visiting an attraction? Select all that apply.

- Purchase tickets online in advance
- Check official website/app
- Read online reviews (TripAdvisor, Google)
- Watch videos (e.g. YouTube, TikTok, Instagram)
- Plan F&B options
- Reserve rides / VIP / skip the line options
- Coordinate with family/friends for schedules
- Other

S9. In general, when deciding whether to visit an attraction, which of the following factors typically influence your planning or choice?

- Ticket cost / pricing
- Travel time / distance
- Wait times / crowds
- Attraction type / theme
- Who and how many people I'm traveling with
- Time of year / season / vacation
- F&B options
- Reviews / recommendations
- Past experience / loyalty
- Availability of passes / VIP / priority access
- Other

S10. Which of the following complaints, if encountered, would keep you from visiting an attraction again?

- Long wait times / overcrowding
- High costs relative to value
- Unhelpful staff / poor service
- Poor cleanliness / hygiene
- Limited attraction availability / closures
- Safety concerns
- Difficulty planning / navigating the attraction
- Other

Segmented Responses – Highlights

Attraction Visitation by Age Group

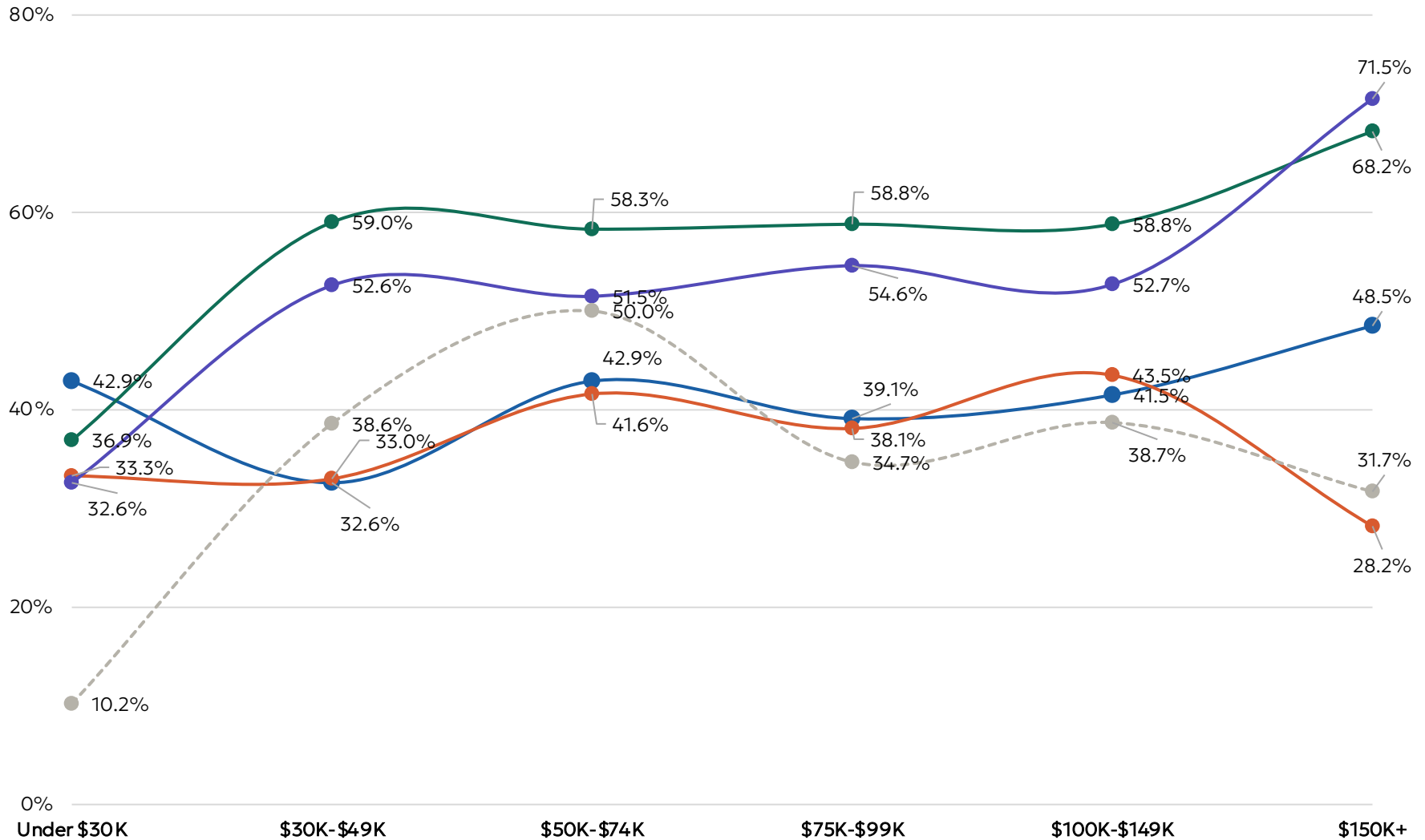
% who visited in the past 12 months (weighted)

	Disney	Universal	Other Theme Parks	Waterparks	Immersive	FECs	Nature/Wildlife	Cultural
18-24	58%	49%	47%	54%	10%	26%	40%	37%
25-34	47%	47%	29%	55%	19%	36%	53%	51%
35-44	45%	37%	47%	53%	24%	44%	62%	54%
45-54	38%	28%	32%	33%	12%	32%	64%	52%
55-64	22%	25%	11%	35%	15%	27%	54%	61%

Visitation Rates by Household Income

% who visited in the past 12 months – note Disney's flat line vs. cultural/nature's upward slope

■ Disney ■ Universal ■ Nature/Wildlife ■ Cultural ■ FECs

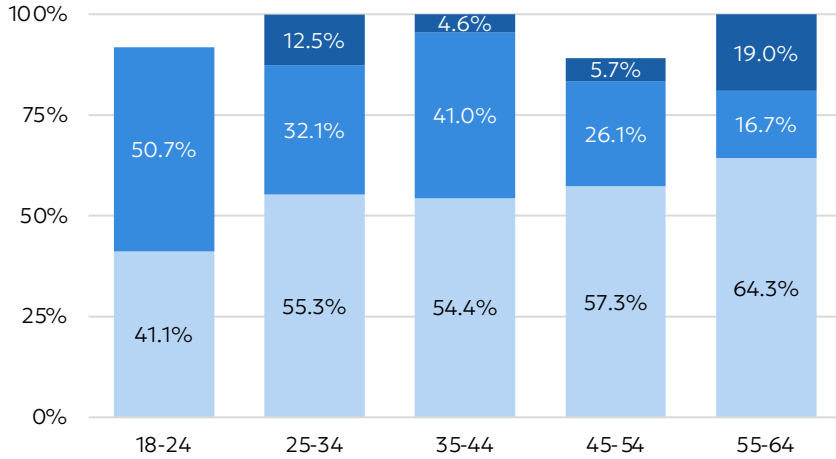


Visit Frequency by Age Group

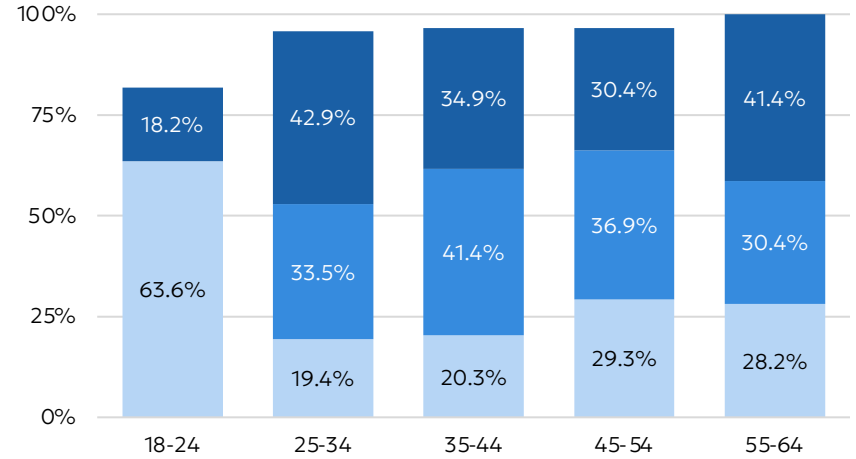
Distribution among visitors – 4 key attraction types

