

Consumer Reviews and Research online

March 2011



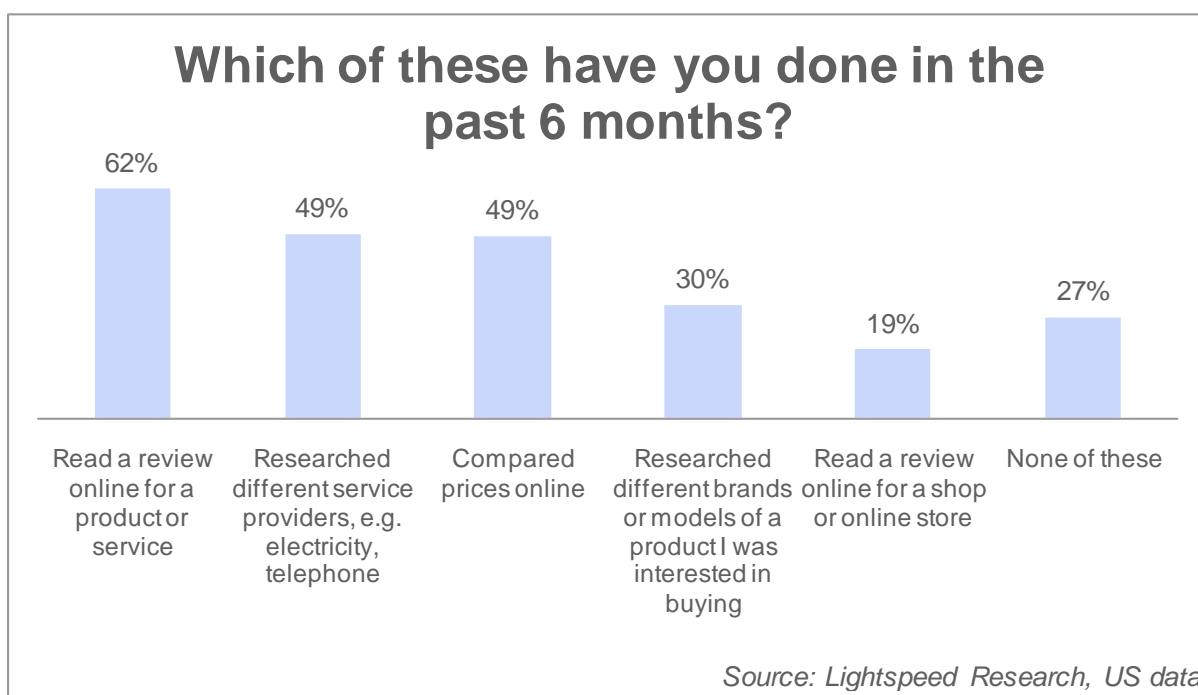
About the survey

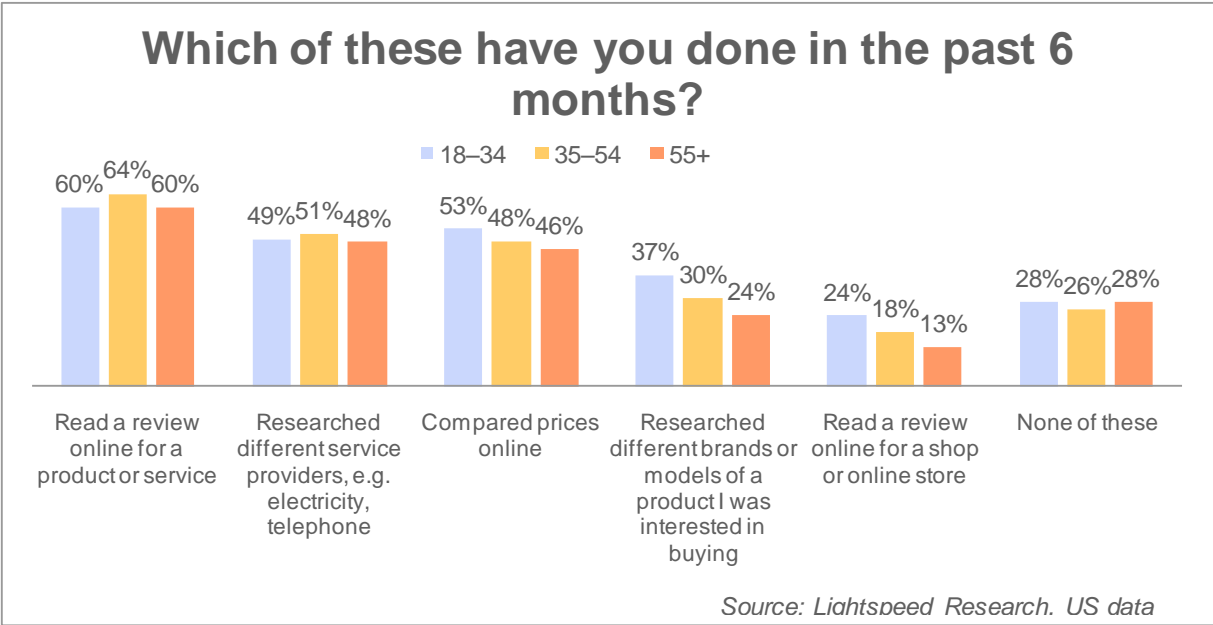
The survey was conducted with a Census representative sample of Lightspeed Research's US online panel in March 2011.

Preliminary Question Results

Respondents were initially asked a preliminary question to ascertain the kind of purchase-related research they do online. There were 1505 respondents to this question

- 73% of respondents have done some kind of online research in the past 6 months
- Reading online reviews is the most popular activity, followed by researching service providers and comparing prices online
- Those aged 18-34 are the most likely to have compared prices online, researched different brands or models, and read reviews online of a shop or online store



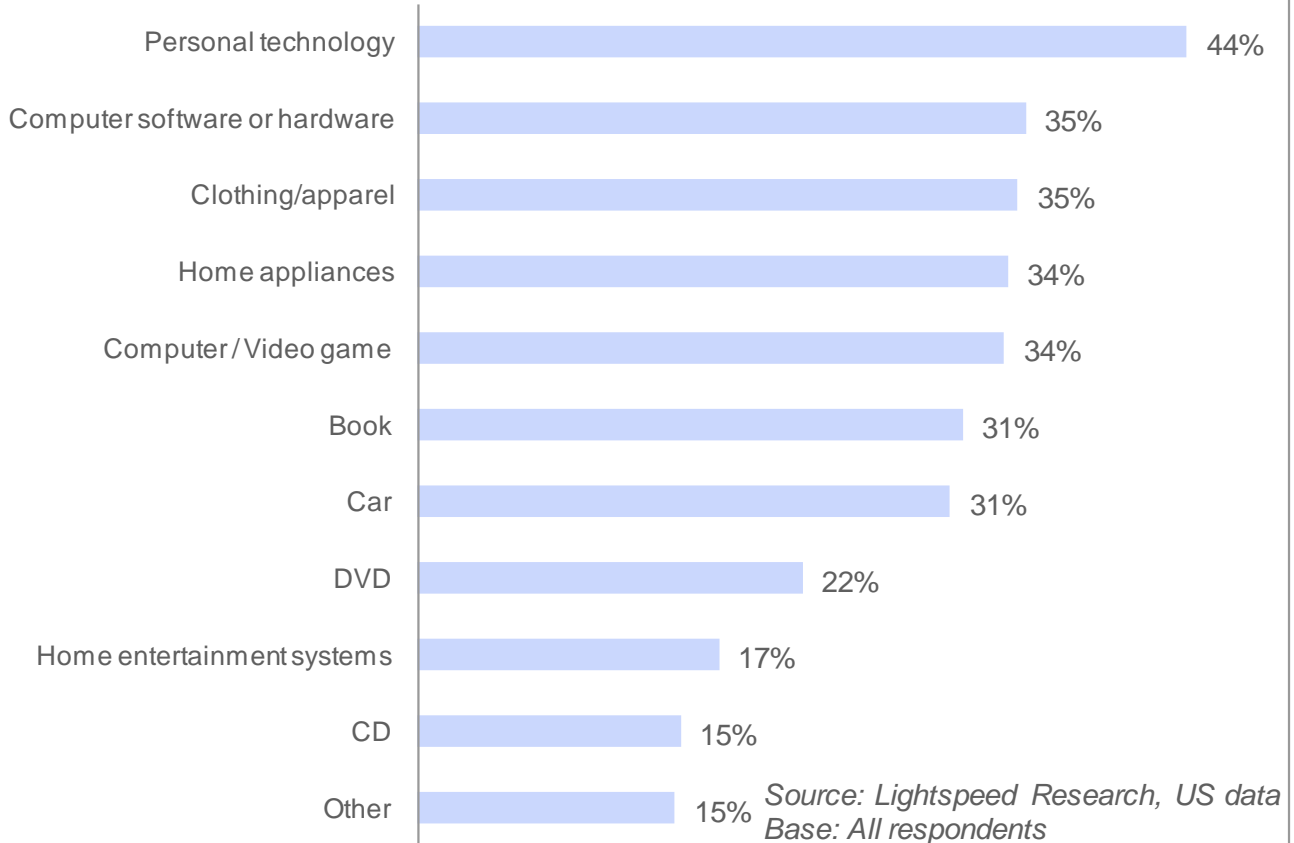


Main Survey Results

The remainder of these questions were only asked to those respondents who had done some form of online research in the past six months. There were 1096 respondents for this main section of the survey

