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EMPOWERING MARKETERS



# Consumer email tracker 2017



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# Introduction

Consumers lead complex and nuanced digital lives: people are existing and consuming online more than ever. But as more of our lives move to the web the main touchpoint between organisations and their customers remains the email address.

In fact, the email address is a relatively stable point in a rapidly spinning online world. 83% of consumers report, this year, that their first email address is still the one they use most.

Over the years, consumers have said they've been receiving fewer relevant marketing emails each year. In 2016, only 16% of consumers said more than half of marketing emails were relevant to them. This year that increased to 20% of respondents: a small but important step to achieving the meaningful and timely marketing consumers crave.

Consumers are engaging well with simple emails composed of text and images. Marketers need to focus on crafting each email carefully, without resorting to gimmicks. Engagement is driven by relevant, short and actionable emails, so making the process as smooth as possible for your customer is a must.

As with last year, consumers are concerned by marketing from unrecognised senders, or too many irrelevant emails. This can push users to unsubscribe or even abandon their email address altogether.

With increasing consumer awareness and an evolving legal framework, maintaining trust and relevance through leading in data privacy is paramount for our industry.

Together, these findings underline the need for the classic direct marketing maxim: "right person, right message, right time".

***Rachel Aldighieri***

*MD*

*DMA*



# Insight hub perspective

The great news is that email marketing continues to connect with consumers with 99% checking their personal inbox every day. That provides a huge opportunity for marketers to engage a captive audience – if the content is relevant to consumers. It's more important than ever to listen to what a consumer wants. Personalisation and content relevance remains an absolute must for consumers - yet 59% of consumers are stating they are receiving irrelevant emails.

The results also suggest consumers have a utilitarian relationship with the channel. Nearly two thirds favour discounts versus a tenth that favour content, and copy is preferred concise not verbose. Order confirmations, delivery updates and receipts are what email does best. The utility of email should be embraced by the marketer: the grudging appreciation of the service message is the consumer's way of telling us they like being sold to, they just don't like to admit it.

This continues to be a challenge in an industry where the fundamental purpose of sending an email campaign is to create relationships. Diving straight into a new friendship like a transaction without even taking the time to gather a person's name, isn't going to reap engagement long. It's great to see that consumers are telling us that they are receiving more relevant emails than before but marketers still have much further to go to fulfil this consumer need. There are still a large number of consumers wondering how a brand got their email address. With GDPR looming, this should be top of every marketers' to-do list. It's vital to ensure the consent of your subscribers, and to include details of where they subscribed in your email content.

60% of consumers don't think brands do email well. This is a devastating blow to marketers: consumers are noticing this and will abandon their email address if marketers continue to take the channel for granted.

What do the data tell us? Offer short copy. Write interesting subject lines. Don't pack the email with content. Have a concise message - with clear calls to action. Include these and you can move from functional appreciation to affection and – ultimately – brand revenue.

The opportunity of engaging consumers is there to be grabbed with both hands by email marketers - if they can understand what consumers' needs.

**Marcus Gearey**

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# Sponsor's perspective

My sponsor's perspective begins on a more positive note compared to previous years. It seems that brands are making slight headway in the crusade towards relevancy in email marketing: 75% of consumers associate good email with messages that contain useful information, and 20% now say that more than half of the marketing emails they receive accomplish this. Conversely, in dotmailer's 2017 Hitting the Mark benchmarking report, a large number of top retailers are not personalising the emails they send beyond first-name salutation (and sometimes not even that). How can brands expect to deliver useful content without being able to deliver messages that are tailored to the recipient?

The brands that are failing to respond to their customers' digital body language are driving consumers to become flippant with email accounts. The data highlights that people have no qualms about creating 'burner' accounts, hinting at a throwaway culture and subversive shopping. Subversive shopping occurs when consumers use multiple email addresses to game the system, and our research shows that this is most often a learned behaviour resulting from brands being overly aggressive with discounts.

On the subject of people's usage of email, it was surprising to find that 50% of consumers say they do not check their emails at work. This indicates that work email is not as pervasive as most marketers would think (after all, we all use email at work), and underlines the fact that B2B email marketers have a much tougher job on their hands when it comes to email marketing.

That brings me nicely onto my final observation – choice of email consumption – of which the results were somewhat jarring. The survey found that just 43% of consumers frequently access marketing emails via their smartphones, which is at odds with Litmus' 2016 report where 53% of all emails are opened on a smartphone or tablet. It is possible that either the UK is behind the curve in terms of mobile adoption; brands are still not optimising their messages for mobile; or more likely, consumers do not recognise triaging their inbox as "accessing" email. Ultimately, the goal of an email marketer is to reduce recipients' cognitive load, whatever device they use to consume the email, by encouraging engagement and guiding them towards the desired action as quickly and efficiently as possible.

As ever, this report gives us marketers the inside view of consumers' attitudes towards our practice. It is easy for us to get stuck in bubbles and ruts but essentially, the consumer always has the final say and we would be foolish to disregard it..

**Skip Fidura**  
*Client Services Director*  
dotmailer

# Executive summary

## Email accounts

- People typically have 2 or 3 different email accounts
- 59% of people have never deactivated an email address
- 83% of respondents still use their first ever email address as their primary account
- Consumers are using their different addresses in distinct ways – 44% of consumers send marketing messages to particular addresses
- Email has the potential to connect with most consumers, and promptly too – 99% of consumers check their personal email every day
- Consumers estimate they check email over 20 times and spend a total of 2hrs 10min interacting with their inboxes across home, work and mobile each day

## Email marketing

- Consumers estimate that more than half of the emails entering their inbox are marketing messages
- The average consumer is currently signed up to 12 marketing email lists on their personal account – compared to just 2 for a typical work account
- Consumers seek value for money, but also engage with valuable information from emails: 31% want notice of new products and 22% like product reviews

## Email preferences and actions

- Consumers say they open 57% of emails – at odds with the average marketing email open rate of 14%
- 49% of consumers will not open marketing emails from an unrecognised sender – and 50% will mark unrecognised messages as spam
- Most consumers show a preference for promotional email content – 63% like to receive discounts, 59% say good emails contain offers, and 47% are willing to share their email in exchange for discounts
- The top performing email brands – according to consumers – are typically those with a large online presence, and often from the retail sector
- But a striking 60% of respondents don't think any brands do email well
- 59% of consumers agree that most marketing emails are irrelevant
- Respondents say they engage with short emails that are relevant and actionable; for consumers, clear and concise emails with specific, targeted objectives are the best