Once 2x 3+

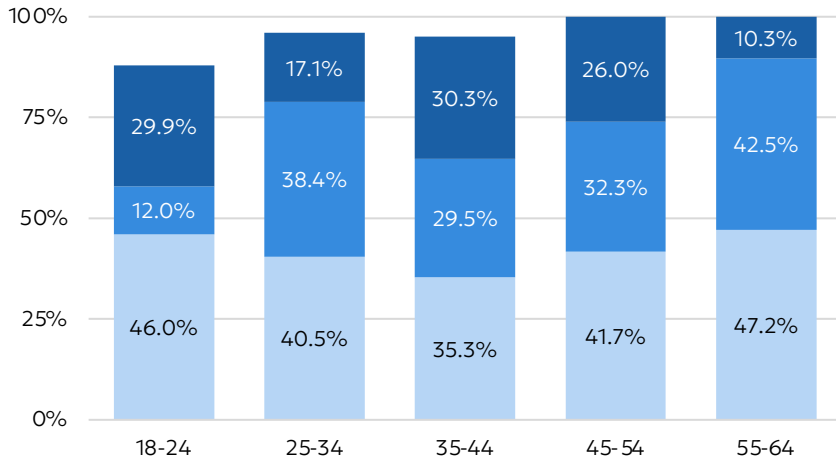
Disney



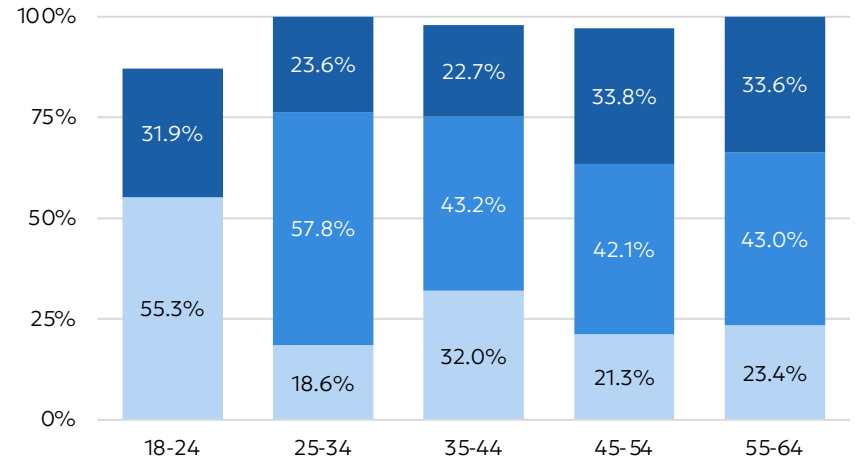
FECs



Nature/Wildlife



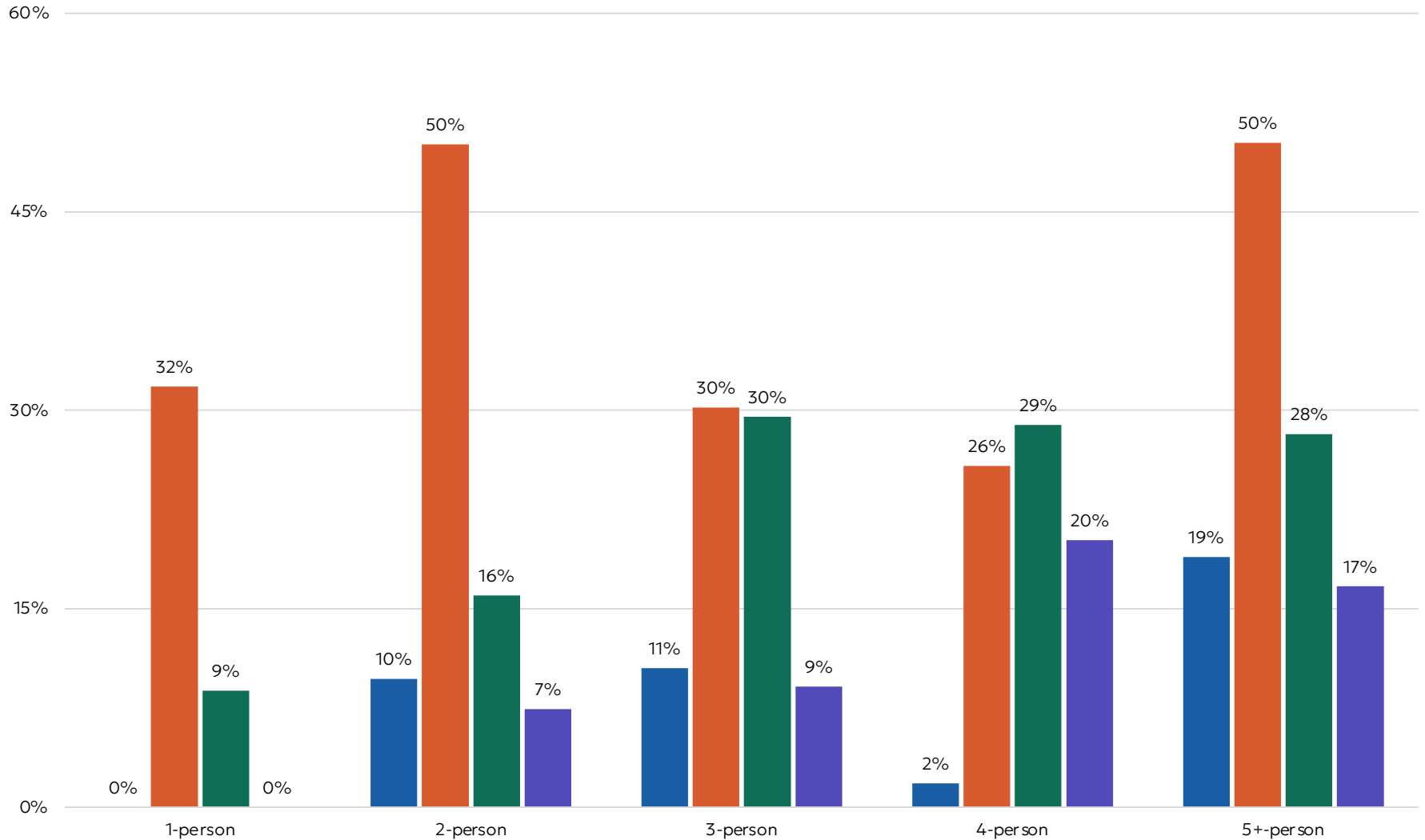
Cultural



Repeat Visitors (3+) by Household Size

% of visitors who went 3 or more times in the past 12 months

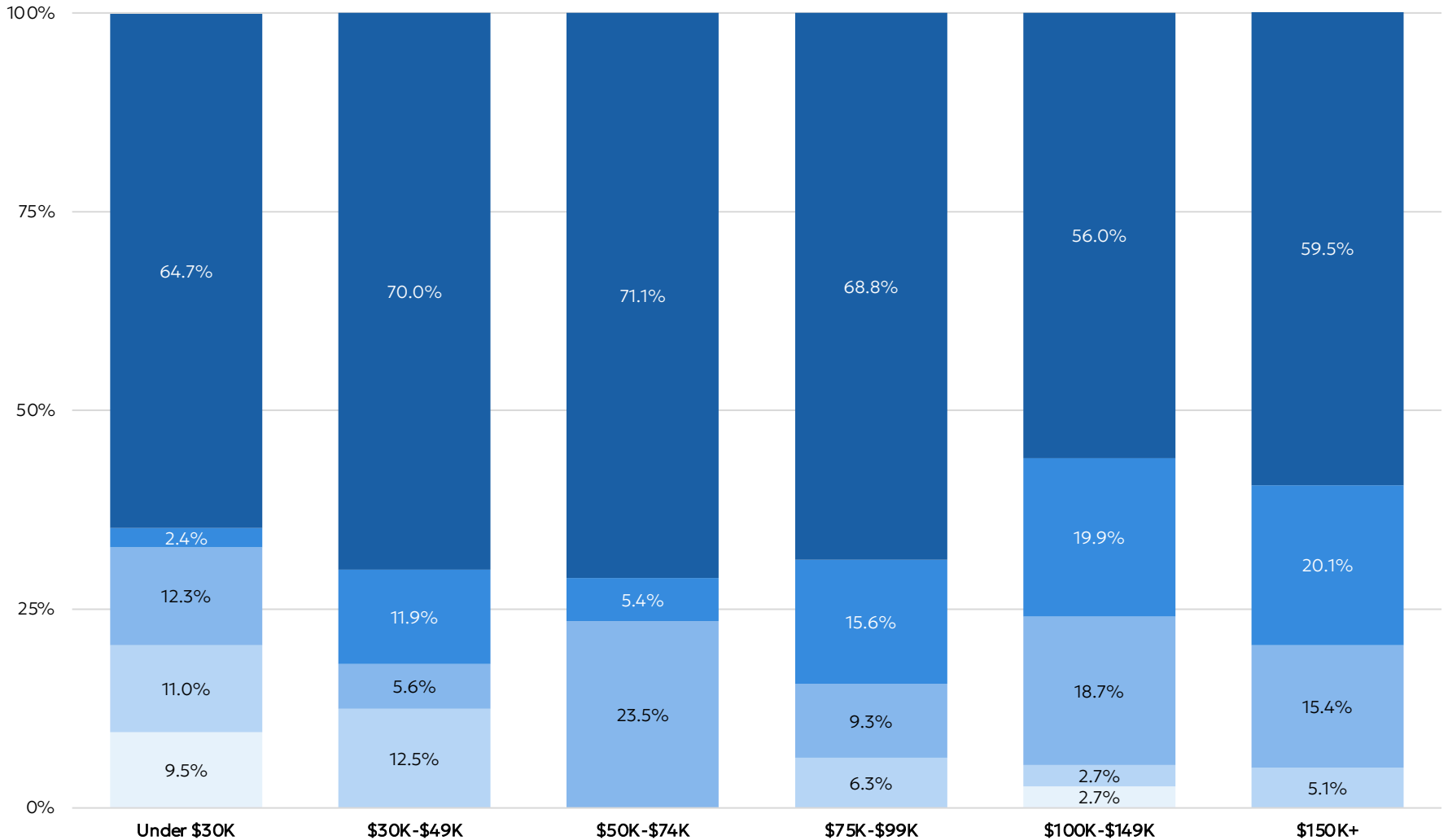
■ Disney ■ FECs ■ Nature/Wildlife ■ Waterparks



Disney Spending Distribution by Income Tier

How much visitors spent in total – note under-\$30k households still spend \$101+ at a 65% rate

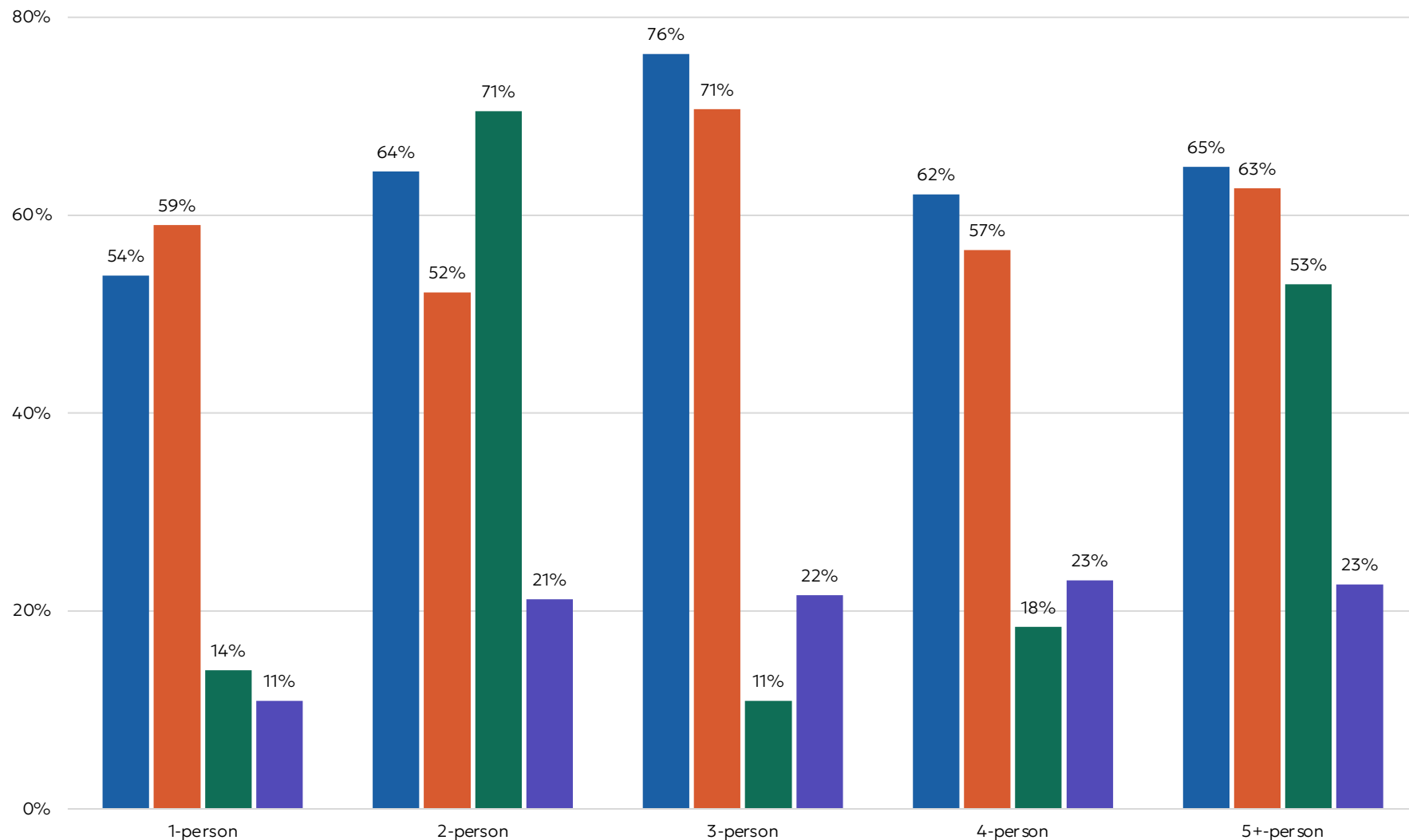
\$0-25 \$26-50 \$51-80 \$81-100 \$100+



High Spenders (\$101+) by Household Size

% of visitors who spent \$101 or more – 3-person households spend the most at Disney & Universal