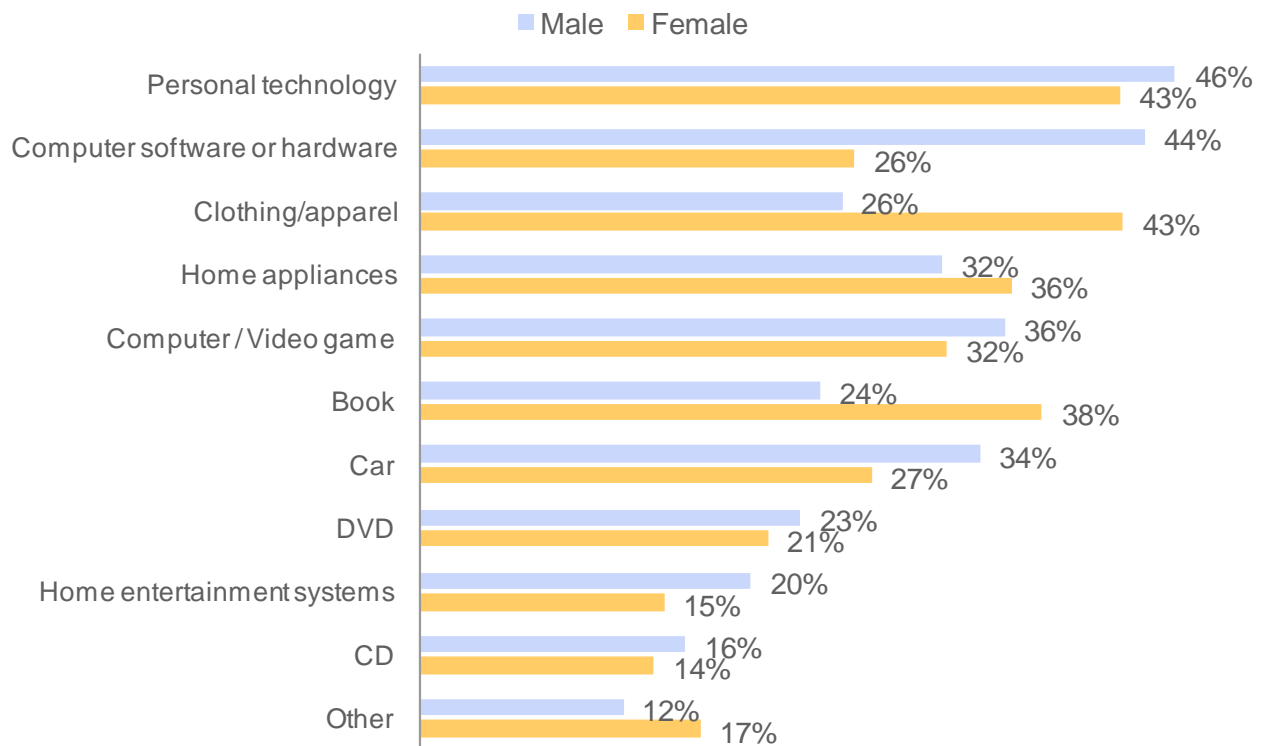
- Personal technology such as cameras, MP3 players and mobile phones are the most popular items to research online.

Which types of products have you researched online before buying (including reading reviews)?



- Men are much more likely than women to have researched computer items, cars, and home entertainment systems
- Women are more likely to have researched clothing and books.

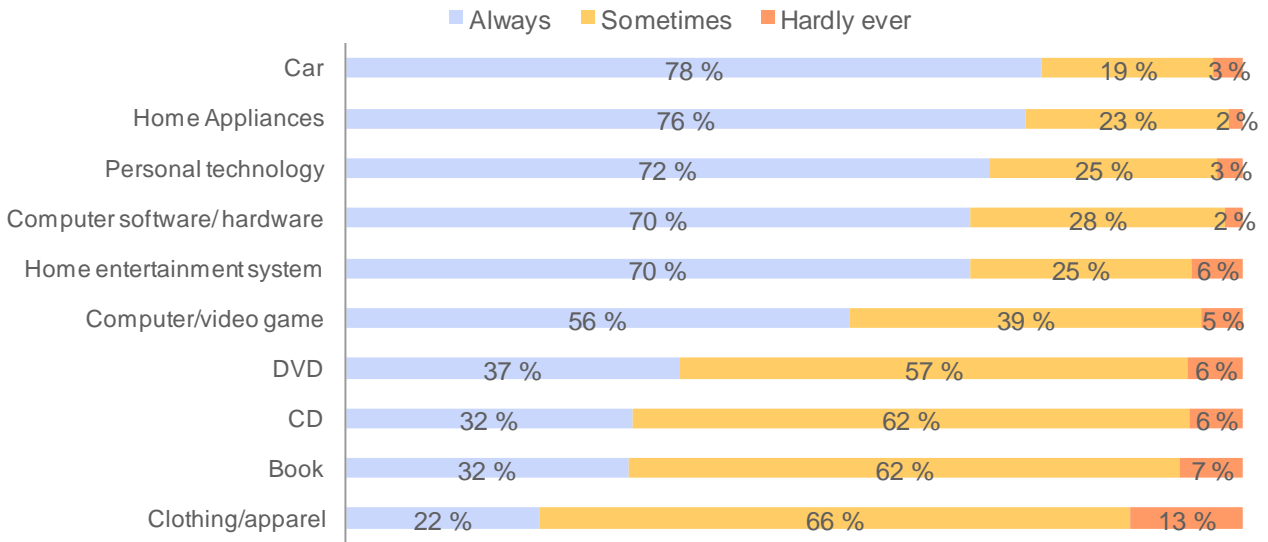
Which types of products have you researched online before buying (including reading reviews)?



Source: Lightspeed Research, US data
Base: All respondents

- For each product they had researched online before buying, respondents were then asked how often they would go online to do research before making a purchase. Eight out of ten (78%) would always research cars, while around three quarters would always research home appliances and personal technology online before making a purchase.

Thinking about the products you mentioned, please indicate for each one how often you would go online to do research before deciding what to buy

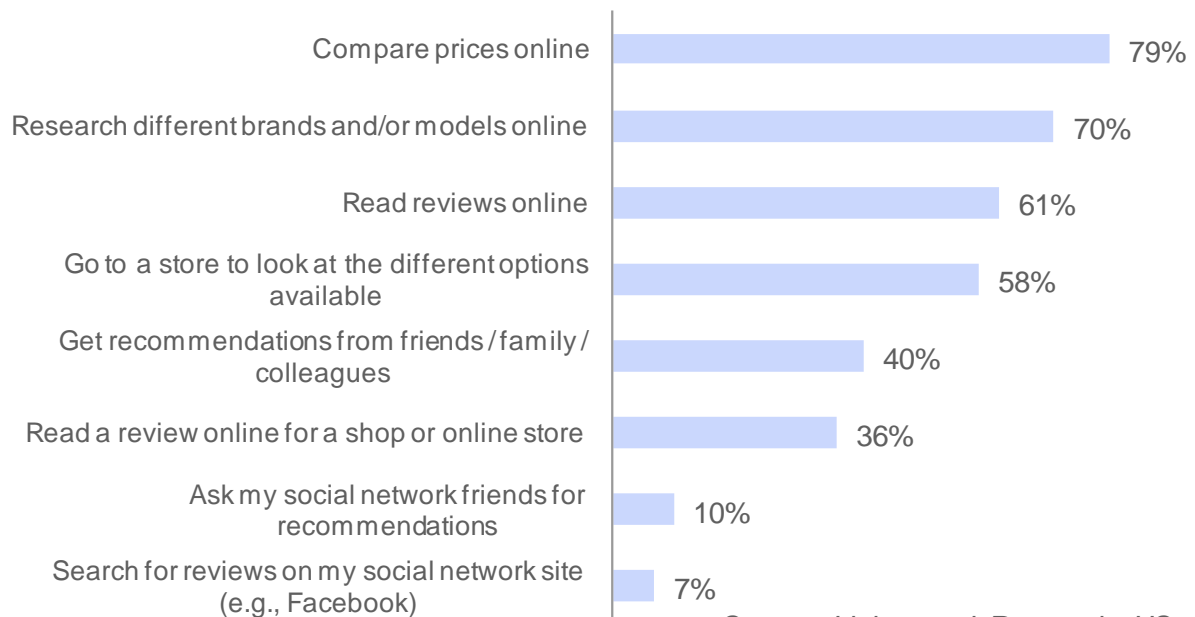


Source: Lightspeed Research, US data
 Base: Respondents that mentioned each product

The majority of respondents said they would always compare prices online before buying a personal technology item like a camera. 70% would research different brands and models online, while 61% would read online reviews