## Responsible use of email

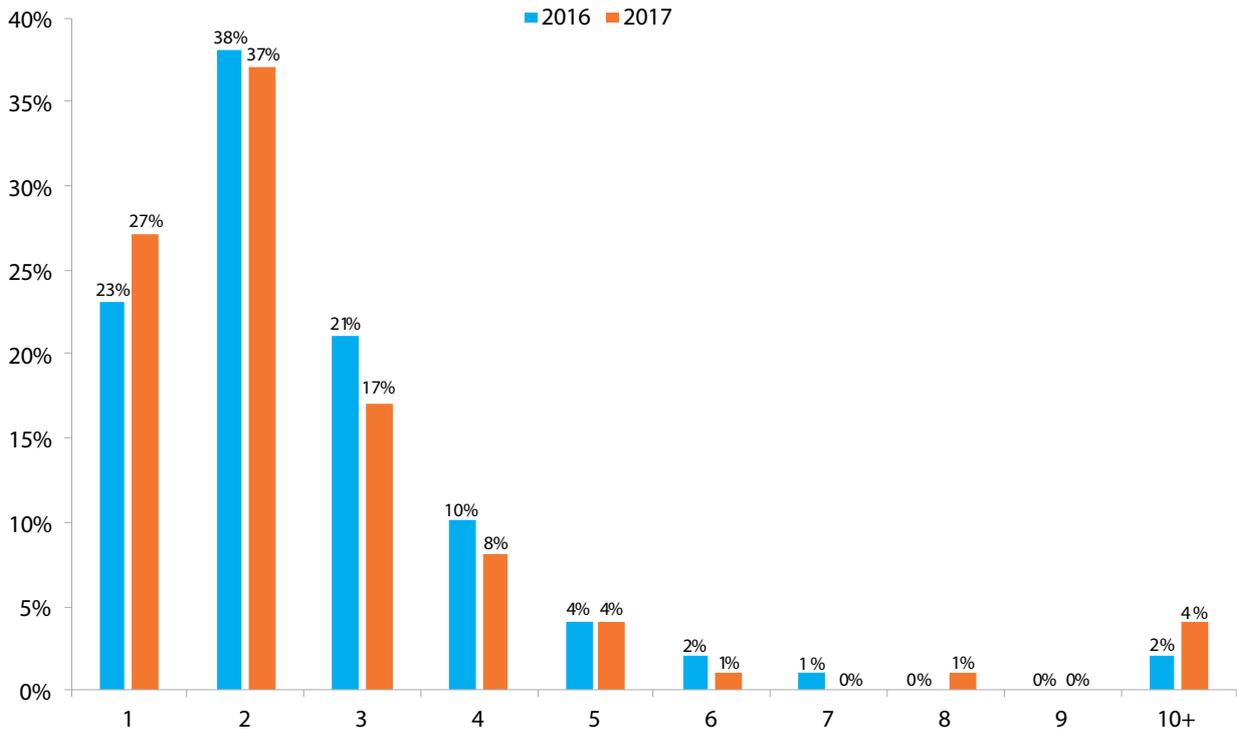
- Unsubscribes are mostly driven by a combination of customer churn (55%), customers receiving too many irrelevant emails (53%) and not remembering they've signed up (47%)
- One in 5 consumers report looking for a desired marketing email in their spam
- 41% of consumers would reduce the frequency of marketing emails if given the choice
- 20% of consumers have abandoned or deactivated personal email addresses because of too many emails – this accounts for over half of all disused email addresses
- When asked about organisations handling their data responsibly, consumers cite the need for preference centre access (37%), trust in the organisation (37%) and clear privacy policies (37%) – all increasing since the last report in 2016
- A number of consumers are still wondering how brands got hold of their email – a concern as GDPR approaches with its strict definition of consent

# 1. Email accounts

## Account ownership

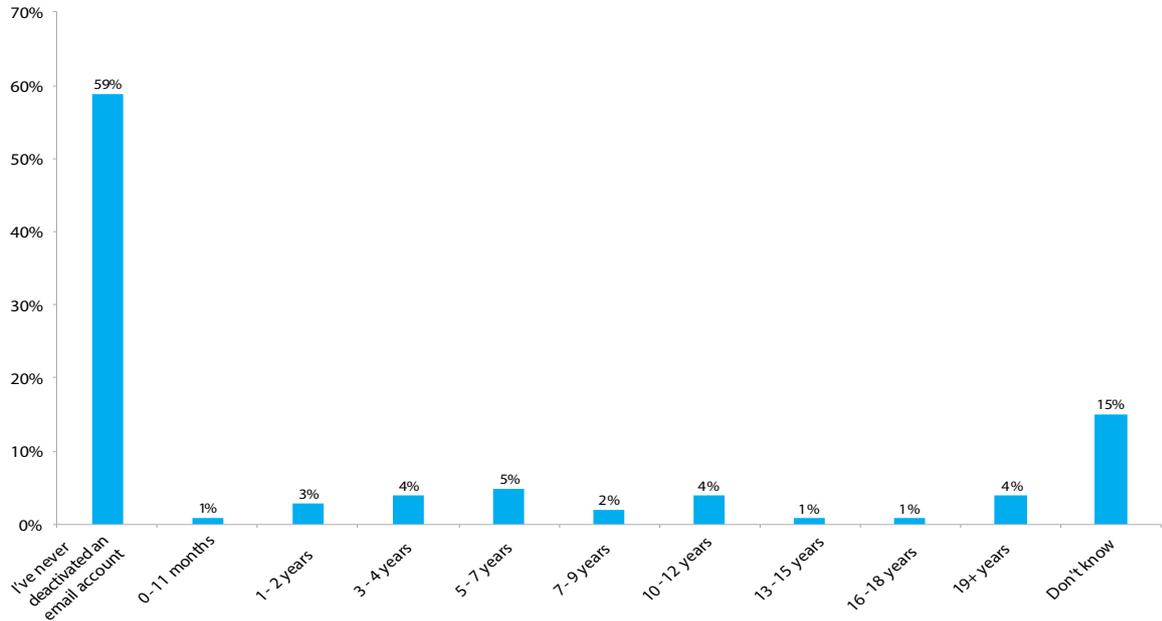
First, we asked about consumers' email accounts. How many do they have? How long to the keep them? Have they ever deactivated or abandoned an account?

### How many email addresses do you have?



The majority of people have one or two email addresses. The average number of email addresses is 2.6, unchanged from last year.

### Typically for how long do you keep an email address active?

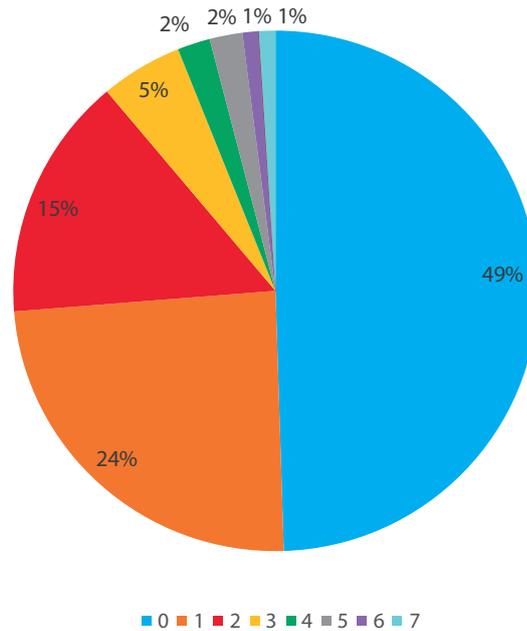


The majority (59%) of consumers have never deactivated an email account. While there is little financial incentive to deactivate, as email accounts are typically free, there are also barriers to deactivation, such as the address being linked to other online accounts like social media profiles or retail sites.

Even within the fraction of accounts destined for deactivation, these are expected to be used for an average of 26 months.

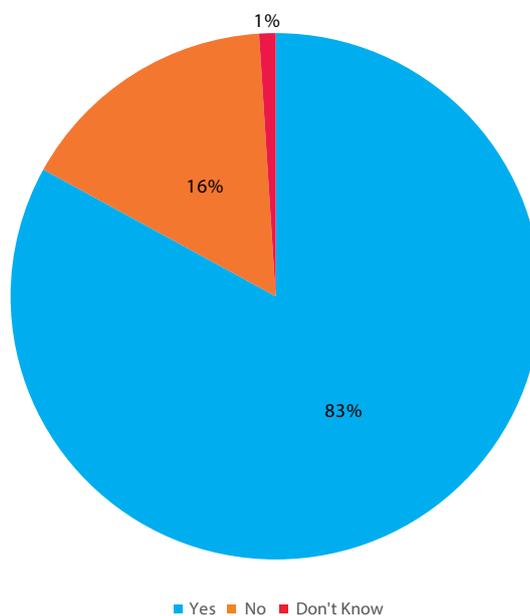
Over time, this loss of accounts could start to affect deliverability. However, according to marketers' own deliverability metrics, 98.3% of emails were delivered in 2016. This suggests marketers are already detecting deactivated accounts using automated mailing list management tools and removing these from their lists.