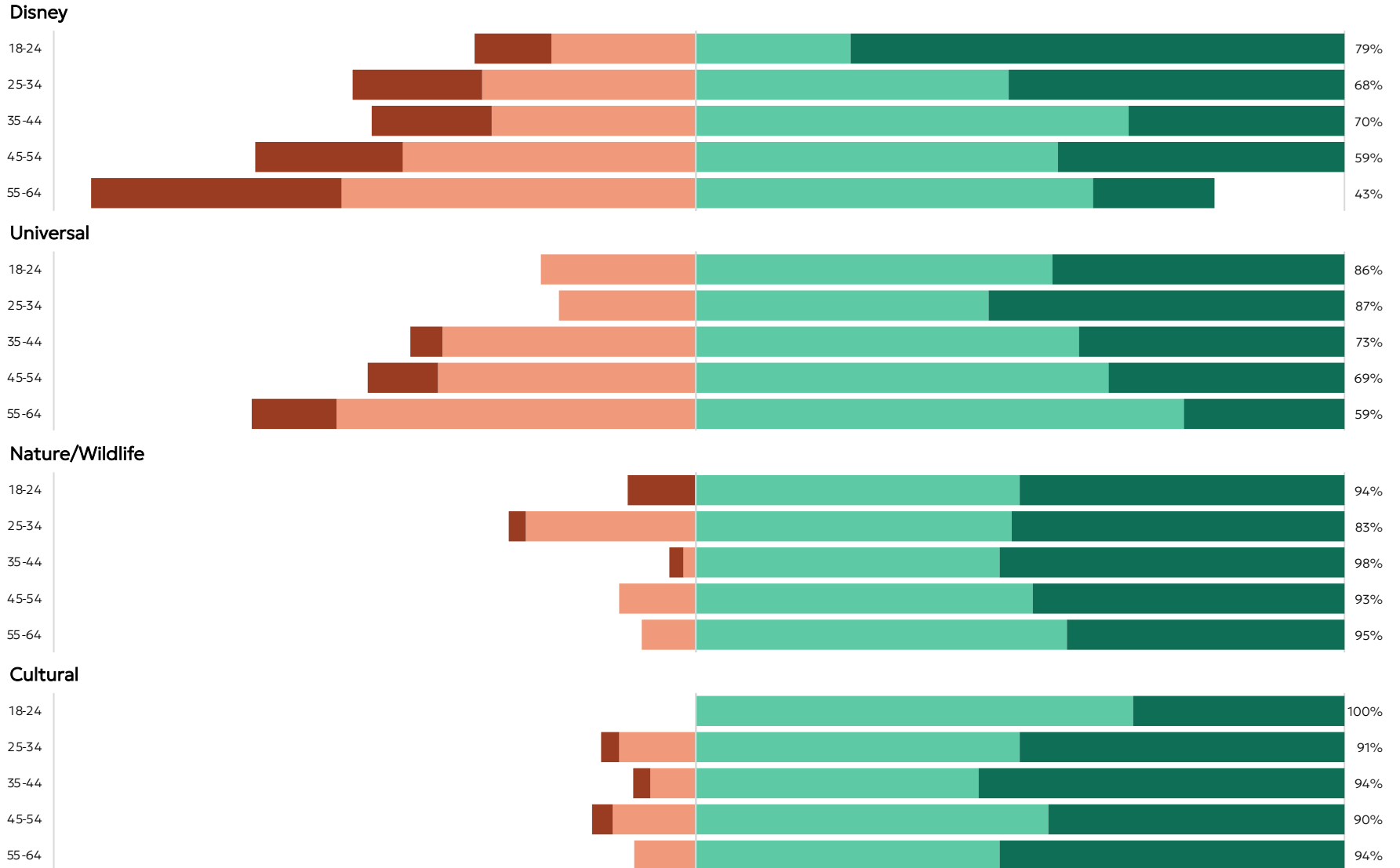
■ Disney ■ Universal ■ FECs ■ Nature/Wildlife



Value for Money by Age – Key Attractions

Excellent/good (right) vs. poor/terrible (left) – Disney deteriorate sharply with age

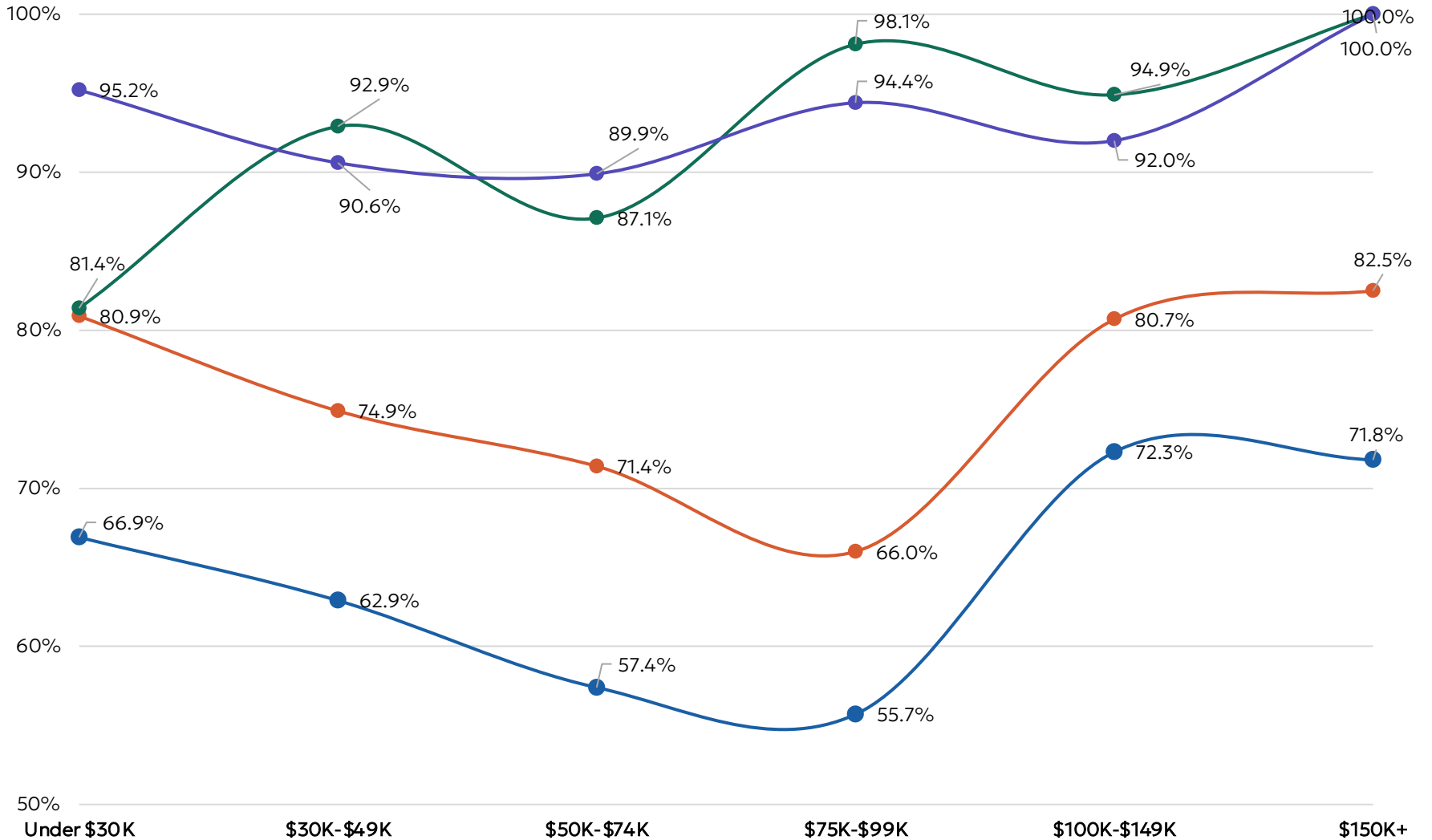
■ Terrible
 ■ Poor
 ■ Good
 ■ Excellent



Value Perception by Income Tier

% rating excellent or good – Disney dips for middle incomes while nature/cultural stay flat

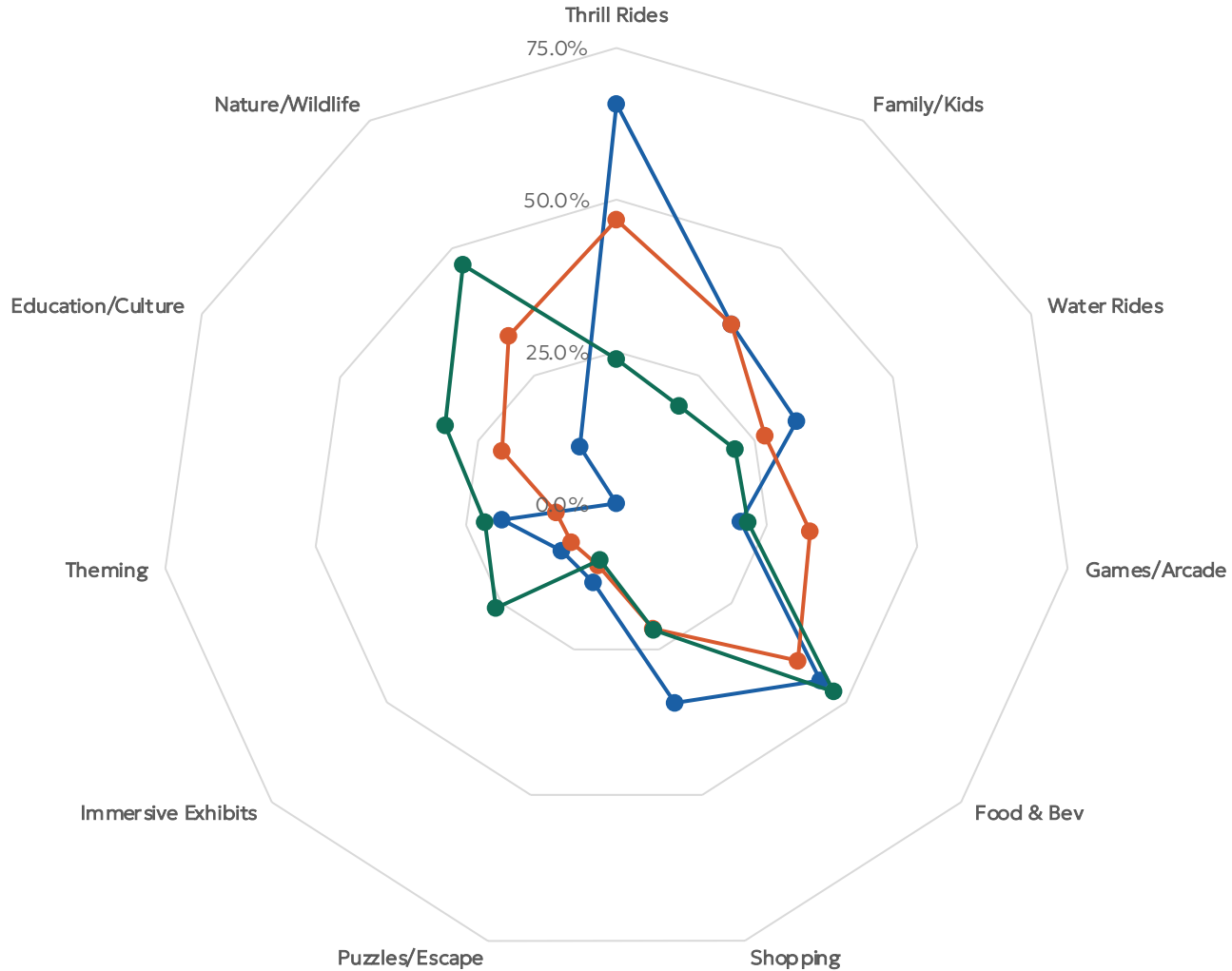
■ Disney ■ Universal ■ Nature/Wildlife ■ Cultural



Experience Preferences by Age

Three generational profiles – the shape shift from thrills to food & nature is dramatic