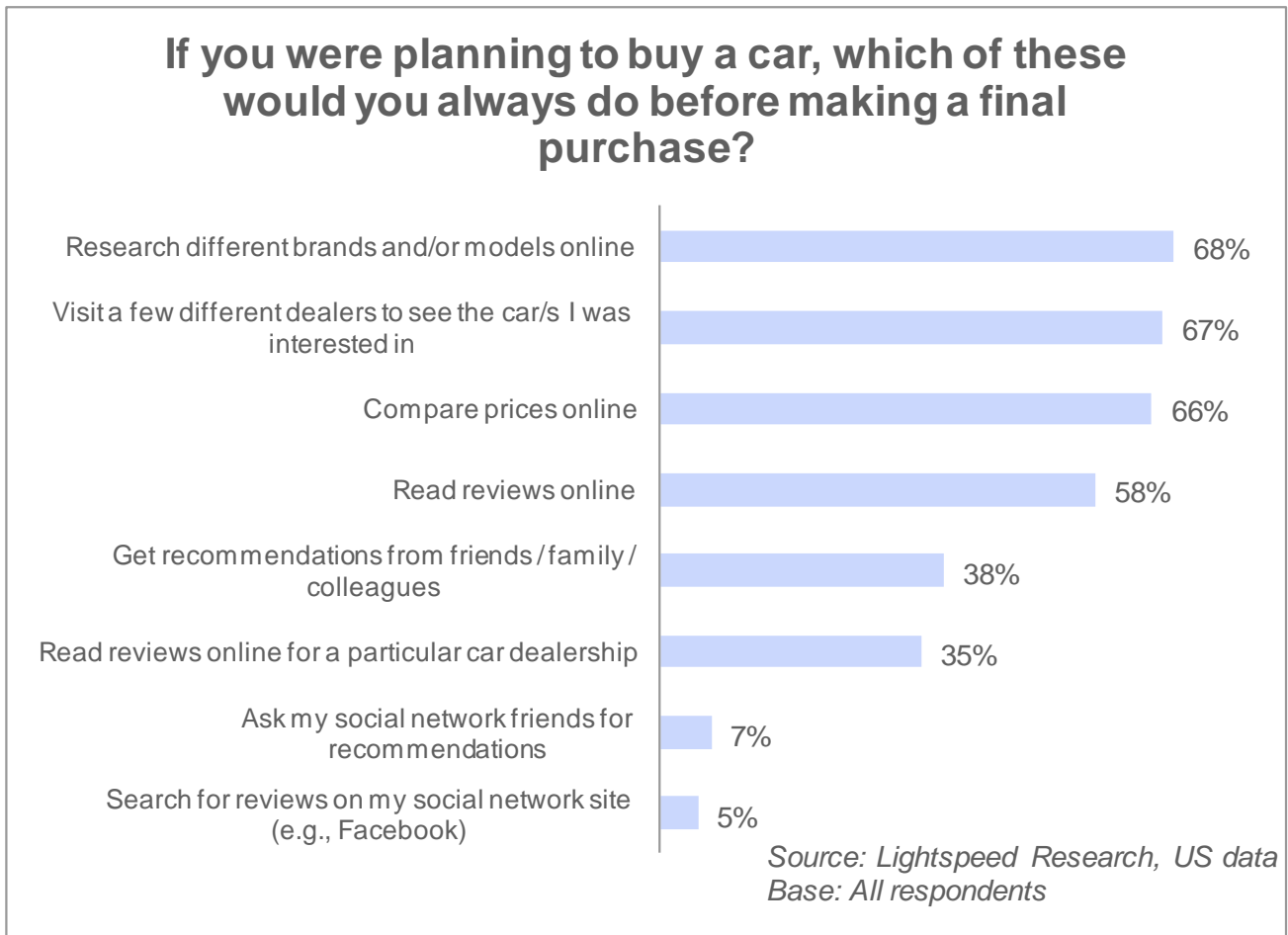
- Just over half (58%) said they would go to a store to look at the different options available
- Social networks aren't a popular place for research or recommendations, with 10% or less selecting these options
- Women are much more likely than men to say they would ask friends/family/colleagues for recommendations (47% vs 32%). Women are also more likely to go to a store to look at the options available
- 18-34 year olds are slightly more likely to search social networks for reviews (11%) or to ask social network friends for recommendations (14%).

If you were planning to buy a personal technology item such as a camera, mp3 player, or a mobile phone, which of these would you always do before making a final purchase?



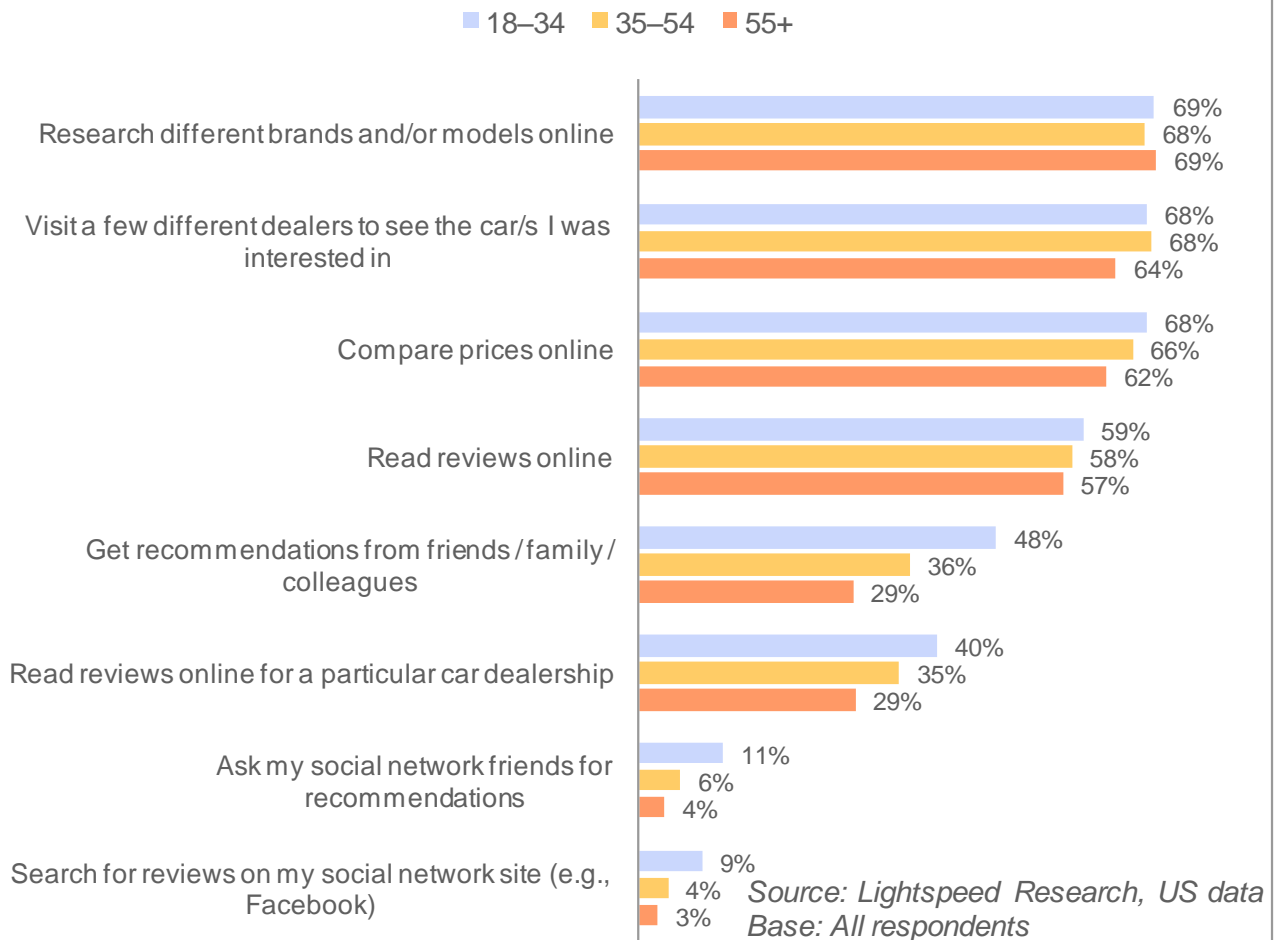
Source: Lightspeed Research, US data
Base: All respondents

- When it comes to buying cars, two thirds of respondents said they would always research different models and visit a few different dealers to look at different cars before making a final purchase decision.



- Women are more likely to say they would always ask friends/family/colleagues for recommendations
- The younger the respondent , the more likely they are to say they would always ask friends/family/colleagues for recommendations before buying a car
- The younger the respondent, the more likely they are to say they would always get recommendations from friends and family, and read reviews online.

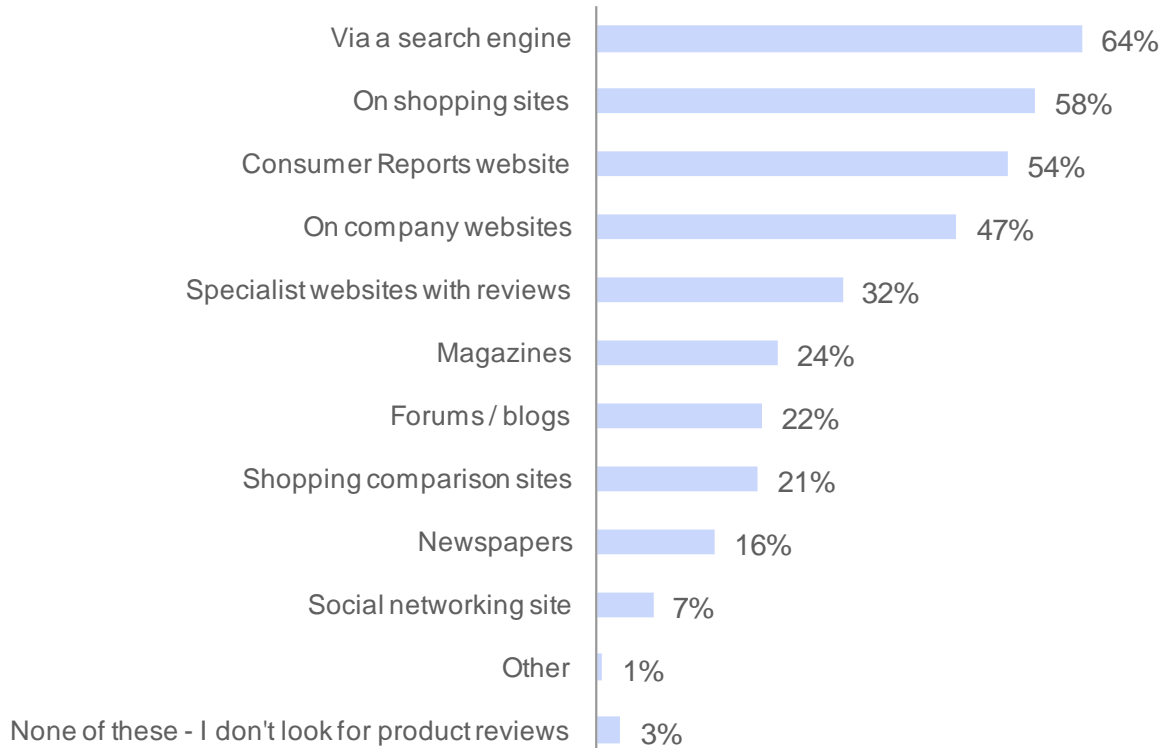
If you were planning to buy a car, which of these would you always do before making a final purchase?