**How many email addresses do you have that are inactive/you don't use anymore?**



Half of people have at least one inactive email address – and a quarter have two or more addresses they no longer use. However, with inbox placement in the UK being measured by ReturnPath at between 83 and 85%, marketers are clearly taking action when they find these unengaged or inactive accounts.

**Is your first email address still your primary email address?**



Eight in 10 (83%) of people still use their original email address as their main account. Given the amount of interconnectivity between email and other online services – social media, banking, marketing, and others – it seems reasonable that abandoning one’s primary email would simply be too inconvenient, no matter the conditions.

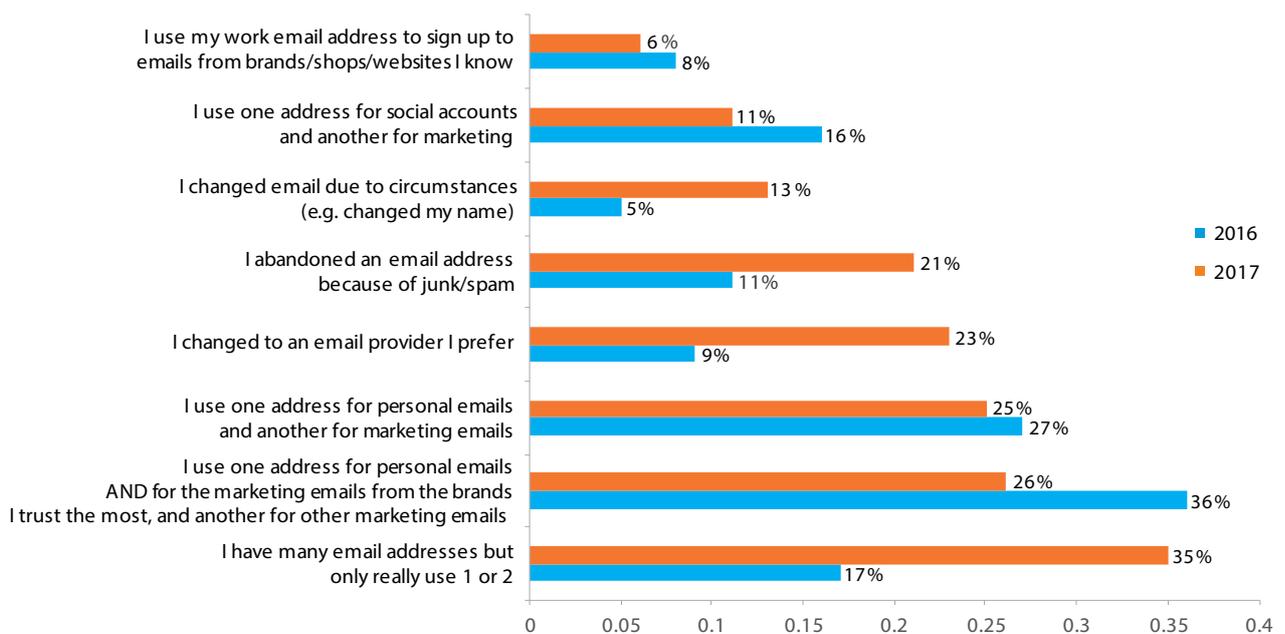
However, given the number of abandoned and deactivated emails, this suggests that alternate accounts are subject to high turnover, hinting at a culture of using disposable accounts amongst some users: signing up for an email address with a plan to abandon it later. Or perhaps consumers are creating new emails for a particular purpose and then forgetting about them. Either way, marketers shouldn’t take the engagement with an email address for granted: it could disappear.

### Account behaviour

Next, we asked about the use of email. How are consumers using their different email accounts? How often are consumers engaged with their inbox? How does prevalence of email use on smartphones and tablets compare to use on computers?

Consumers report that they interact with email for hours every day, and over half of what they receive in their inboxes is marketing.

#### How do you use your different email addresses?

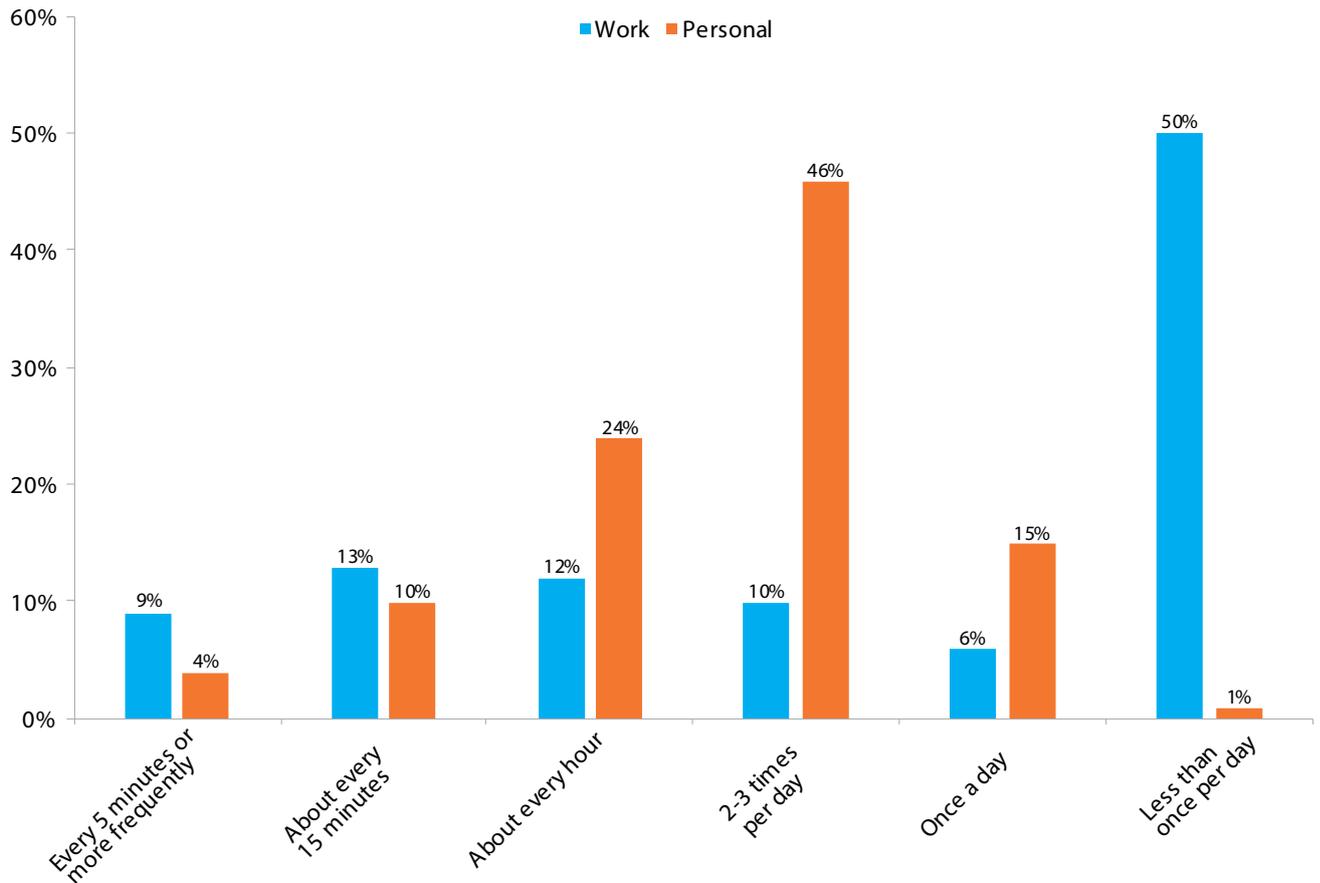


We find a mixture of behaviours when it comes to differentiating between email accounts.