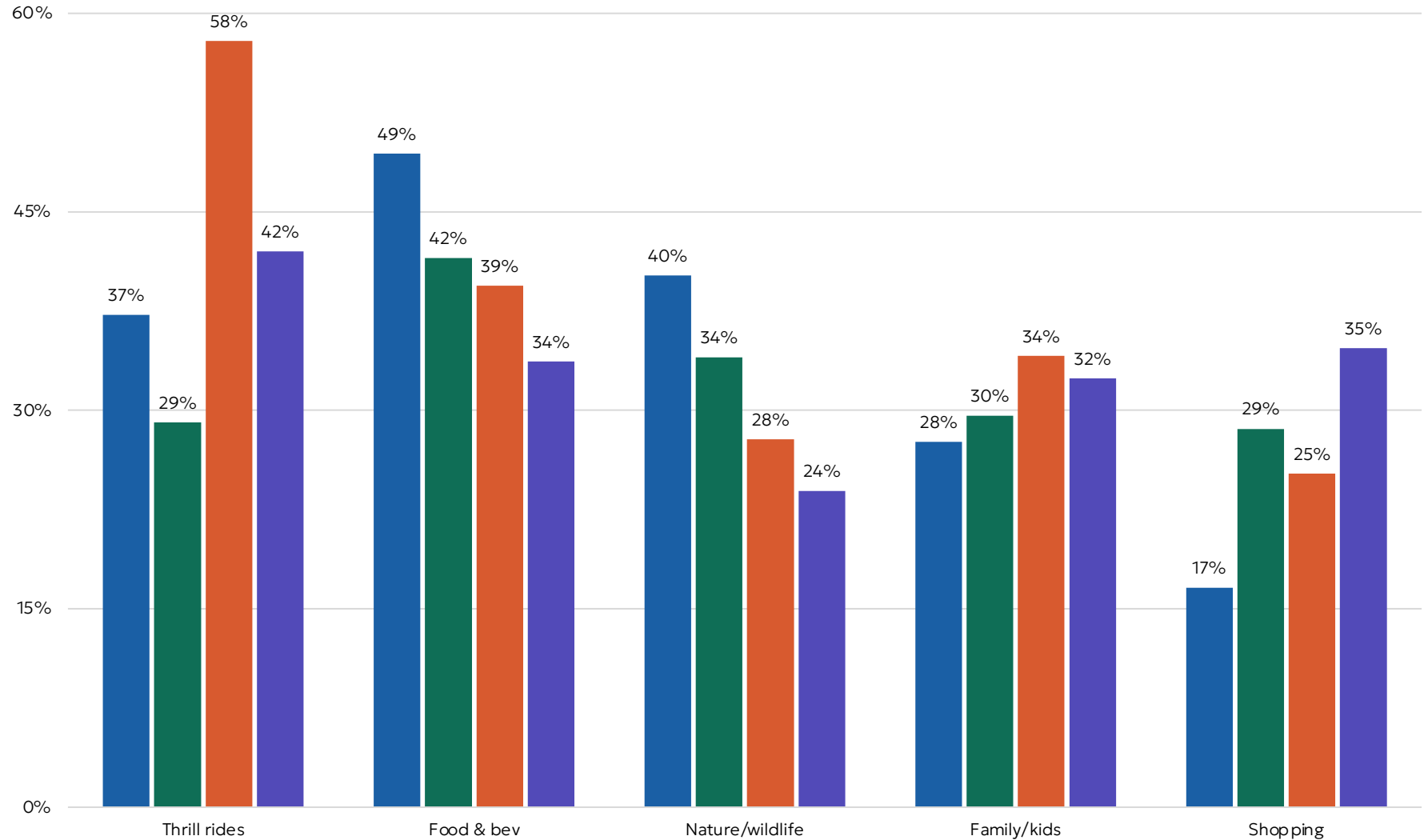
■ 18-24 ■ 35-44 ■ 55-64



Top Experience Preferences by Region

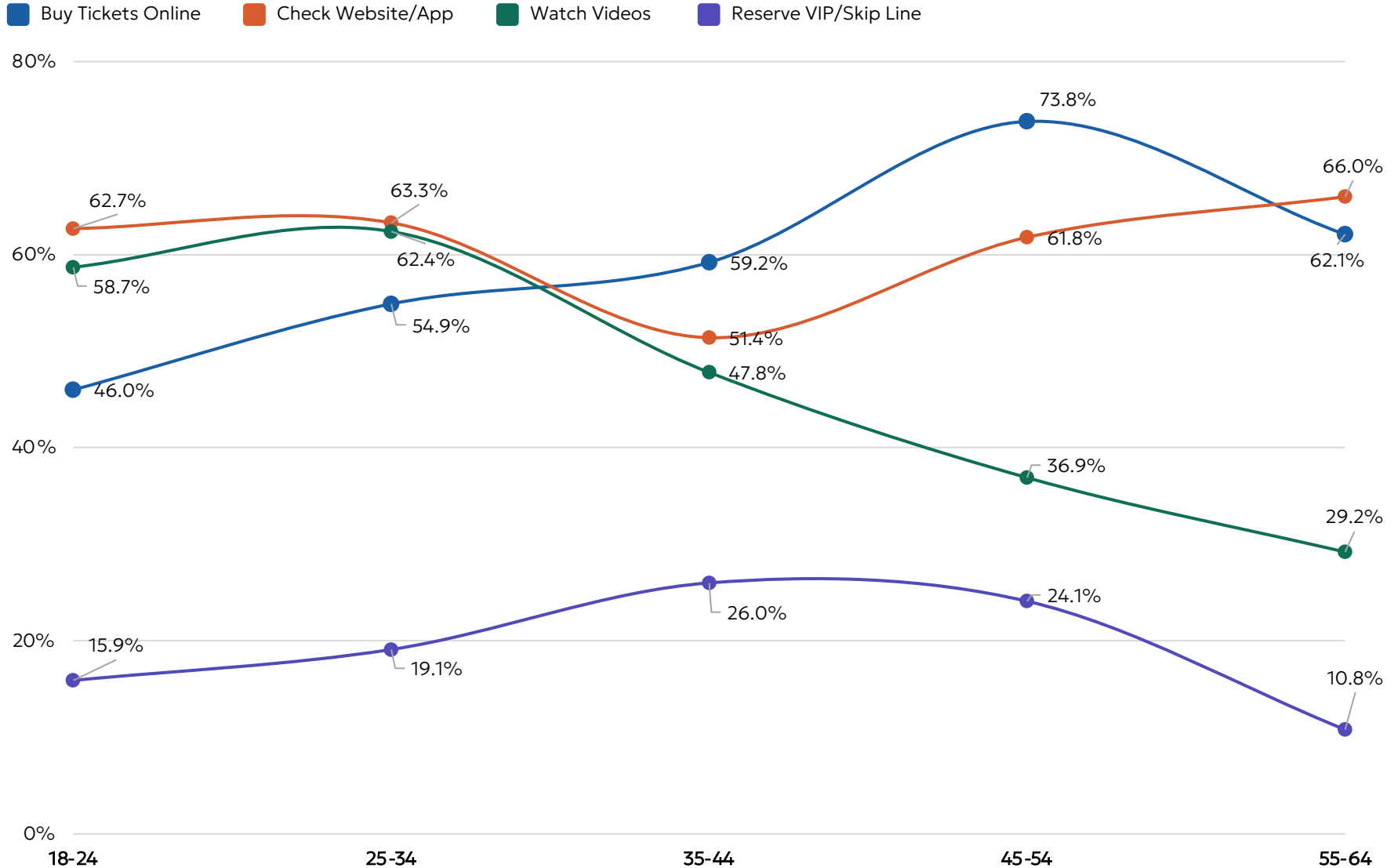
The South is the thrill capital; the Northeast leads on food & beverage

■ Northeast ■ Midwest ■ South ■ West



Pre-visit Behaviors by Age

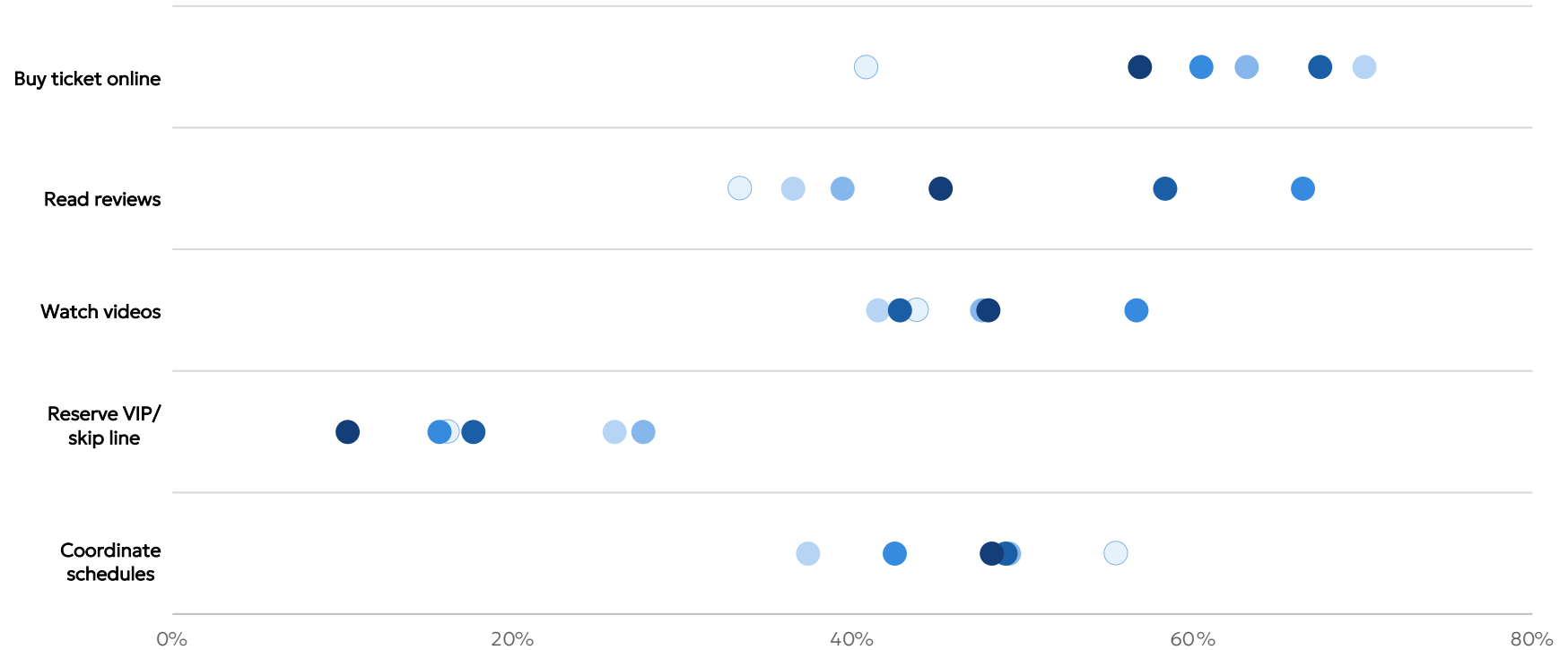
Video research drops with age while advance ticket buying peaks mid-career



Pre-visit Behaviors by Income

Each dot = one income tier

Under \$30K \$30-49K \$50-74K \$75-99K \$100-149K \$150K+



Decision Factors by Income Tier

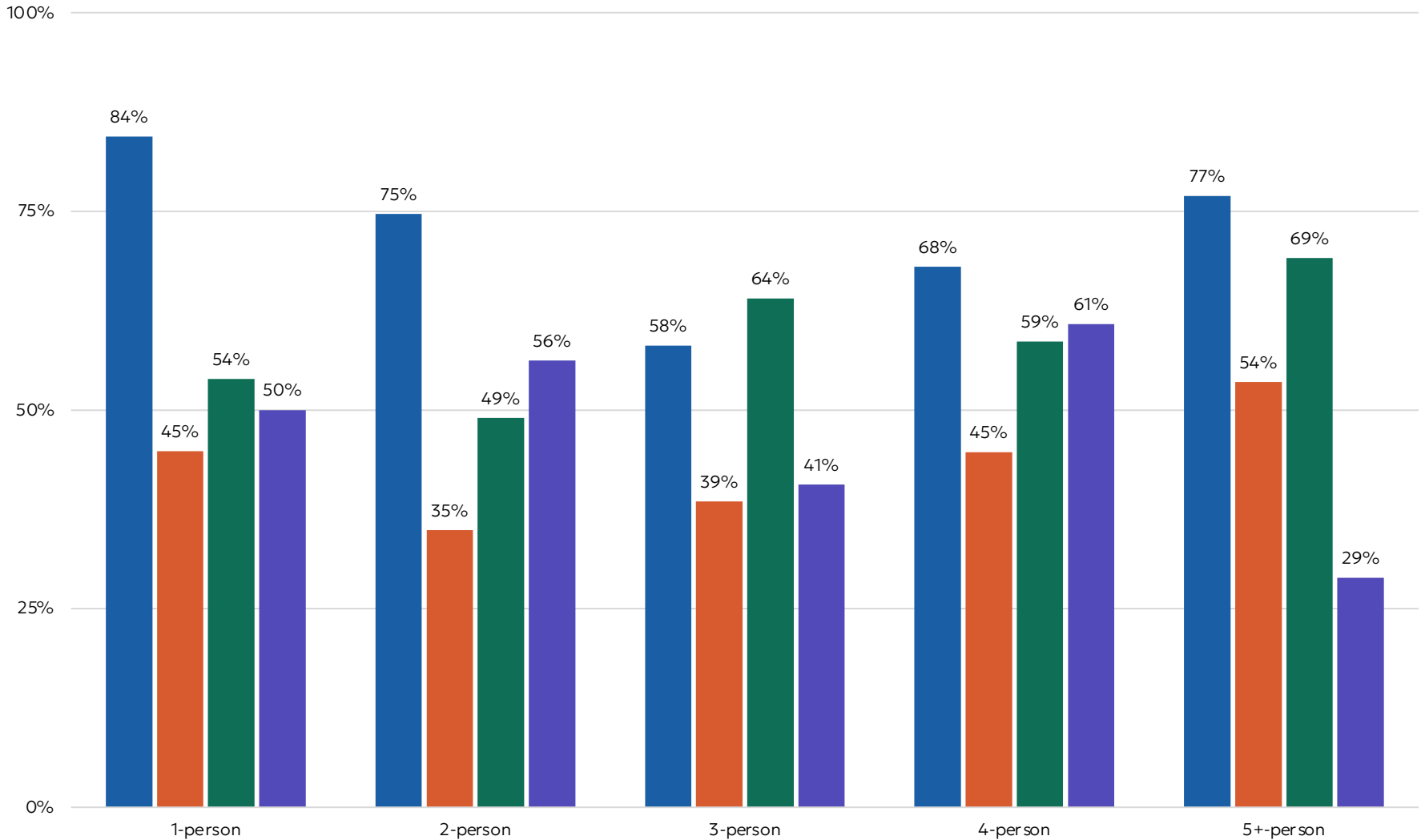
% selecting each factor – ticket cost is universal; season and reviews matter more for higher incomes