Shopping sites and search engines are the most popular places to look for product reviews

- Only 3% of respondents said they do not look for product reviews at all
- Women are more likely than men to look on shopping sites (63% vs 52%)
- Respondents aged 55+ are more likely to look in newspapers (21% vs 15% for 35-54s, and 11% for 18-34s).

Where do you look for reviews of products?

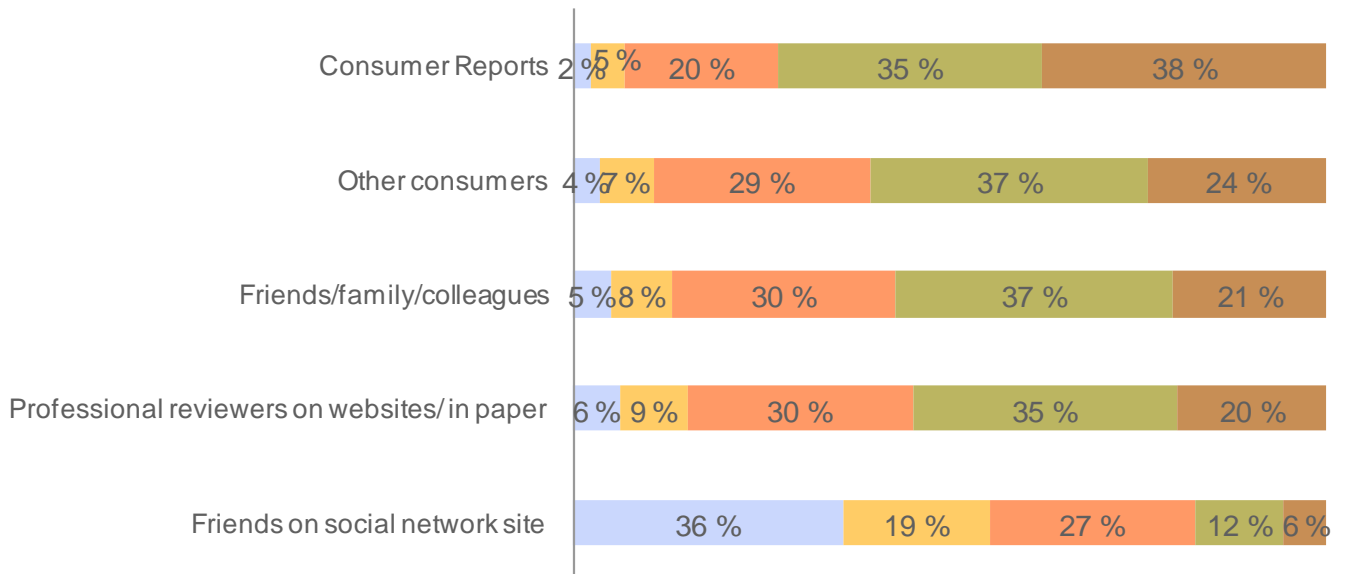


Source: Lightspeed Research, US data
Base: All respondents

- Respondents put most weight on reviews from Consumer Reports - with 38% saying it's very important that a product has good reviews online from other consumers.
- By contrast 36% say that it's not important that a product has good reviews from social network friends.

When researching a product, how important is it that it has good reviews online from each of the following?

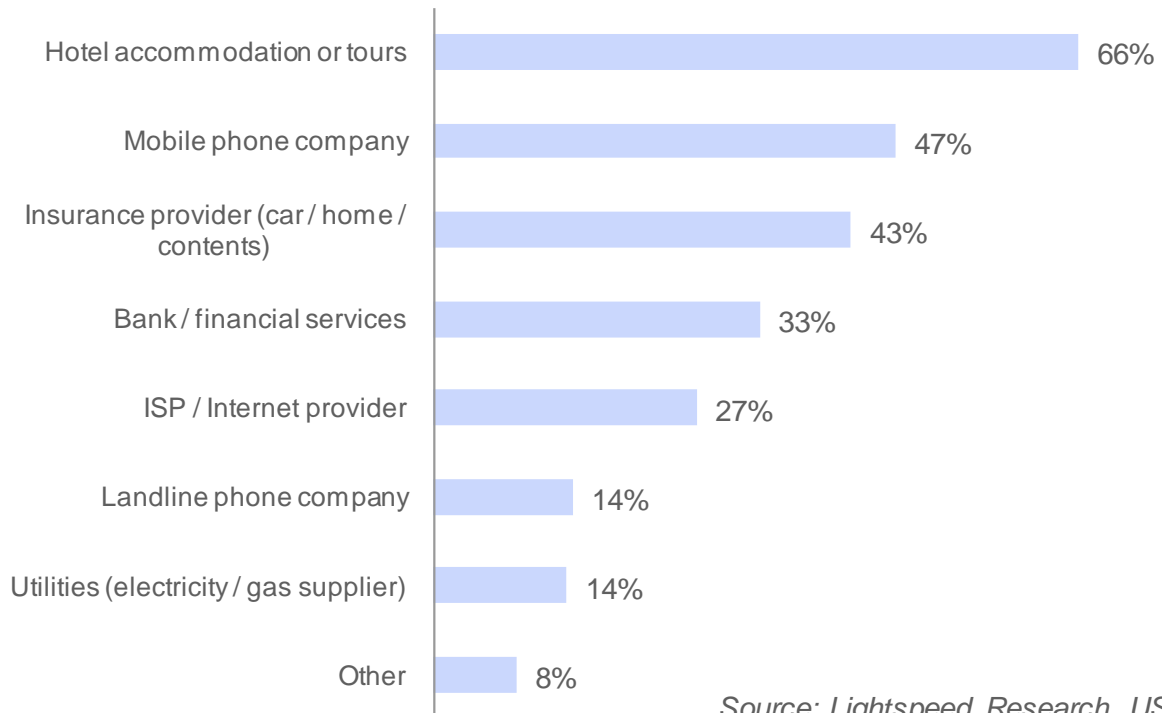
■ 1 – Not important ■ 2 ■ 3 ■ 4 ■ 5 – Very important



Source: Lightspeed Research, US data
Base: All respondents

- When it comes to services, respondents are most likely to have researched hotel accommodation and tours online.

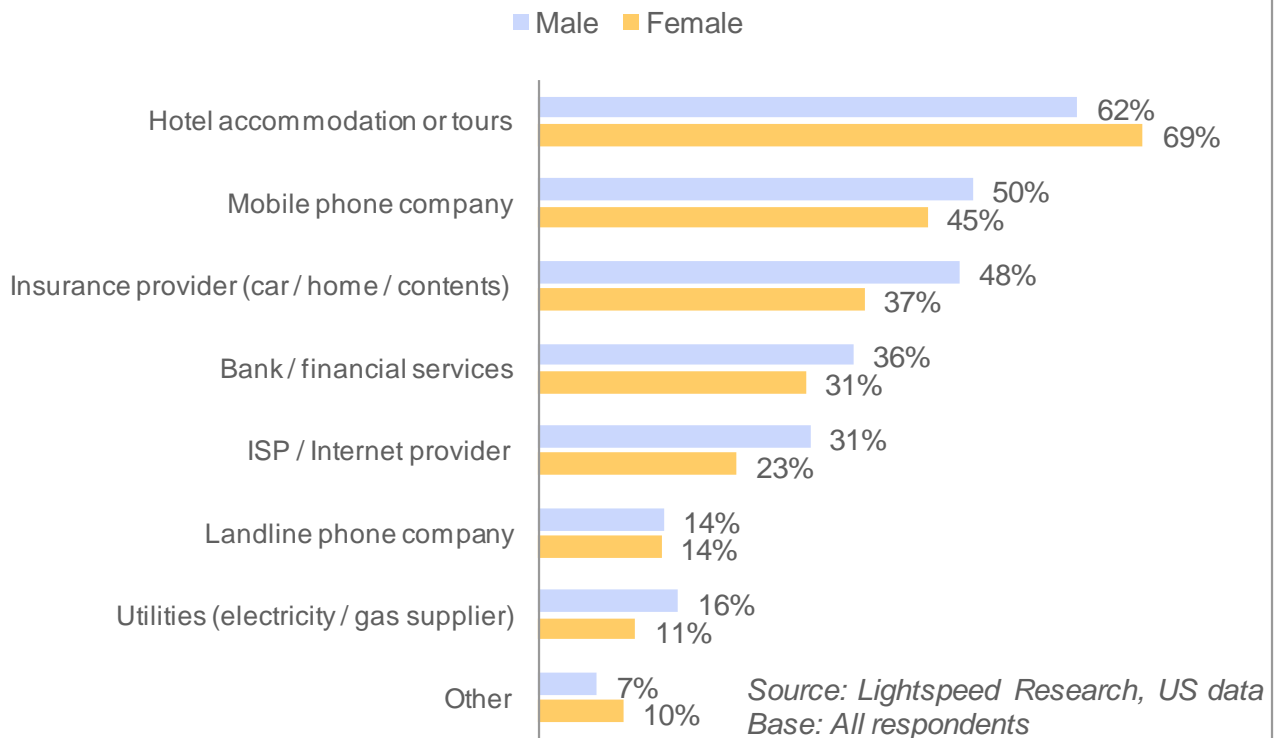
Which types of services have you ever researched online?