Of those with multiple email addresses, 35% only really use one or two addresses.

A large minority of consumers funnel any marketing communications to one particular account, while keeping personal emails separate. 26% said they only allow the most trusted marketing messages to their personal email, whereas 25% said they don’t allow any marketing to their personal account. In total, 44% of respondents checked at least one of these options, showing this is a prevalent behaviour.

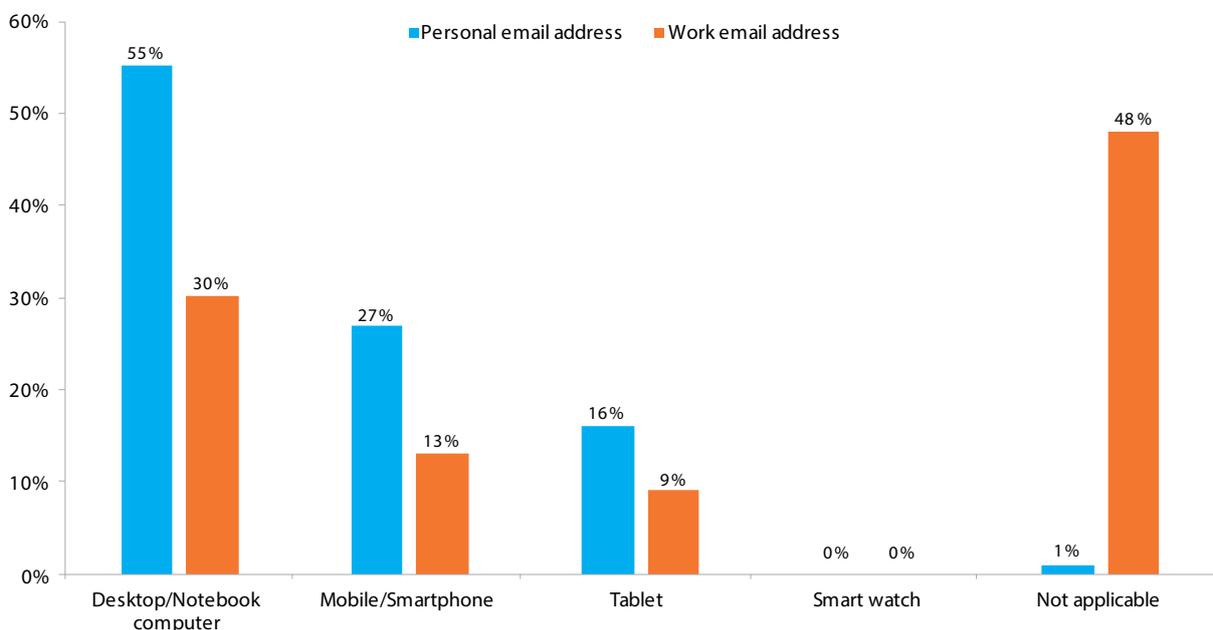
**How often do you check your email inbox?**



Most consumers check their personal inbox 2 or 3 times a day, and we observe a fairly even spread of behaviour. 99% of consumers check their personal email every day.

At work, we see more polarisation in the use of email, with 50% not checking their work email at least once a day. This includes those who don't use email at work, highlighting that there are still many professions in the UK that do not rely on email in the workplace. At the other end of this spectrum, 34% check their work email every hour or more frequently.

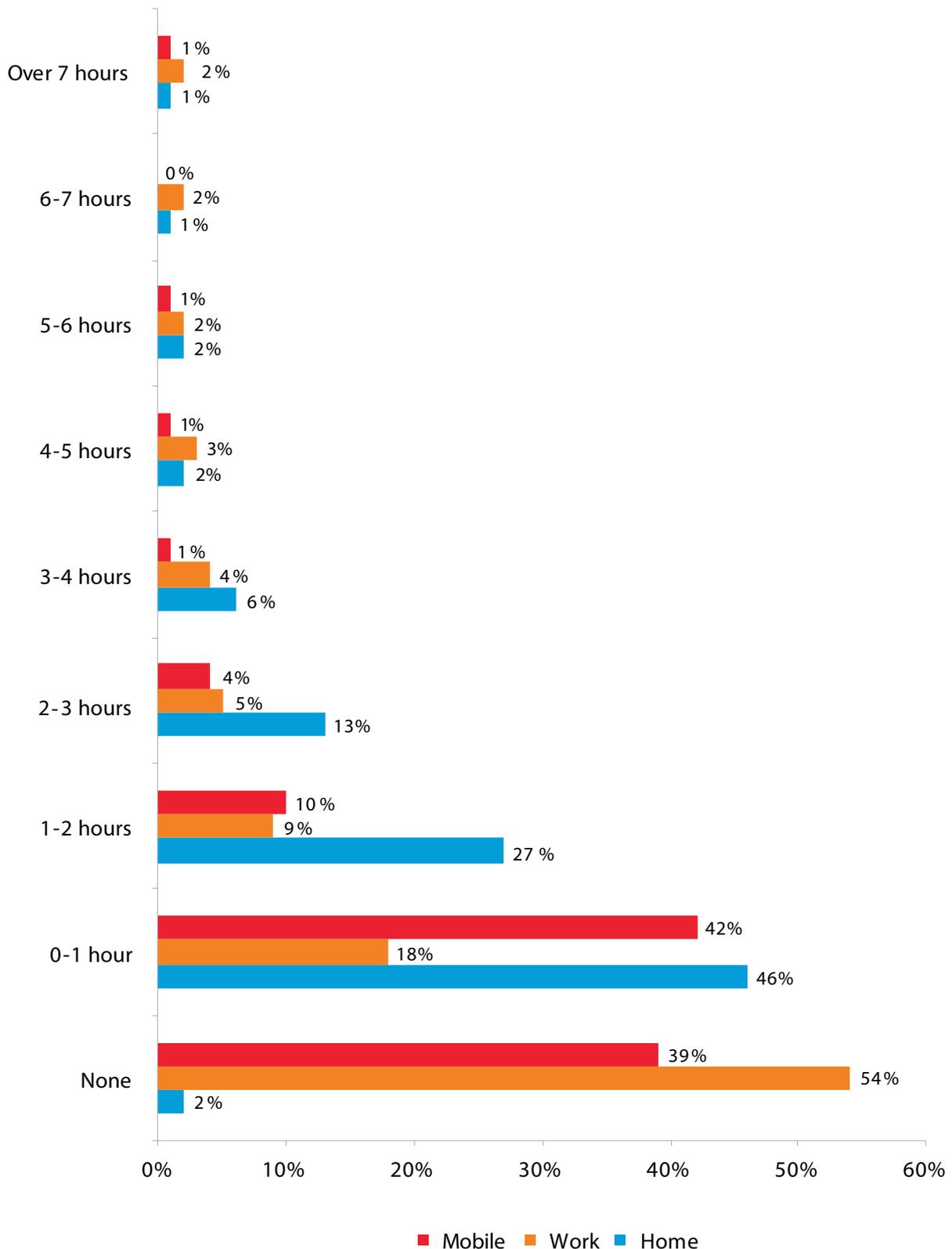
**Please select the device you use most often to access emails from the brands/shops/sites you know.**



Whether work or personal, the most common way to check email is a computer for most email users. Significant minorities, however, use mobile or tablet as their primary device – especially with personal emails, at 27% for mobile and 16% for tablet.