	Ticket Cost	Travel Distance	Wait Times	Type/ Theme	Travel Party	Season	F&B Options	Reviews	Loyalty	VIP/Passes
Under \$30K	67%	61%	42%	55%	32%	44%	10%	16%	21%	12%
\$30K-\$49K	70%	55%	62%	60%	44%	45%	11%	34%	34%	13%
\$50K-\$74K	74%	69%	53%	55%	39%	45%	9%	25%	33%	12%
\$75K-\$99K	67%	69%	44%	57%	41%	62%	14%	45%	38%	8%
\$100K-\$149K	75%	66%	38%	58%	49%	64%	7%	28%	26%	10%
\$150K+	65%	56%	59%	64%	36%	50%	8%	34%	14%	17%

Key Decision Factors by Household Size

Solo households obsess over cost; large households weight logistics and type

Ticket Cost Travel Party Type/Theme Wait Times



Dealbreaker Complaints by Age Group

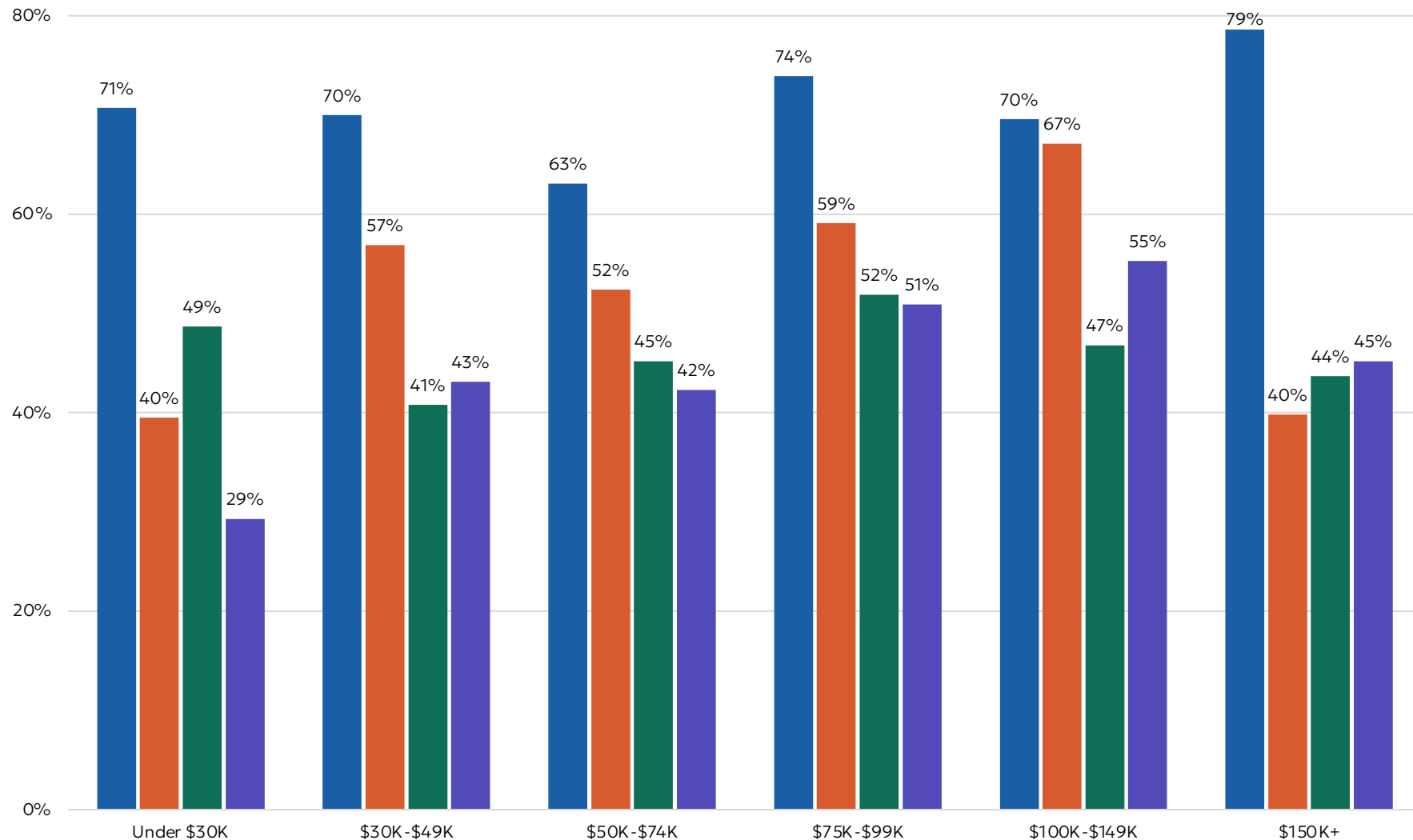
% citing each as a reason not to return – long waits nearly triples from youngest to oldest

	Long Waits	High Costs	Poor Service	Cleanliness	Closures	Safety	Navigation
18-24	28%	76%	12%	28%	45%	38%	11%
25-34	44%	66%	35%	54%	47%	47%	23%
35-44	59%	64%	27%	45%	38%	41%	13%
45-54	57%	77%	31%	48%	42%	48%	26%
55-64	75%	75%	43%	53%	55%	45%	26%

Top Dealbreakers by Income Tier

“High costs” is cited at 63-79% across all income tiers – not just a low-income concern

■ High Costs ■ Long Waits ■ Cleanliness ■ Safety



Disney vs. Universal Studios

Comparison of language used in open-ended responses

Disney

“I love Disneyland even though it is expensive since it is an unforgettable experience”

Concession: love despite cost

“Disneyland is my favorite but so expensive now”

Favorite qualified by price

“I love Disney and Universal theme parks but they are too pricey”

Emotional attachment vs. price barrier

“It’s like visually seeing my childhood comes to life in real time”

Emotional, holistic, no ride named

“Being there with my grandkids and watching their joy”

Family memory, not a product review

Universal

“I like Universal Studios but the price has really jumped”

Transactional: price vs. product

“The food is overpriced. But I always have fun when I go”

Itemized complaint, still functional

“Hagrid’s motorbike ride at Universal!”

Specific ride named

“The Simpsons ride at Universal Studios was by far the best”

Product review: which ride, how good

“I got to see Mario land in the new universal park”

Specific attraction, novelty framing

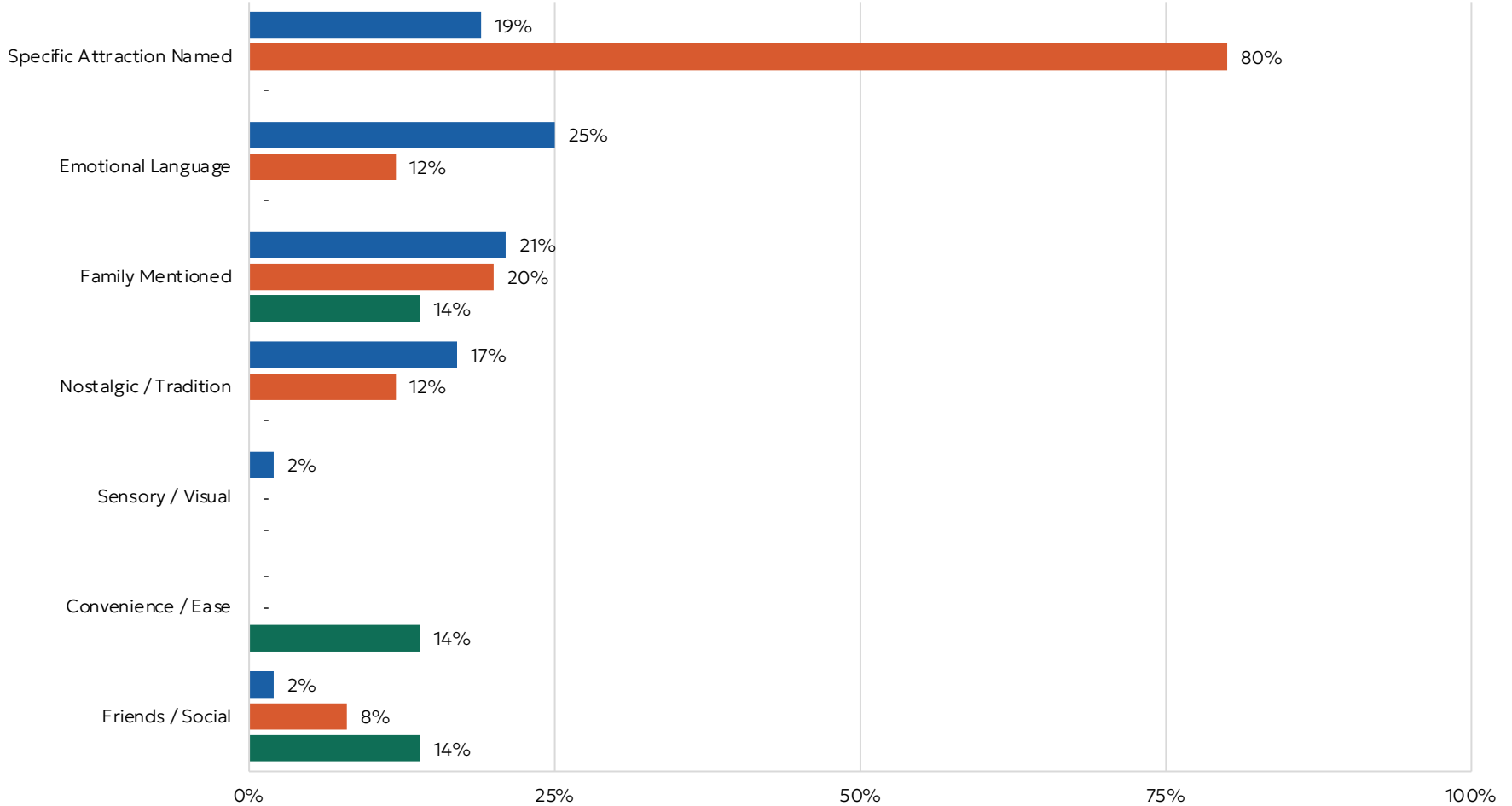
Emotional Fingerprint

% of open-ended "favorite experience" responses containing each sentiment theme

■ Disney (n=48)

■ Universal (n=25)

■ FECs (n=7)