Source: Lightspeed Research, US data
Base: All respondents

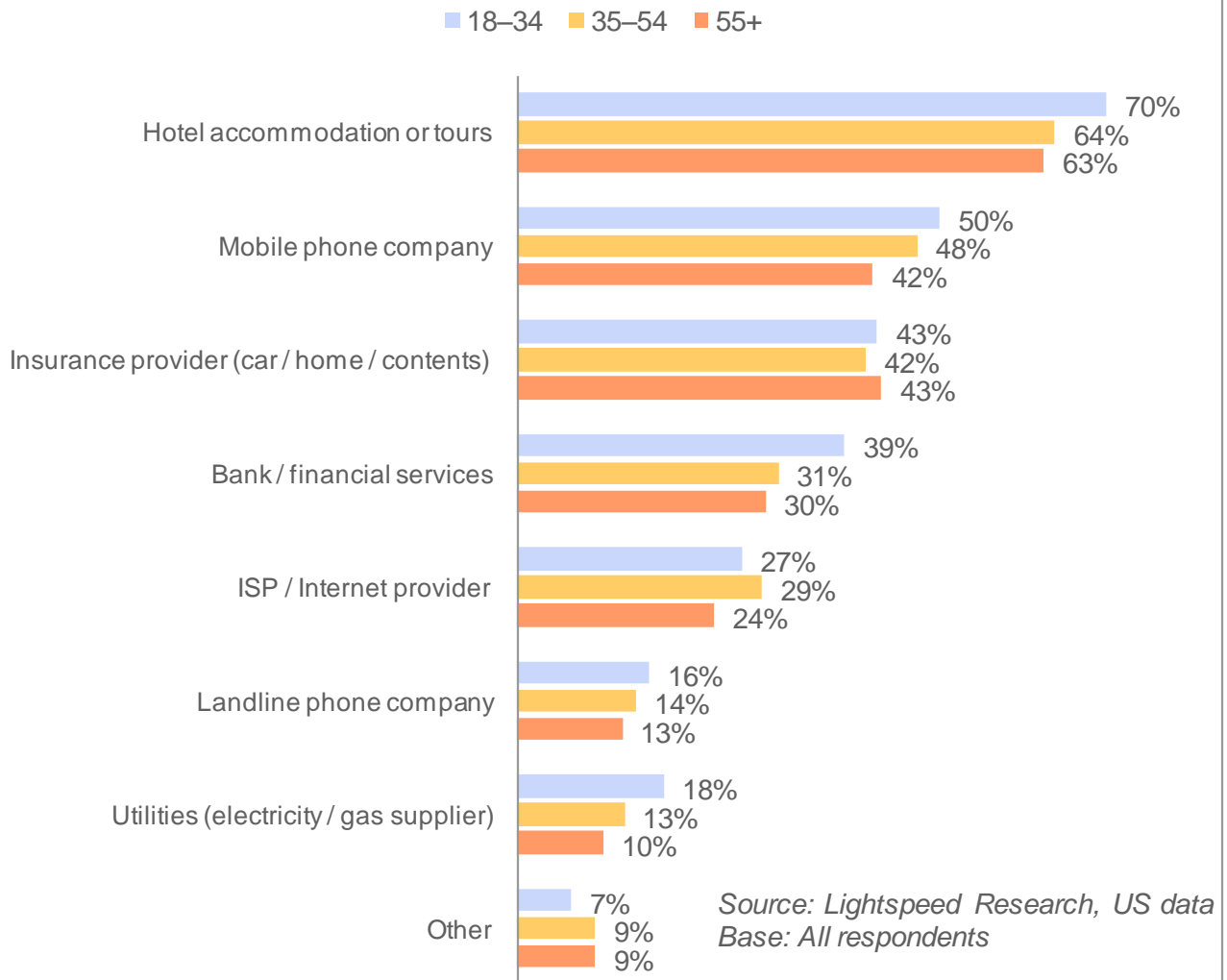
- Women are more likely to have researched hotels and tours online, whilst men are more likely to have researched ISPs, banks, insurance providers and mobile companies.

Which types of services have you ever researched online?

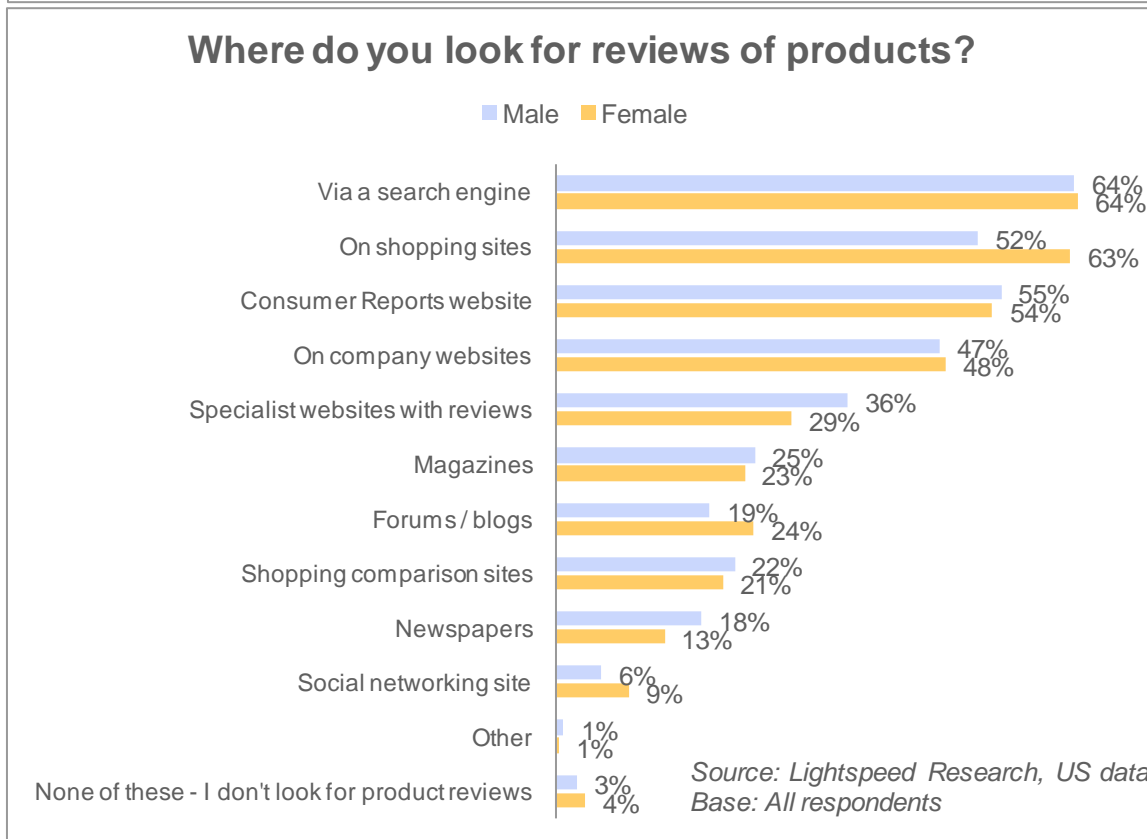
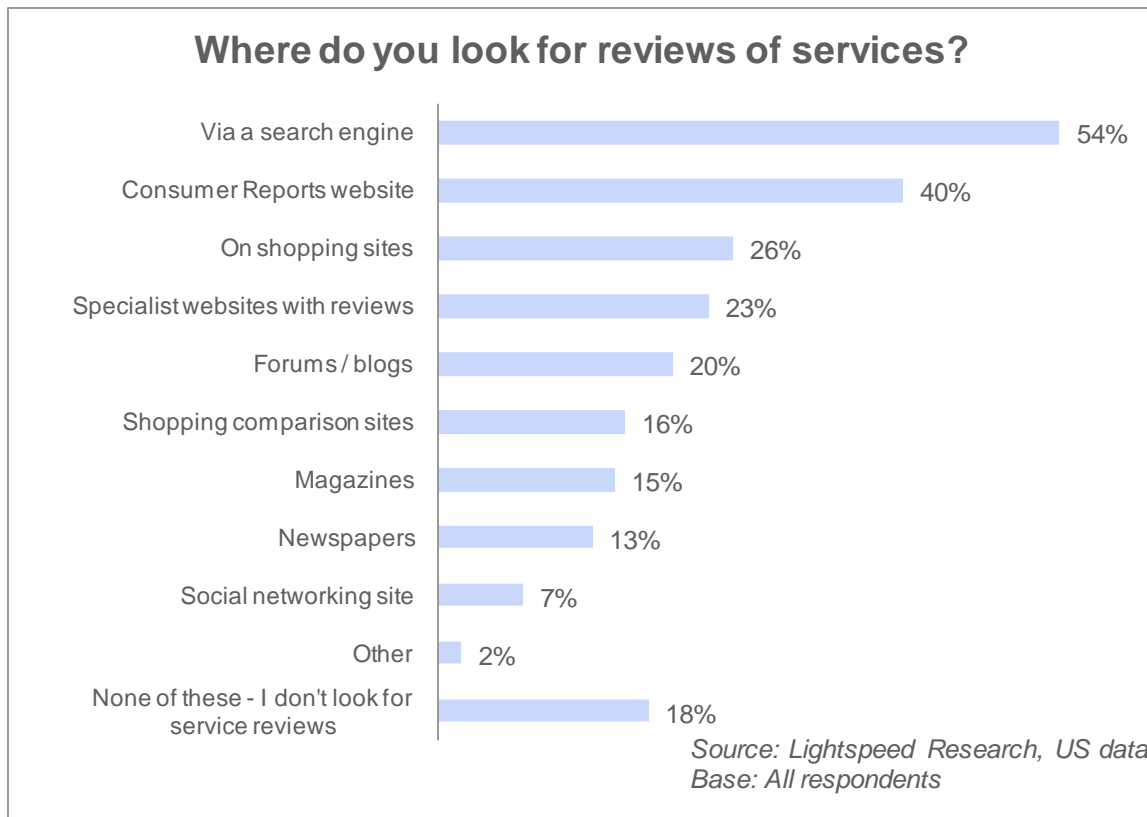