According to [data on device usage from Deloitte](#), 78% of adults own or have access to a laptop computer, 85% to a smartphone, and 68% to a tablet. So, consumers still prefer viewing email on a computer even taking into account the high levels of smartphone and tablet ownership.

**How much time do you spend using email per day?**

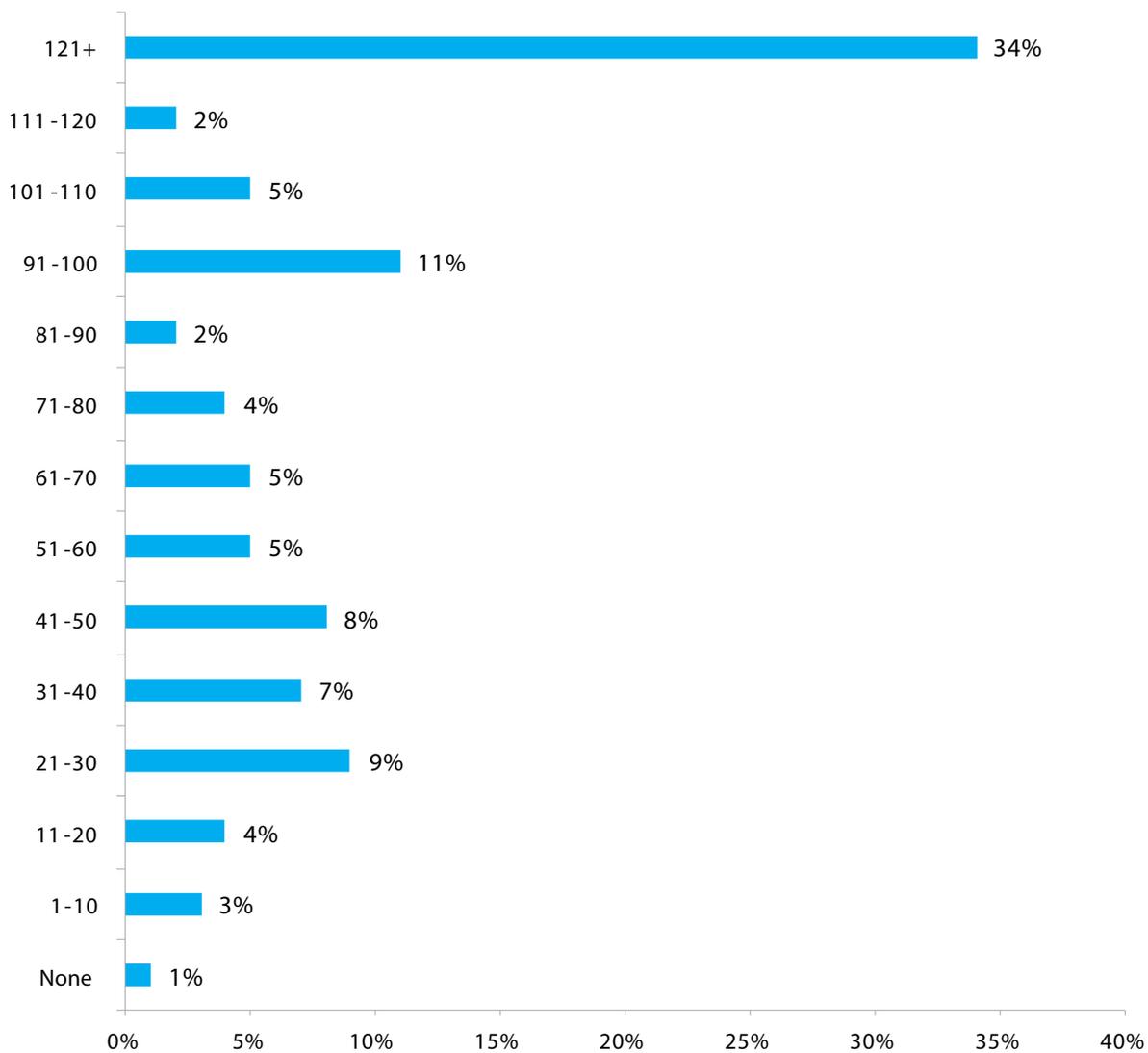


At home, people typically spend 2 hours or less using email. 2% of consumers said they don't spend any time using email at home, whereas 5% of consumers say they used email for 4 hours or more.

54% of consumers spend no time using email at work, although it can be expected that the decision makers within organisations are more likely to fall into the 46% of people that do use email at work.

Use of email on mobile is growing. 39% spend no time accessing email on mobile, meaning 61% of users do – compared with 51% last year.

**How many emails do you receive in your inbox on average each week?**



Consumers estimate high numbers of messages enter their inbox; 34% of respondents opted for the highest available option, 121+, alongside a fairly even spread for the other options.

**The average email user: work and home**

Based on these responses, we estimate that the average consumer checks their work inbox 28 times a day, and their personal inbox 19 times a day. The high number of checks for work email is driven by the minority of consumers who repeatedly check their email while at work – every 5 minutes or more frequently.

The average consumer says they spend around 1hr 30min using their personal email, around 1hr using their work email, and 40mins checking email on mobile – a total of 2hrs 10min interacting with email each day.

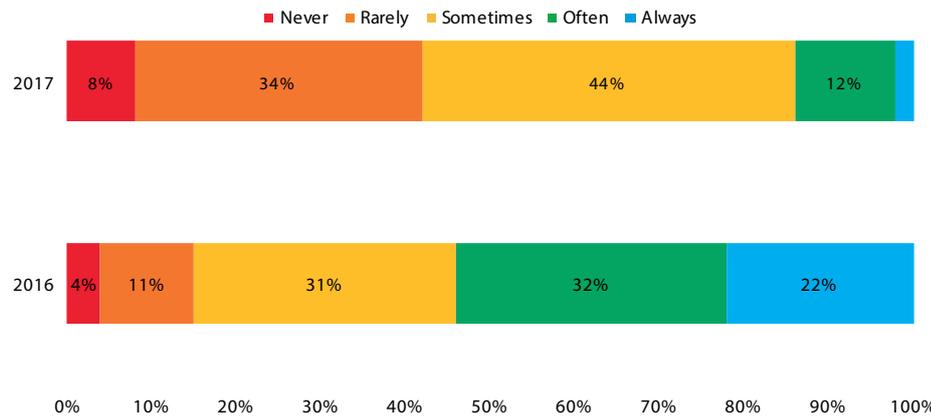
At work, email users are therefore spending a little over 2 minutes each time they check. They spend over twice as long, around 5 minutes, checking their personal inbox each time.

## 2. Email marketing

### Signing-up

Next, we asked about marketing mailing lists. How often do users sign up happen and why are consumers registering?