Open-ended Responses w/ each Sentiment Theme

Broken out by mentioned attraction type

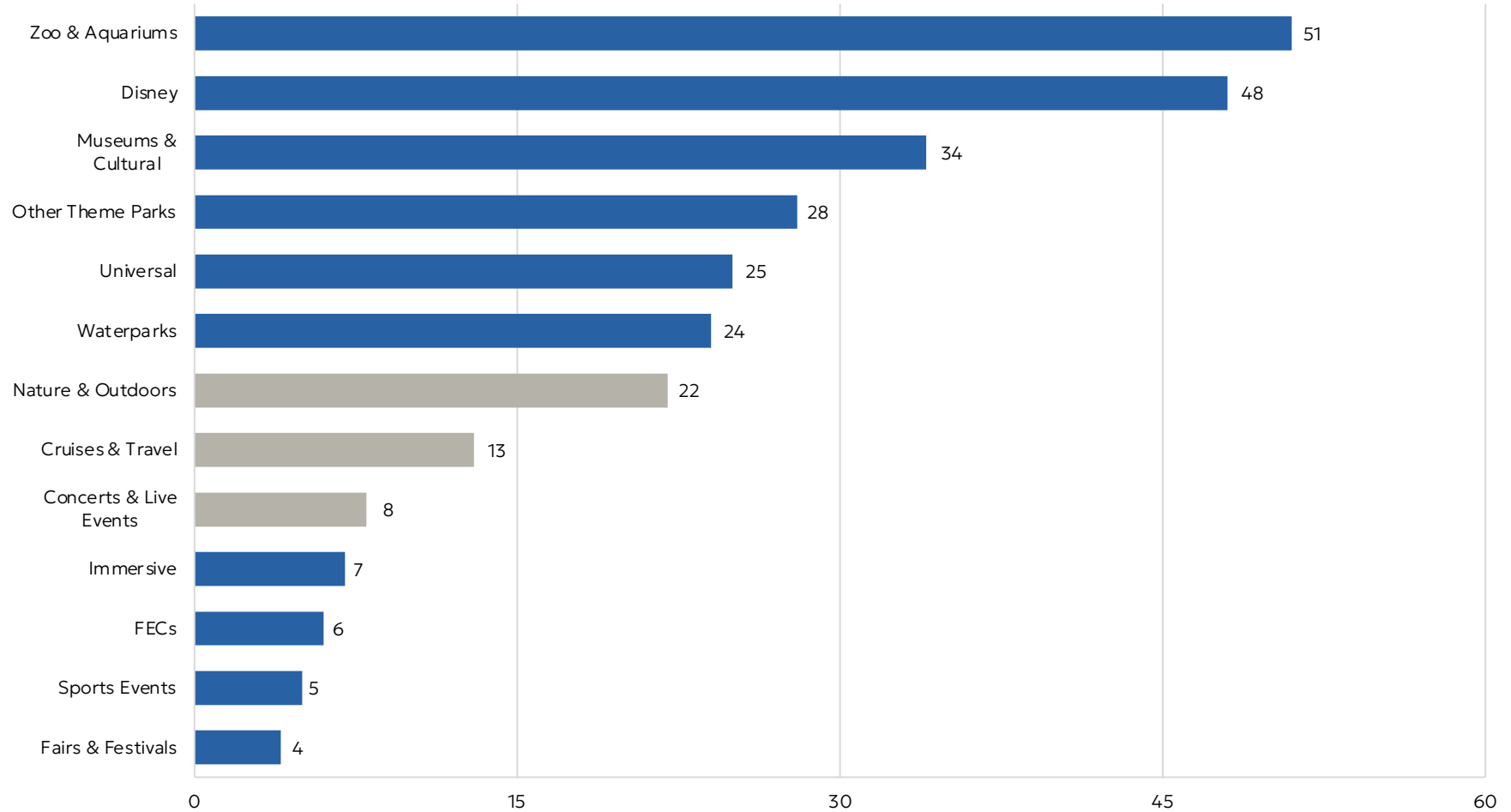
	Disney	Universal	Other Parks	Water-parks	Immersive	FECs	Zoos	Museums	Nature	Concepts	Sports	Cruises
Specific Attraction Named	19%	80%	21%	12%	—	—	5%	6%	—	—	20%	—
Emotional Language	25%	12%	7%	21%	33%	—	20%	21%	33%	22%	20%	23%
Nostalgic / Tradition	17%	12%	4%	—	—	—	5%	3%	—	11%	—	—
Family Mentioned	21%	20%	14%	29%	17%	14%	25%	—	10%	—	40%	8%
Friends / Social	2%	8%	4%	4%	17%	14%	7%	—	19%	11%	—	8%
Cost / Value Mentioned	6%	12%	14%	4%	—	—	5%	—	5%	—	—	—
Learning / Educational	2%	—	—	—	—	—	7%	18%	—	—	—	8%
Peace / Escape	—	—	—	—	—	—	2%	—	29%	—	—	—
Convenience / Ease	—	—	7%	—	17%	14%	2%	—	10%	—	—	—
Repeat / Habitual	4%	8%	4%	—	—	—	9%	3%	—	11%	—	—
Unique / Novel	10%	12%	—	—	17%	—	11%	9%	5%	—	—	31%
All-day Time Value	6%	—	7%	12%	—	—	9%	—	5%	—	—	—
Negative Qualifier	6%	12%	—	—	—	—	2%	—	—	—	—	—
Sensory / Visual	2%	—	—	—	67%	—	5%	9%	19%	—	—	8%
n (responses)	48	25	28	24	6	7	44	34	21	9	5	13

Favorite Experiences Named by Visitors

Number of times each category was cited in open-ended responses (n=300)