- In general, 18-34 year olds are more likely to have researched a range of services online. The exceptions are insurance providers and ISPs, where proportions are similar across the three age groups.

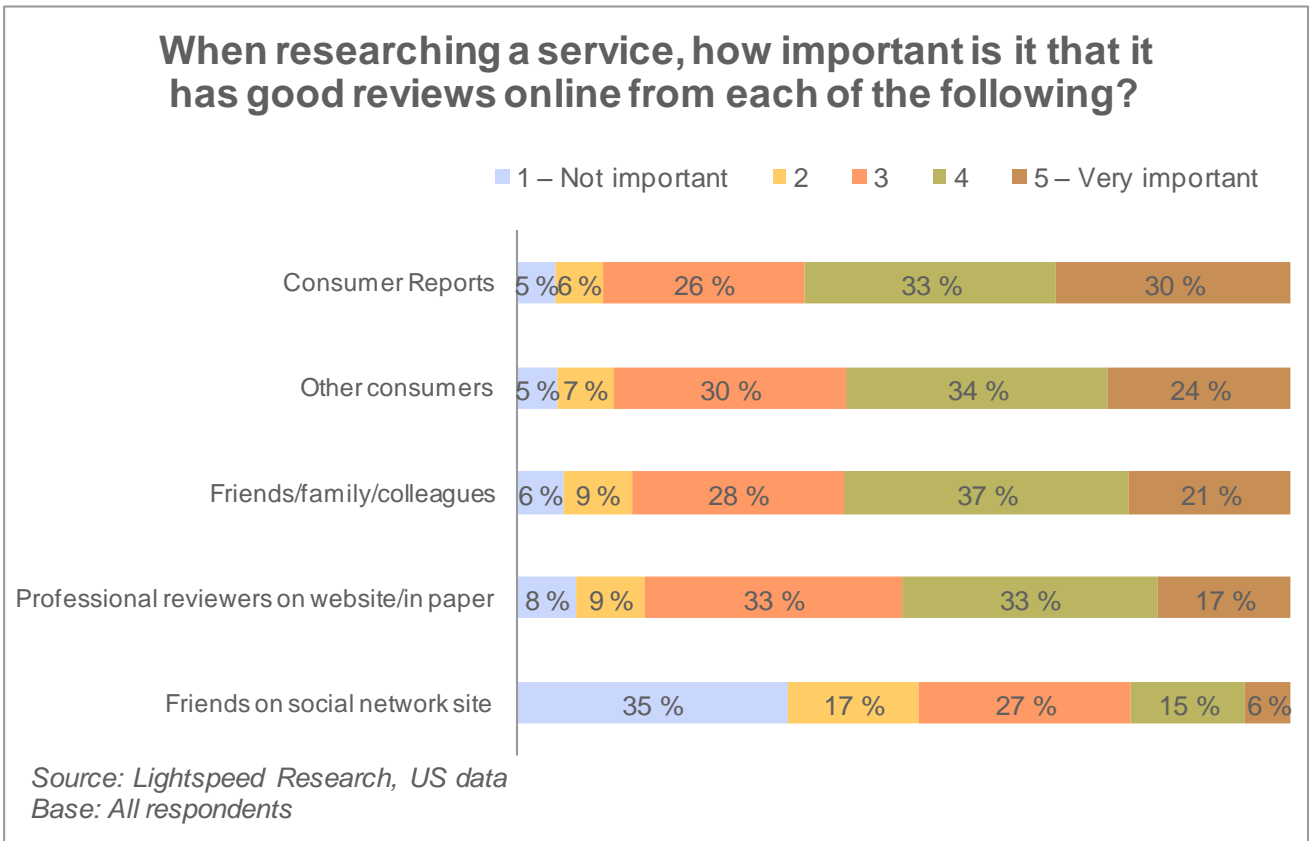
Which types of services have you ever researched online?



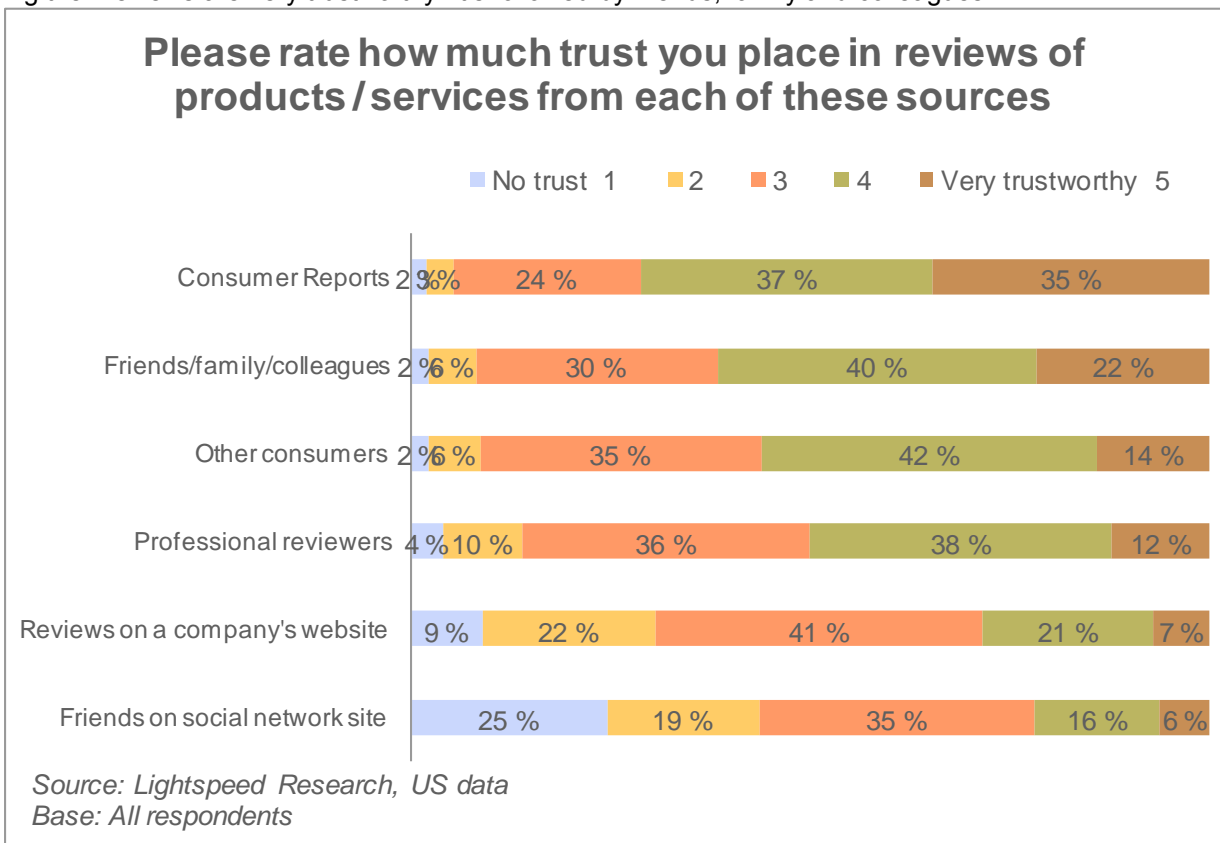
- Search engines are the most common place to start looking for service reviews, followed by the Consumer Reports website
- Men are more likely to look on specialist websites (36% vs 29% of women) while women are more likely to look on shopping sites (63% vs 52%).