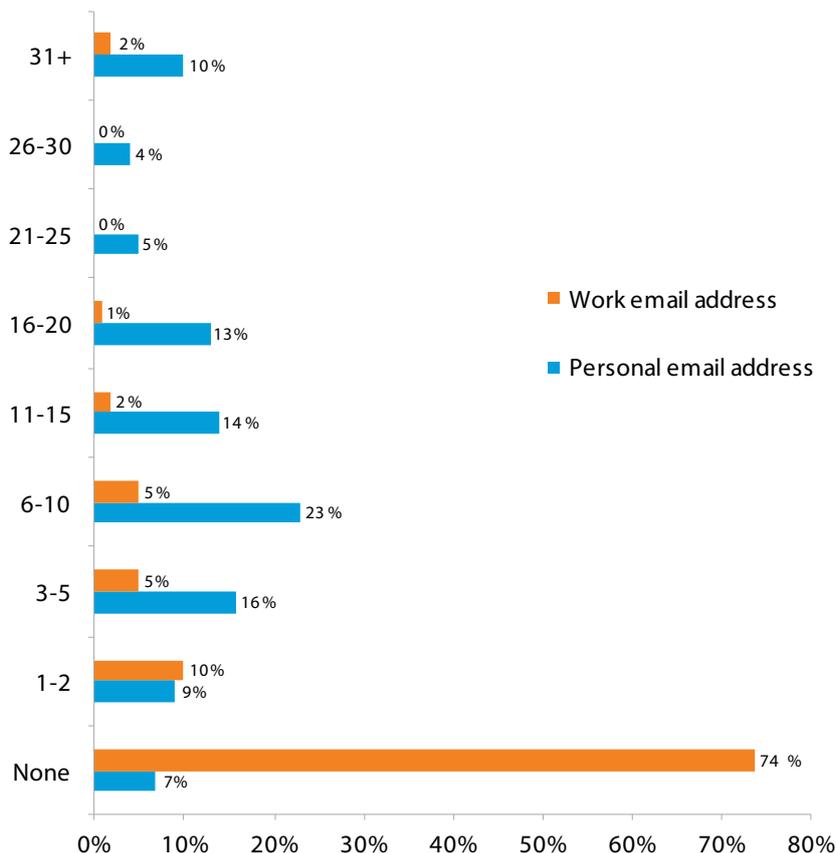
#### How often do you sign up to receive marketing emails from brands/shops/sites?



We've seen a dramatic fall in the numbers of consumers willing to opt in to marketing communications. The majority of consumers answered that they "rarely (34%) or "sometimes" (44%) opt in to receive marketing via email, and we have very few consumers at the extremes of the scale.

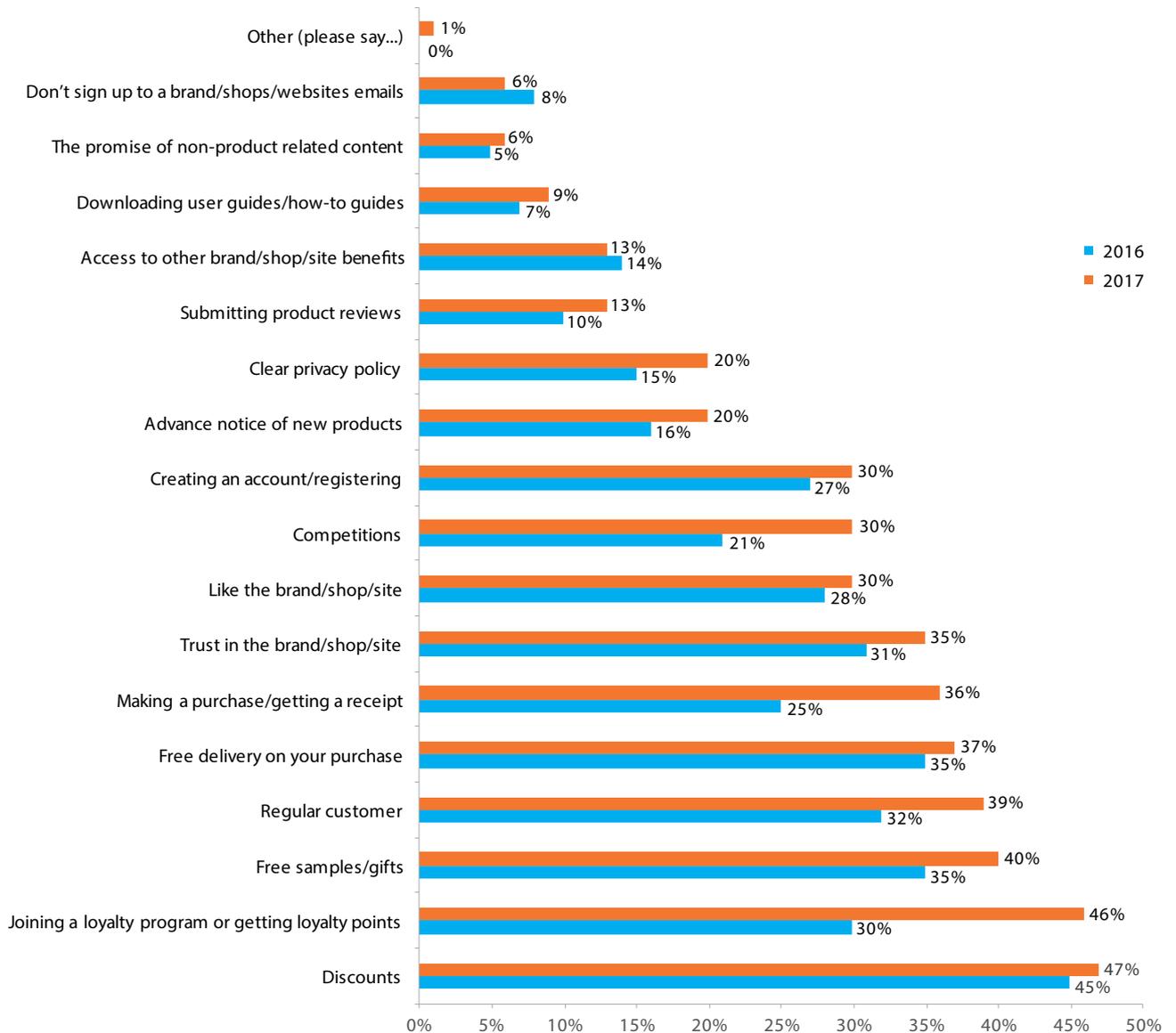
This suggests that for a lot of consumers the brand, product and topic matter a great deal, but there are very few fundamentally opposed to email.

#### How many brands/shops/sites are you currently signed up to receive emails from?



93% of consumers are signed up to at least one mailing list using their personal accounts. The average consumer signs up for 12 mailing lists on their personal account. Largely due to the 48% of email users without work accounts, there are far fewer consumers signing up using their work accounts.

**What persuades you to give your email address to a brand/shop/website?**



Promotions are the most common reasons for signing up to receive marketing emails, making up four of the top 5: Discounts (47%), a loyalty program (46%), free samples (40%) and free delivery (39%). The focus on discounts by the consumer is unsurprising, as receiving the offer of something for free or a discount will always generate interest. However, for the businesses involved making only these types of offer will impact ROI and marketers have regularly reported that these methods are not the best performing. According to the last [Marketer Email Tracker](#) trustworthiness (39%), competitions (26%) and the offer of exclusive content (23%) were the three most effective methods.