■ Survey Category

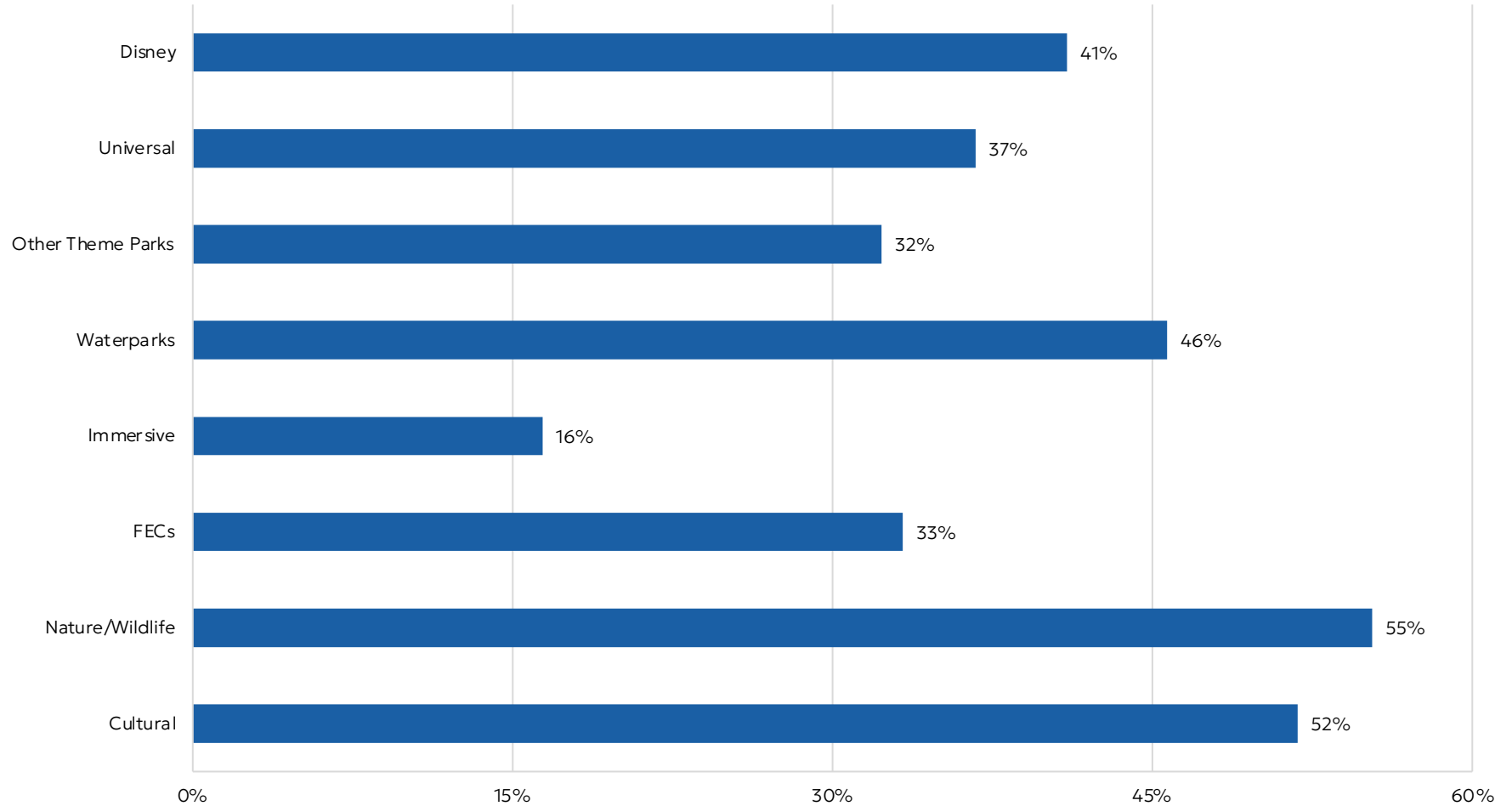
■ Outside Survey Categories



Aggregate Responses

Attraction Visitation Rates

All respondents – % visited past 12 months

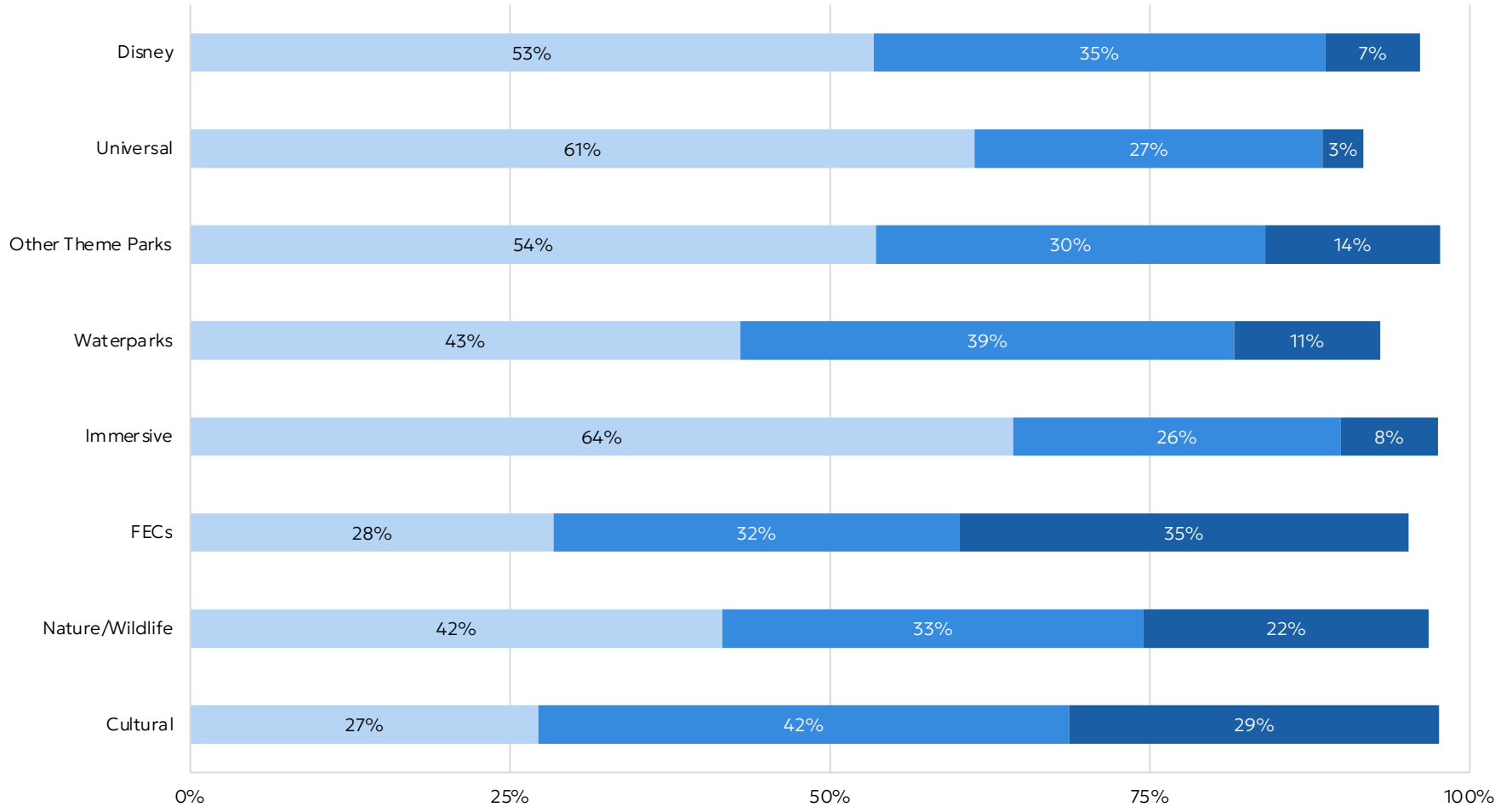


Source: The Park Database

Visit Frequency

All respondents – distribution among visitors

Once 2x 3+

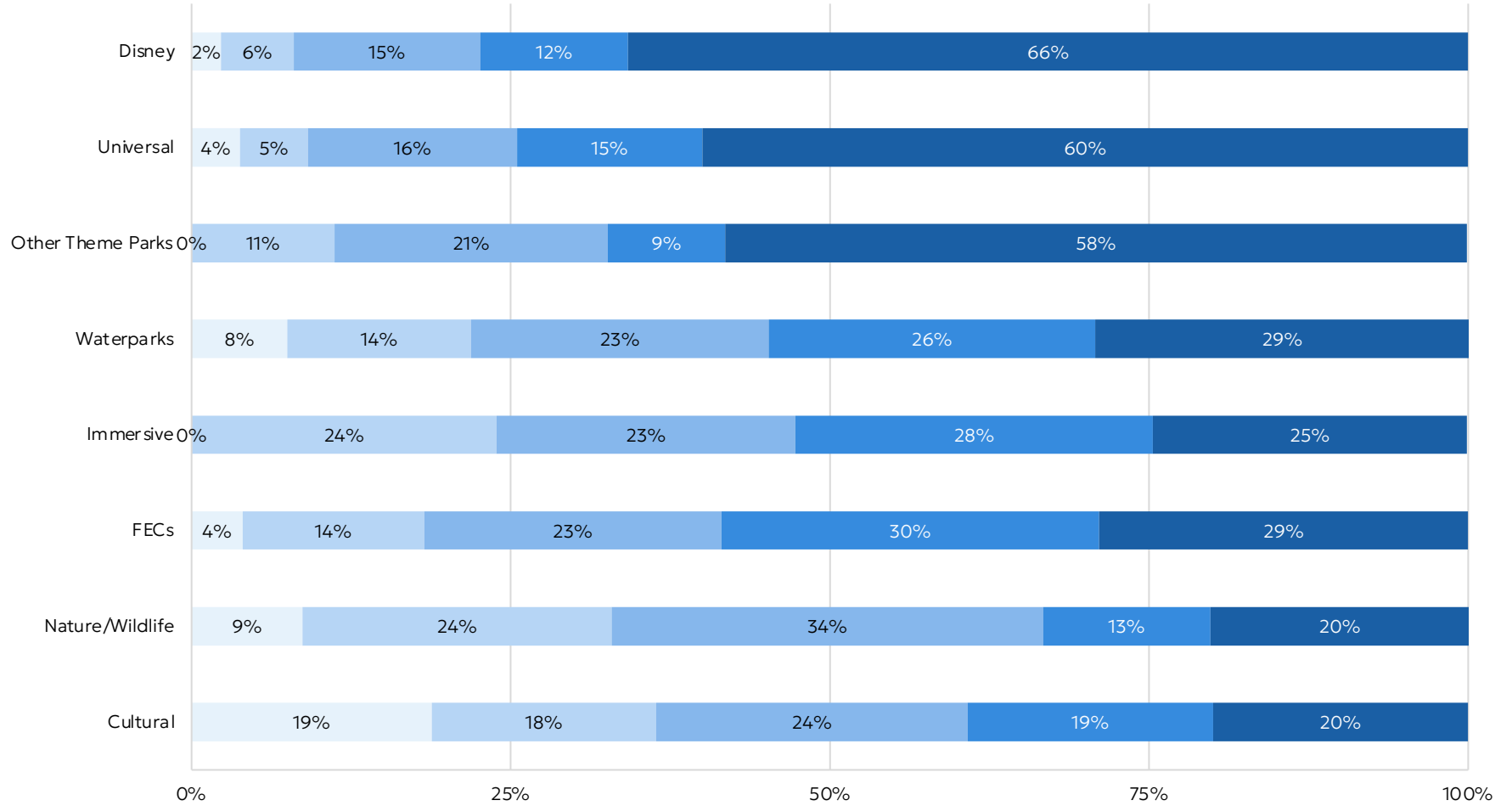


Source: The Park Database

Total Spending

All respondents – spending distribution

\$0-25 \$26-50 \$51-80 \$81-100 \$101+

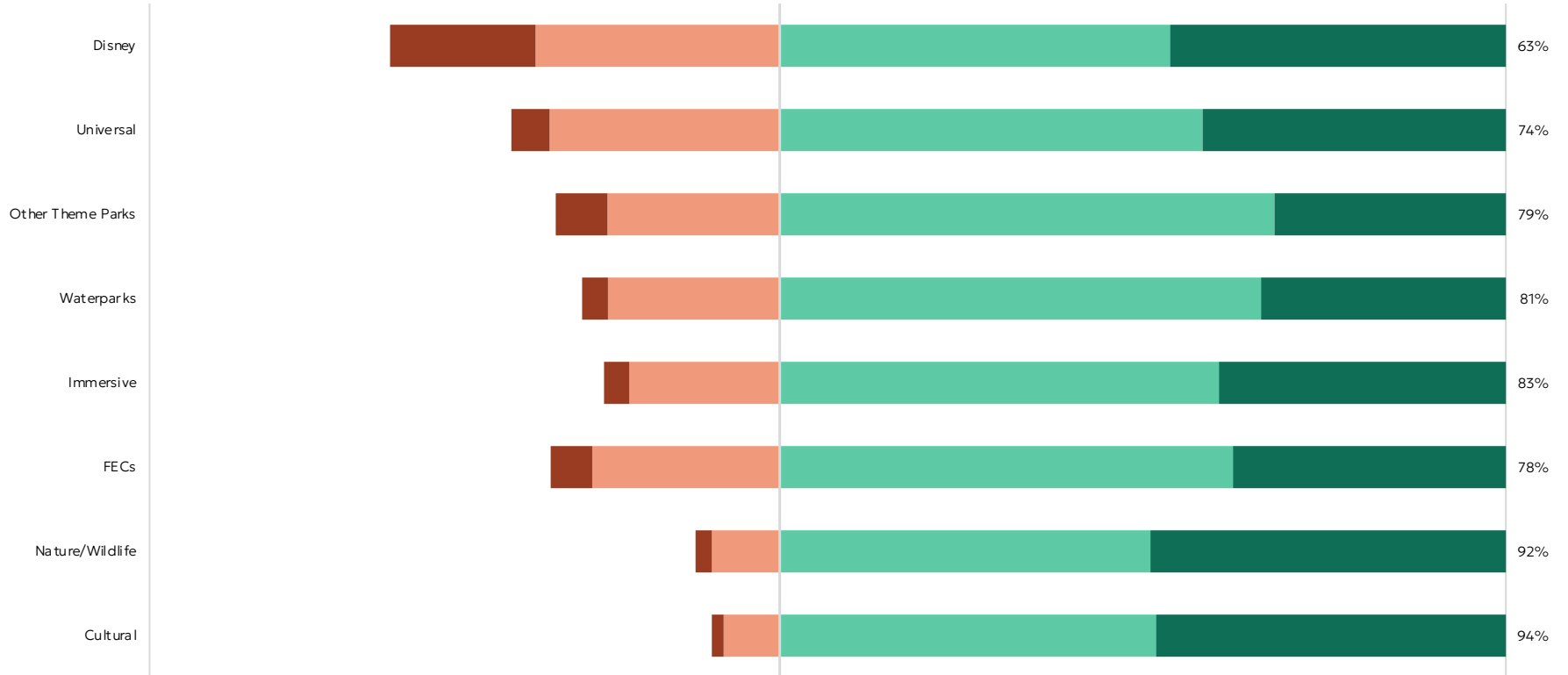


Source: The Park Database

Value for Money