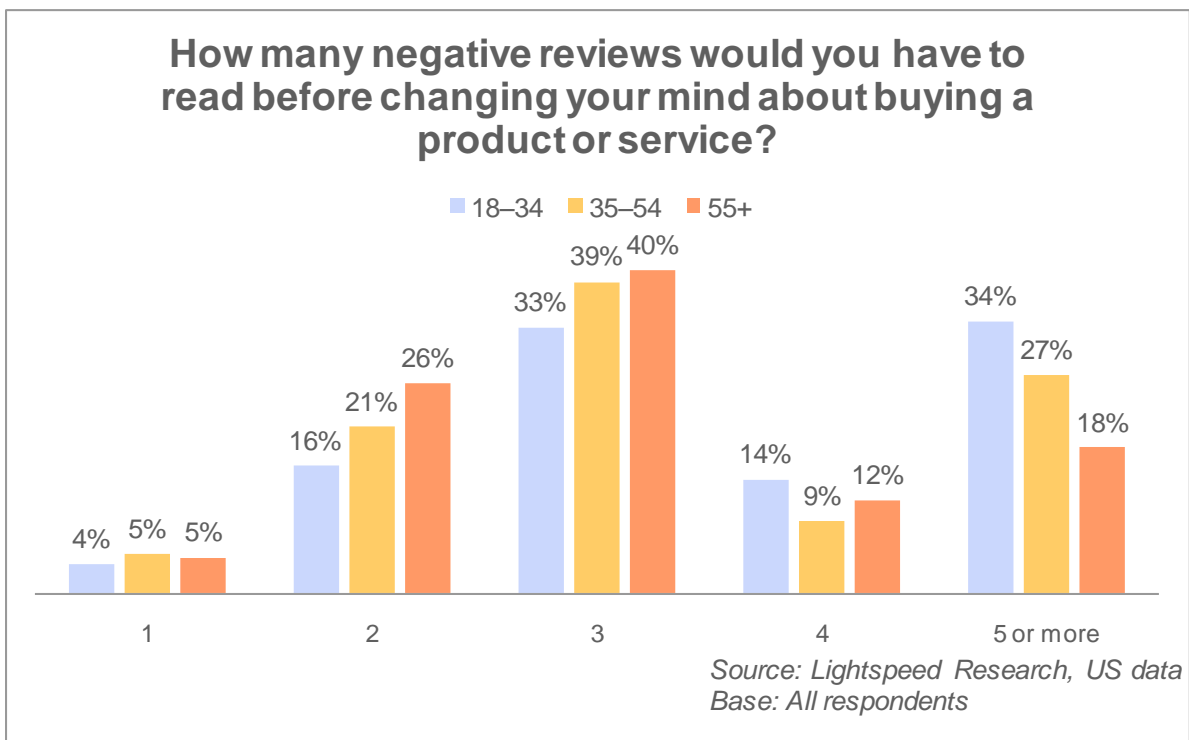
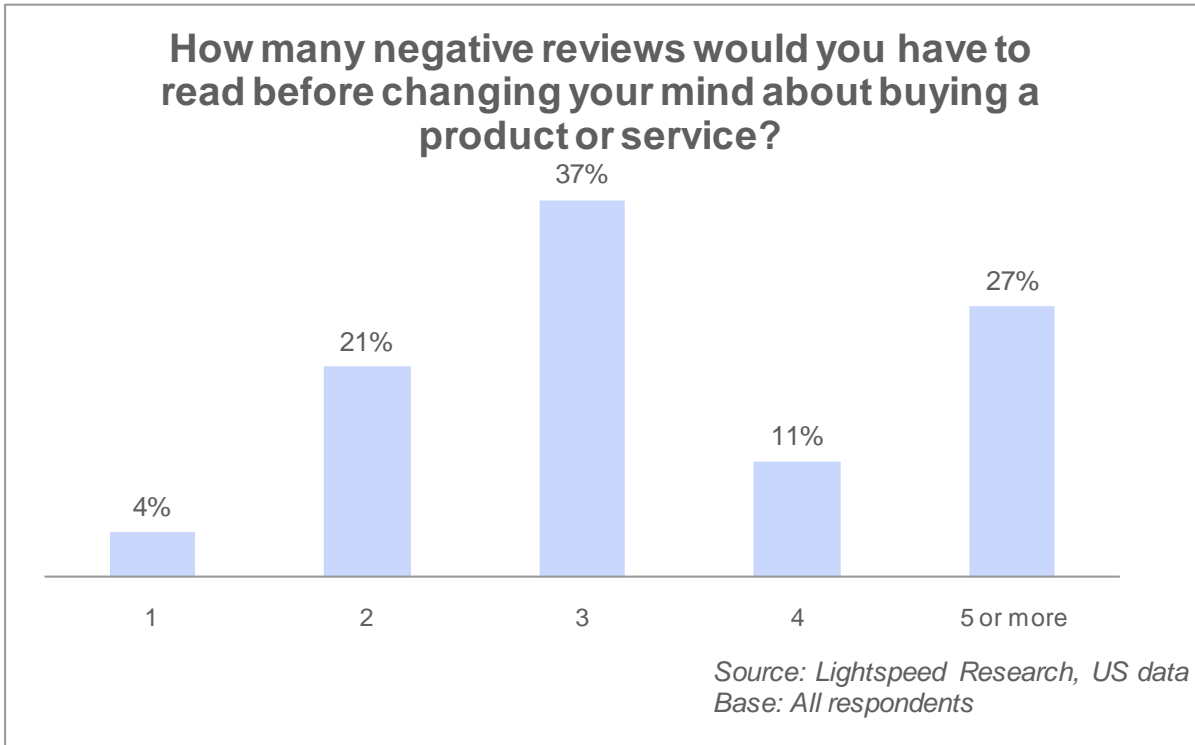
As we saw earlier for products, consumers are most likely to value good reviews from Consumer Reports.



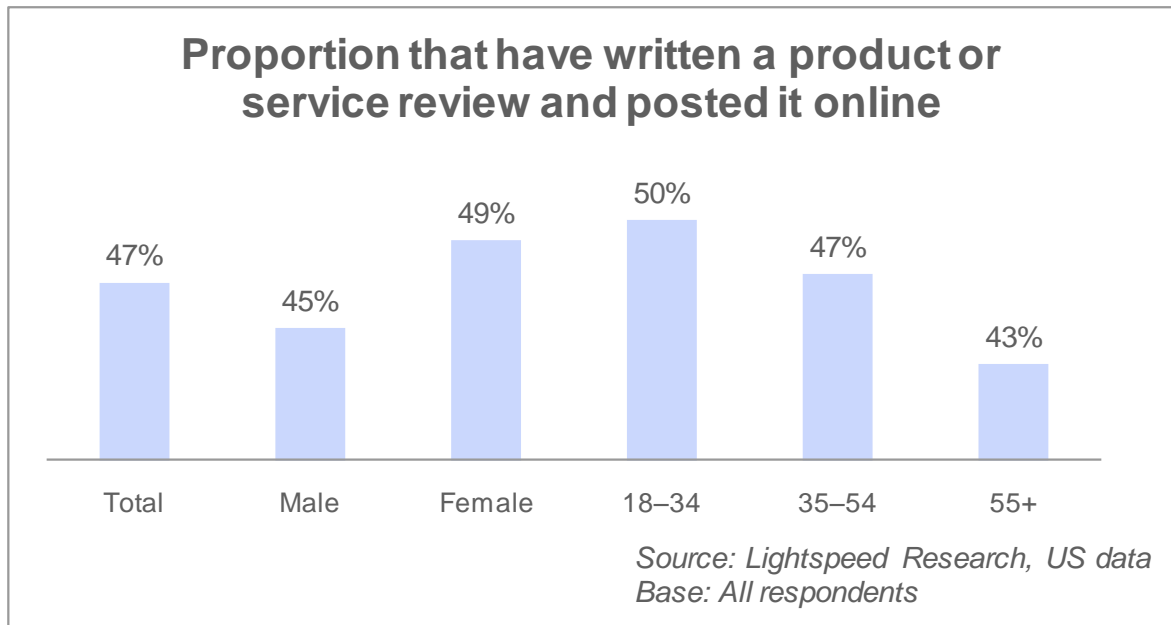
When it comes to trust, Consumer Reports once again ranks most highly, with 72% trusting them and 35% saying their reviews are very trustworthy. It's followed by friends, family and colleagues.