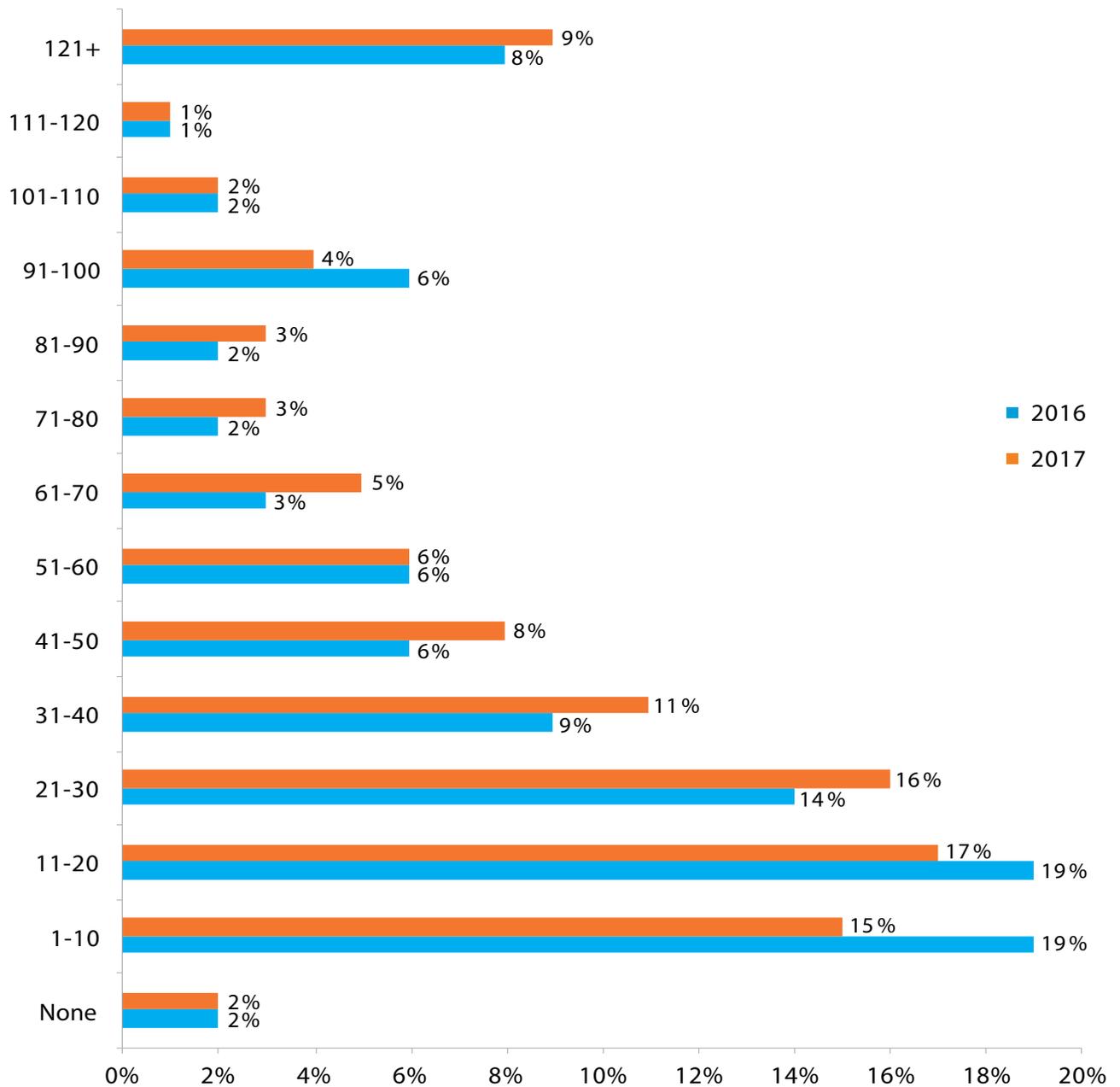
In addition, significant minorities have ethical considerations when deciding whether to sign-up to receive emails from a brand: trust in the brand (35%) and a clear privacy policy (20%), for example.

We have seen a large increase in those who cite a loyalty program as a reason to share their email address, from 30% in 2016 to 46% this year.

## Receiving email marketing

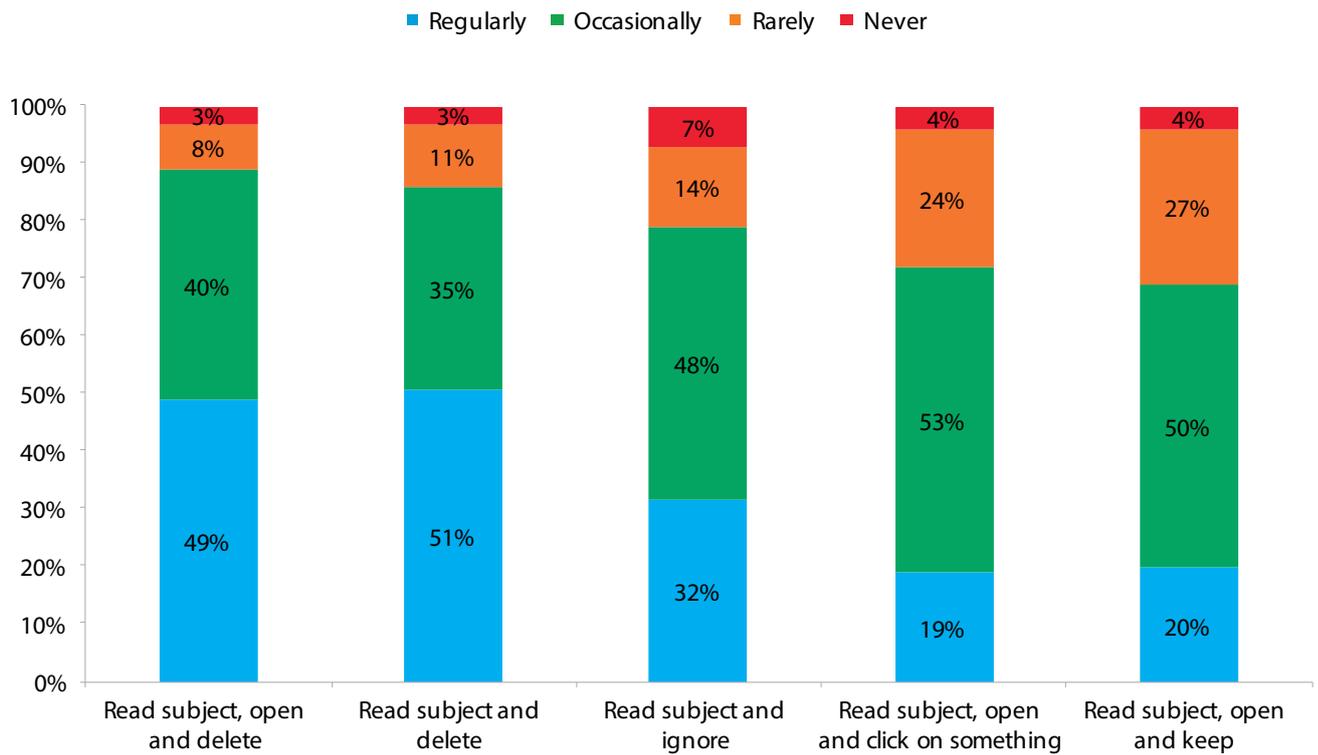
Next we asked about marketing emails: how many are consumers receiving, and what do they like to receive?