All respondents — sentiment breakdown

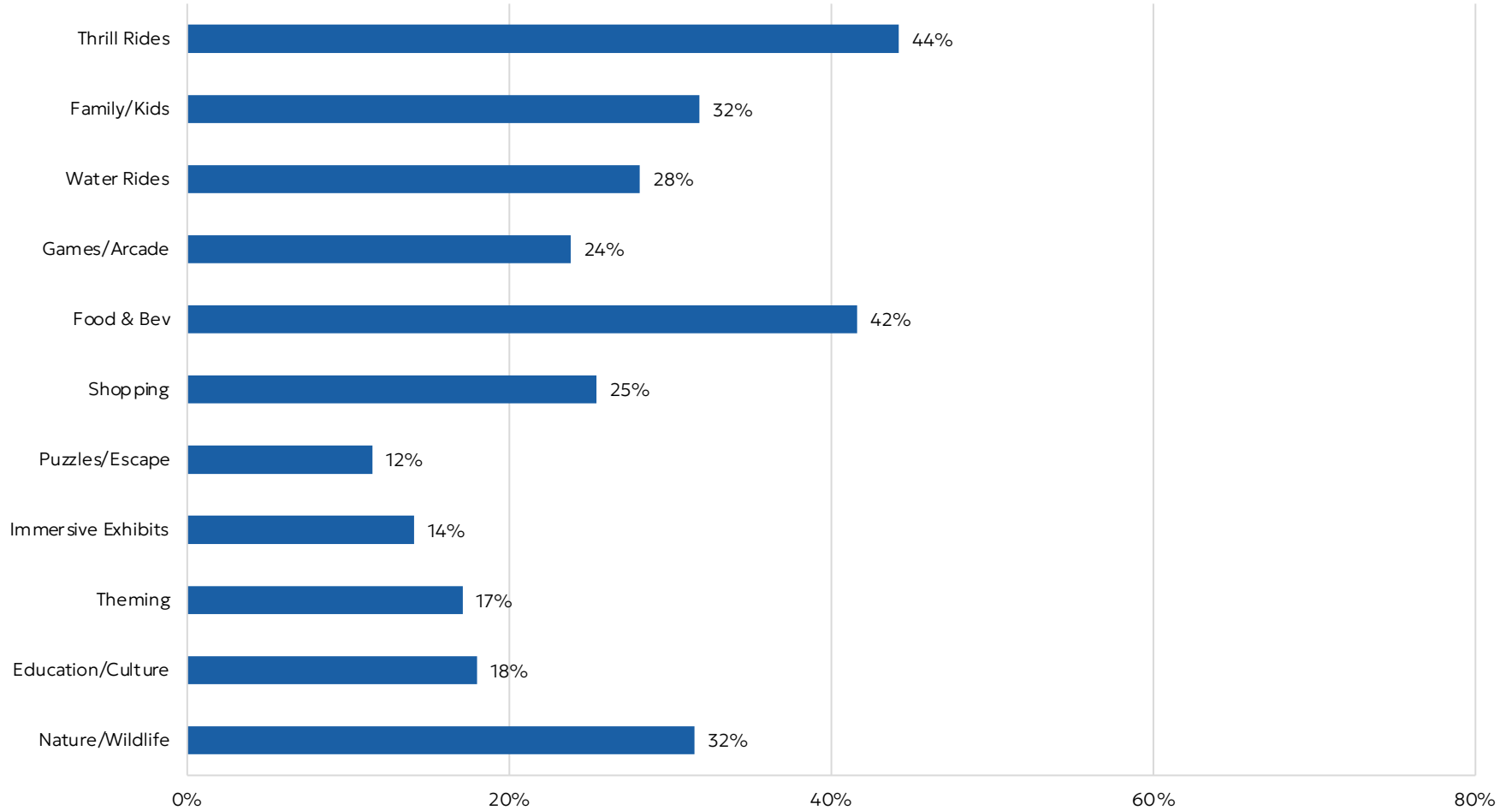
Terrible Poor Good Excellent



Source: The Park Database

Favorite Experience Types

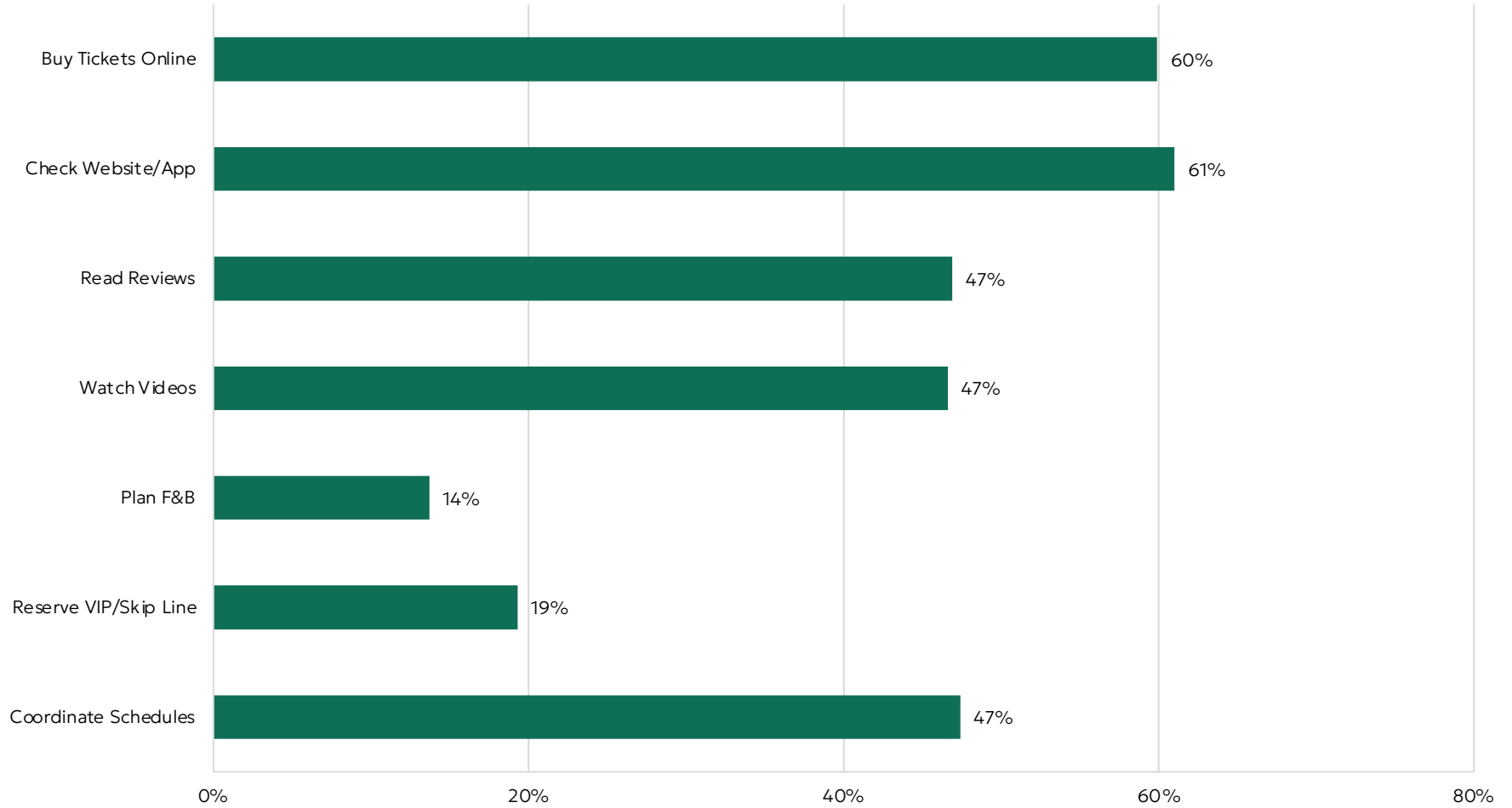
All respondents — % selecting each



Source: The Park Database

Pre-visit Behaviors

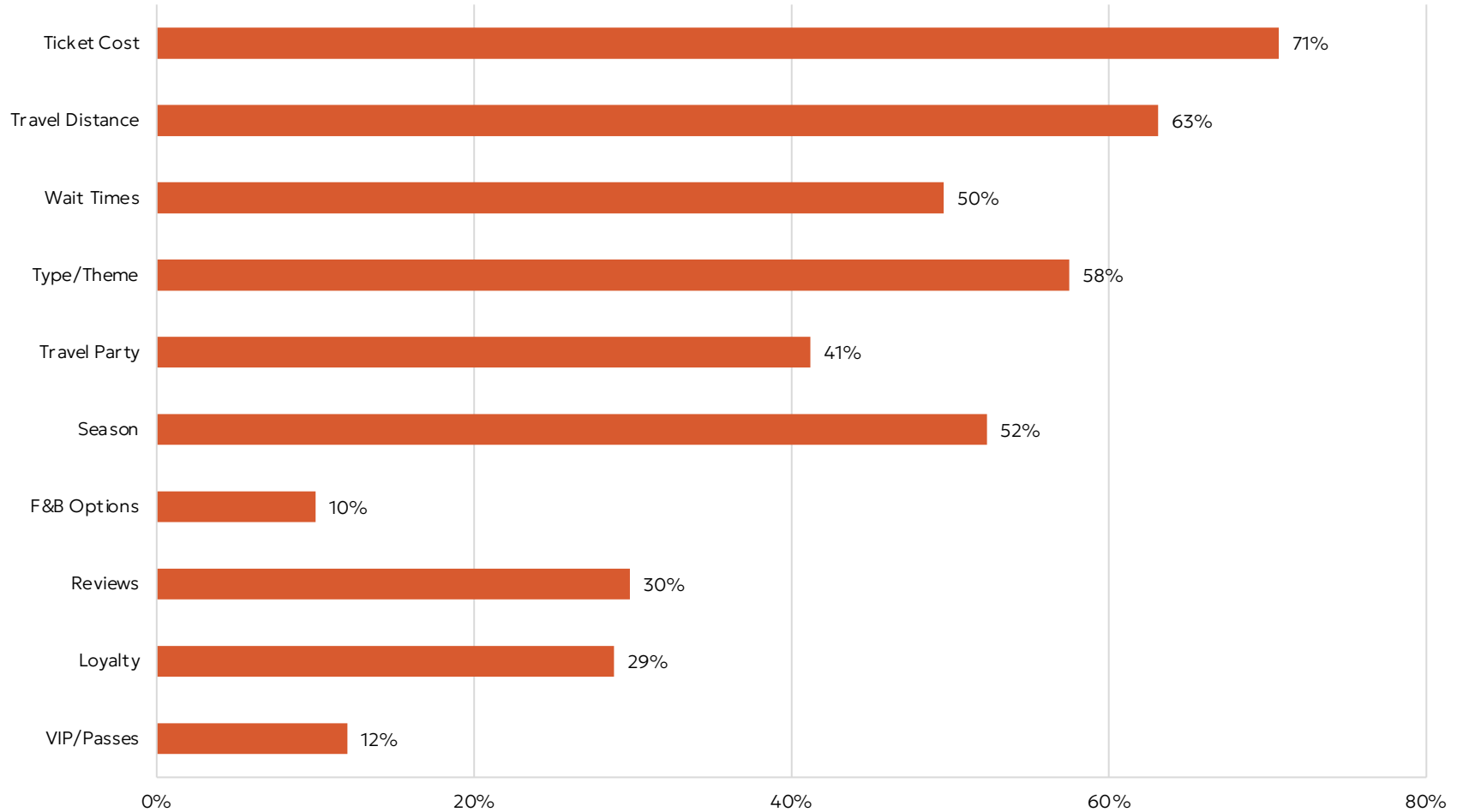
All respondents — % selecting each



Source: The Park Database

Decision Factors

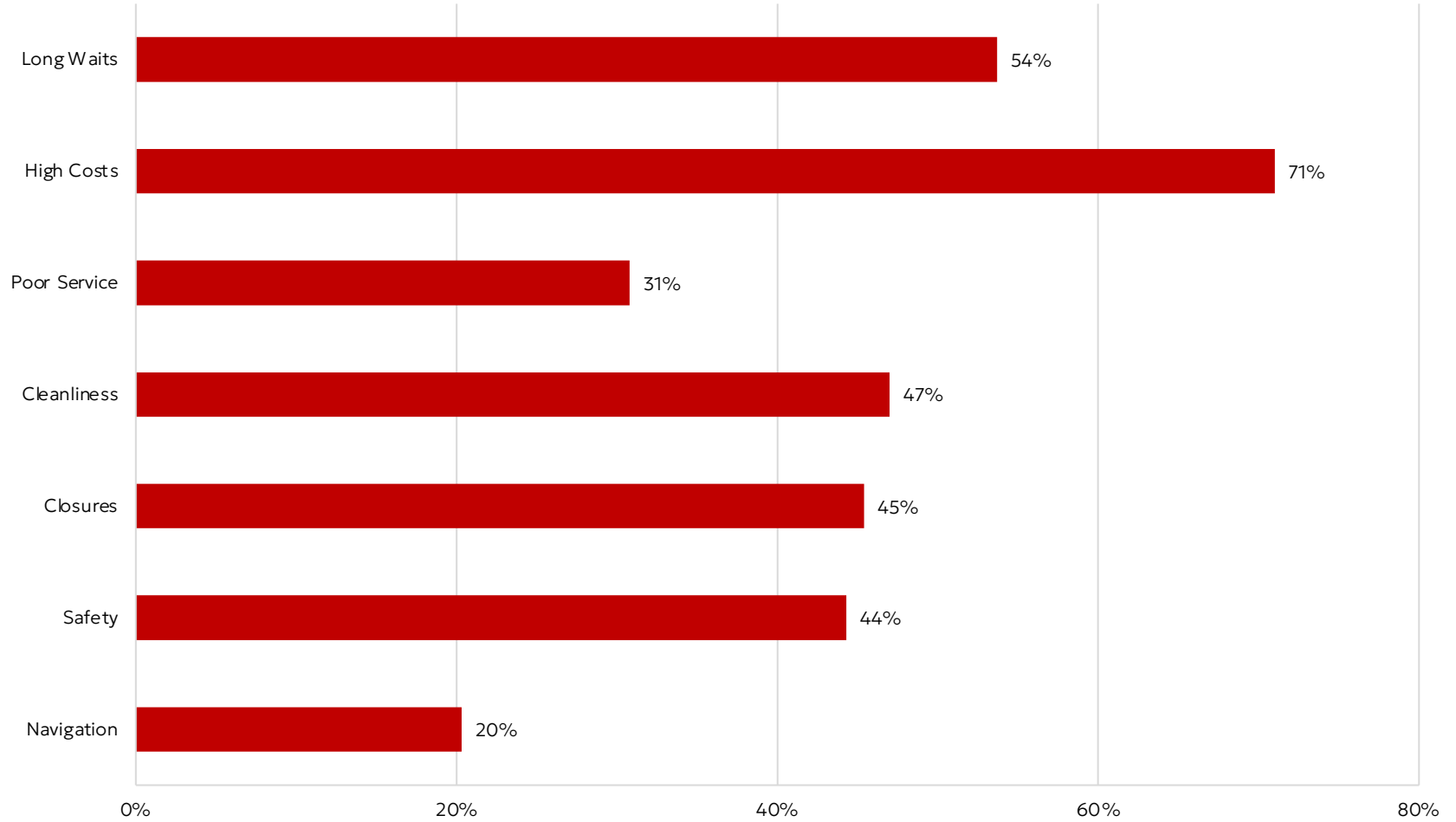
All respondents — % selecting each



Source: The Park Database

Dealbreaker Complaints

All respondents — % selecting each



Source: The Park Database