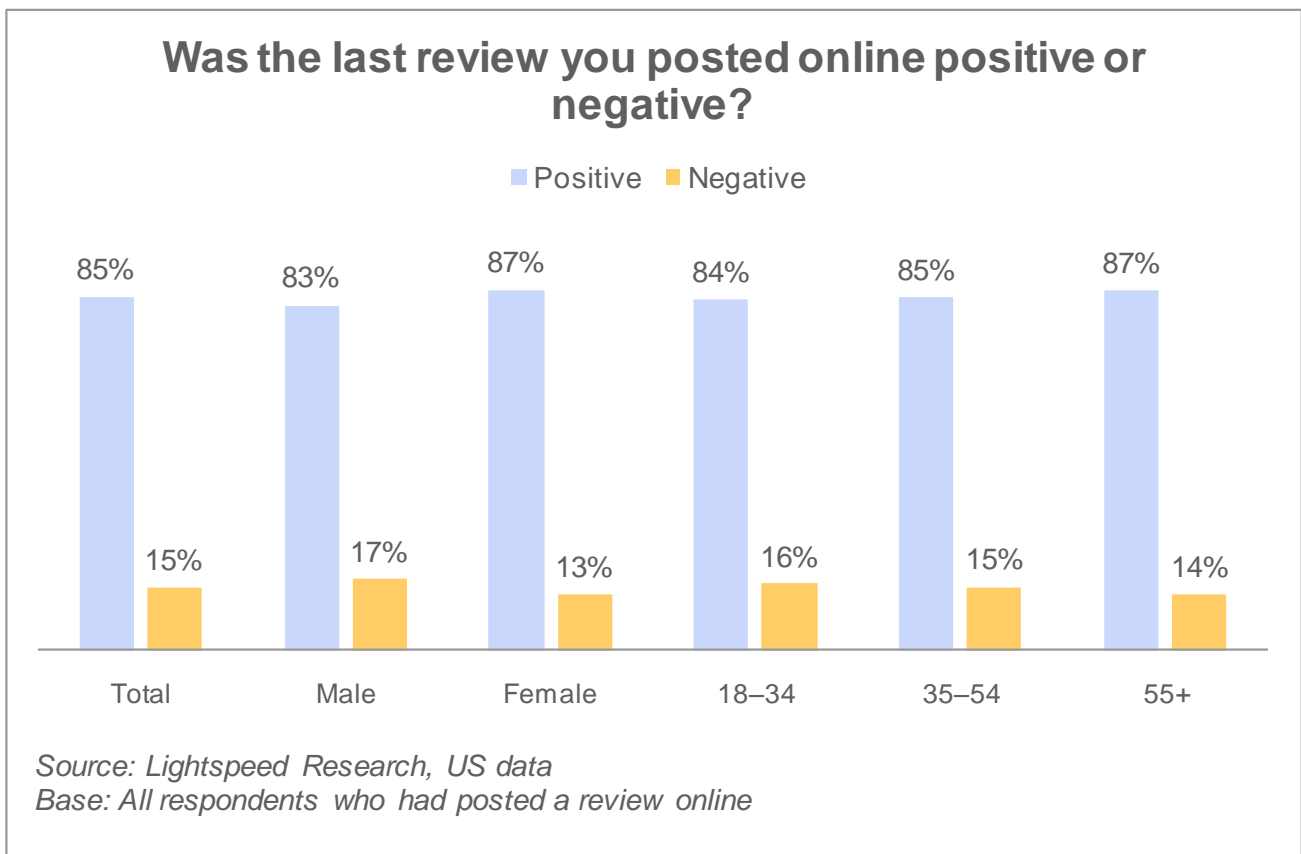
- It's three strikes and you're out for most - with 62% saying they would change their mind after reading 1-3 negative reviews
 - 18-34 year olds need more persuading to change their mind - with 34% saying they would need to read five or more negative reviews before changing their mind about a purchase - higher than the other age groups.



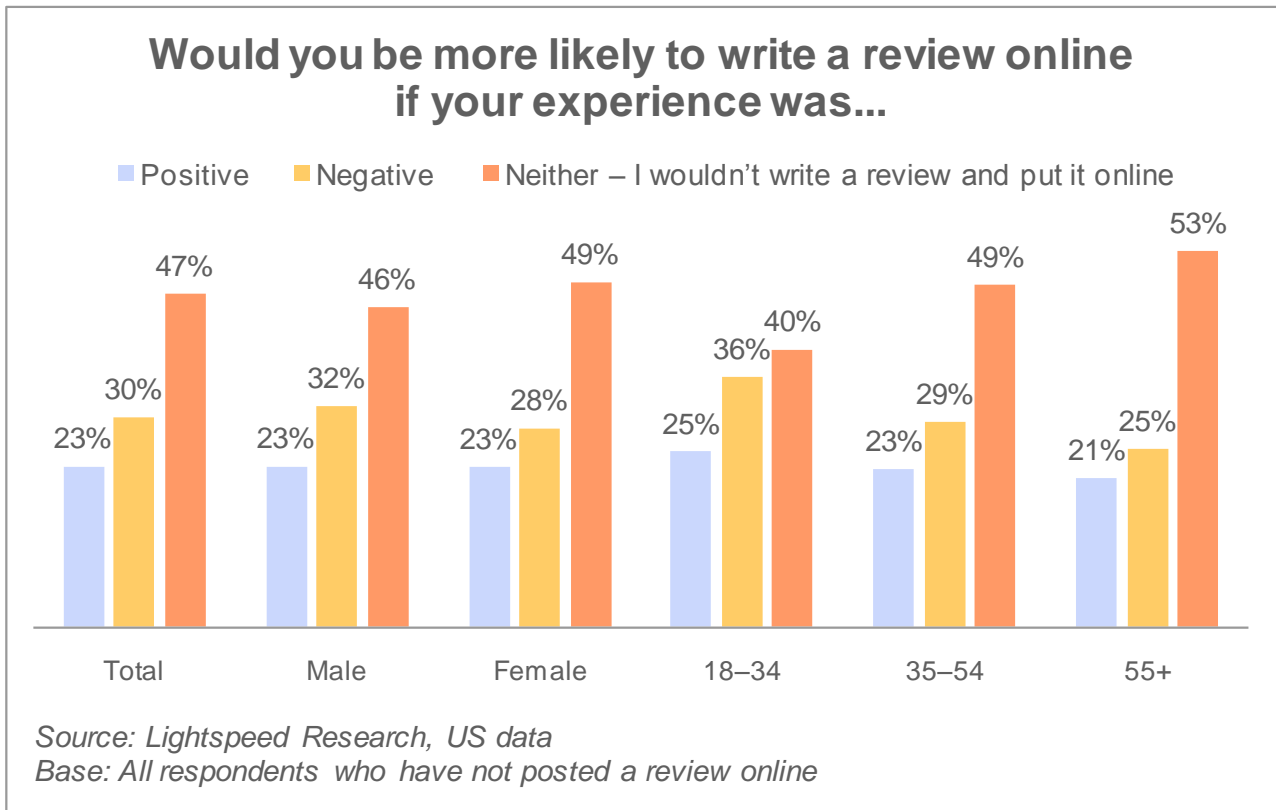
- Just under half say they had written a review and posted it online - with 18-34 year olds the most likely to do this.



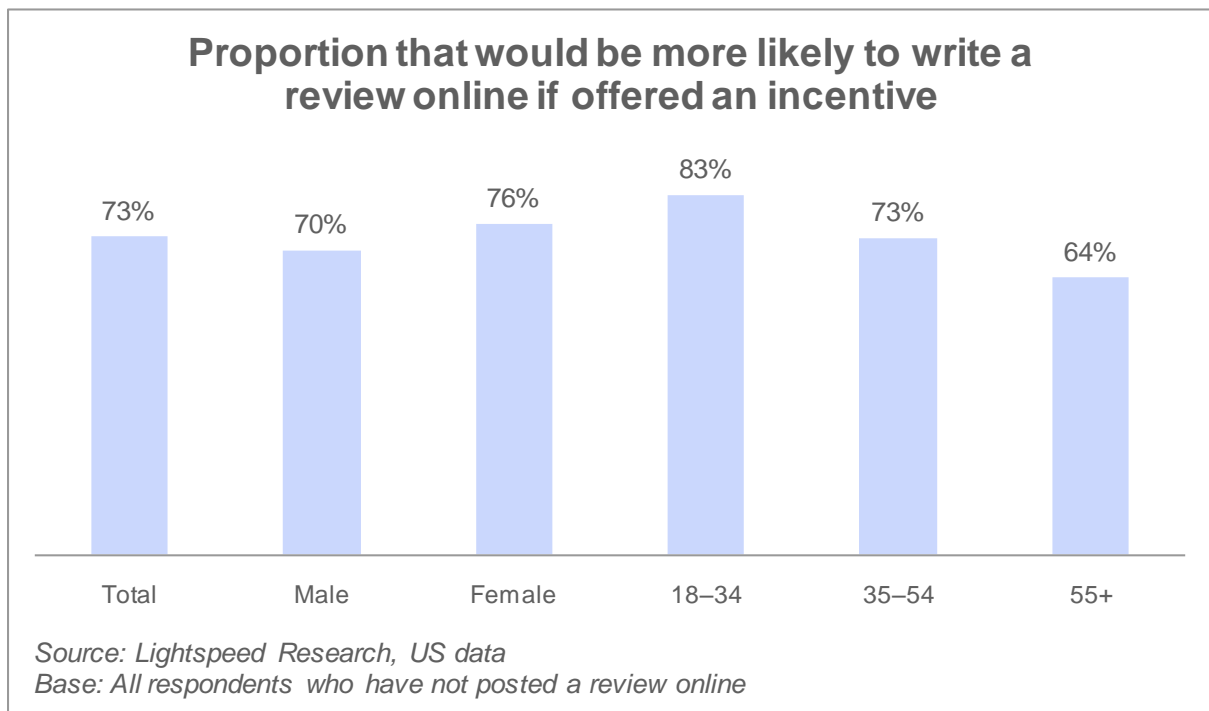
- Of those who had posted a review online, the majority said their last review was positive.



- Amongst those who have not posted a review online, 47% said they would never do this, while 30% said they would be more likely to post a review after a negative experience, and 23% said they would post a review after a positive experience.



Amongst those who have not posted a review online, three quarters said they would be more likely to write one if they were offered an incentive, such as a discount voucher - this increases to 83% of 18-34 year olds.



For more information please contact:

Naor Chazan, Marketing Director, Americas – Lightspeed Research
nchazan@lightspeedresearch.com Tel: 908.605.4480
www.lightspeedresearch.com