**How many emails do you receive in your inbox on average each week from brands/shops/websites you know?**



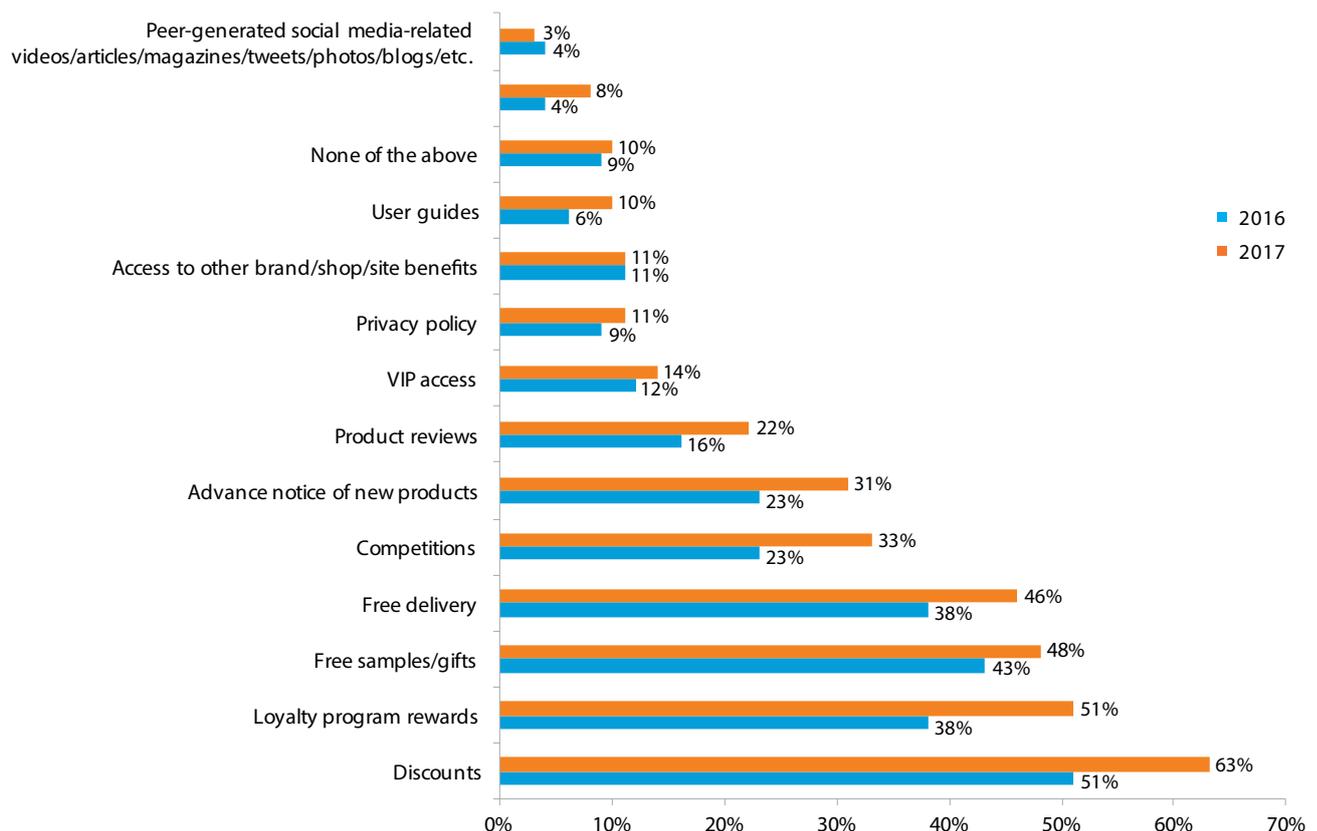
When it comes to marketing, consumers aren't being flooded with messages. The overwhelming majority of consumers (78%) believe they receive under 10 marketing emails a day.

**When you check on your smartphone, how often do you do the following when you receive an email from a brand/shop/site you know?**



Generally, deleting and ignoring emails on smartphones are commonplace, clearly showing that smartphones are where inboxes are triaged not read. Around half of email users delete their emails whether opening them first or not. Consumers say opening, clicking and keeping emails is less common, with only around a fifth of users regularly taking these actions.

**Once a brand has your email address, what do you like receiving from them?**



Typically, consumers cite tactical content as their favourite – things that give them added value – highlighting the opportunity that a content driven marketing campaign could offer marketers. From direct discounts (63%) to rewards (51%), free gifts (48%), free delivery (46%) and competitions (33%), consumers unsurprisingly have a strong preference for saving money and giveaways. [Email marketers themselves](#) tend to place less emphasis on discounts than consumers, suggesting they typically gain less benefit than the consumer. Using offers strategically to develop brand trust, and engagement, drive retention and increase lifetime value is essential.

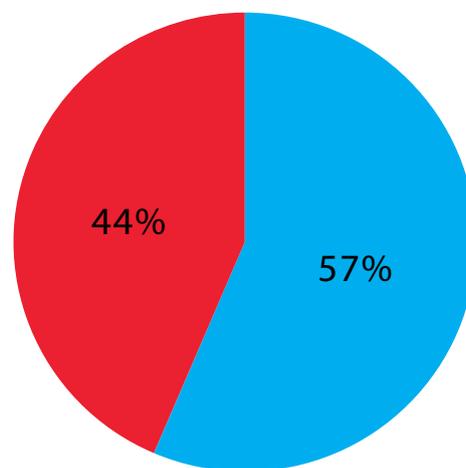
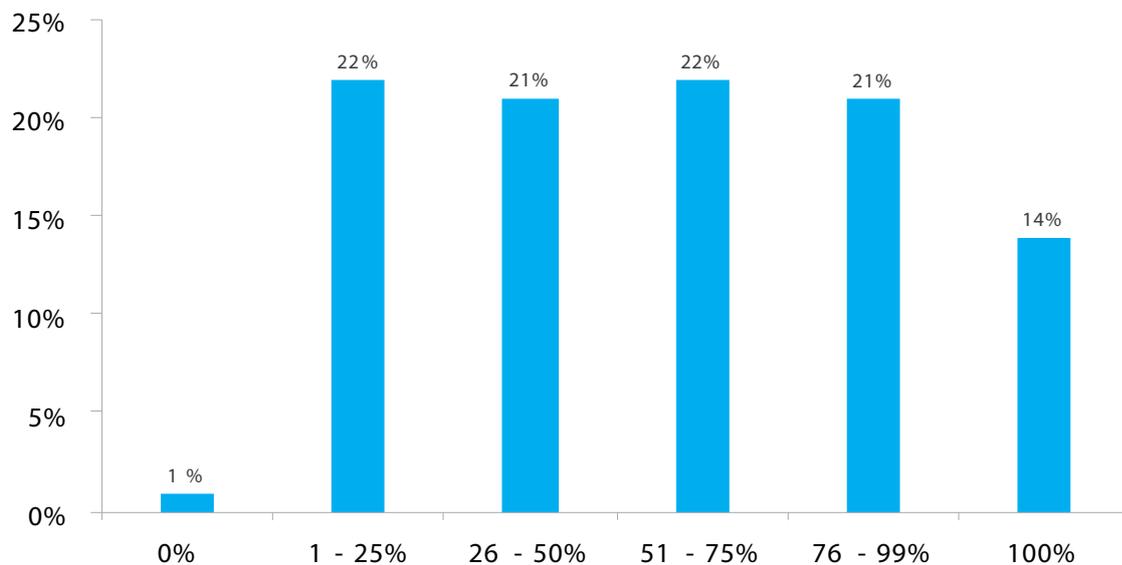
There are preferences favoured by large groups of consumers, such as advance notice of new products (31%) and product reviews (22%), which cost nothing to the marketer. Giving consumers valuable information can generate engagement too.

# Email preferences and actions

## Opening

Next, we asked about factors in opening emails. What makes a consumer likely to open? What email content do consumers like? And what persuades them to read, share and click?

### What percentage of emails do you think you open and read?

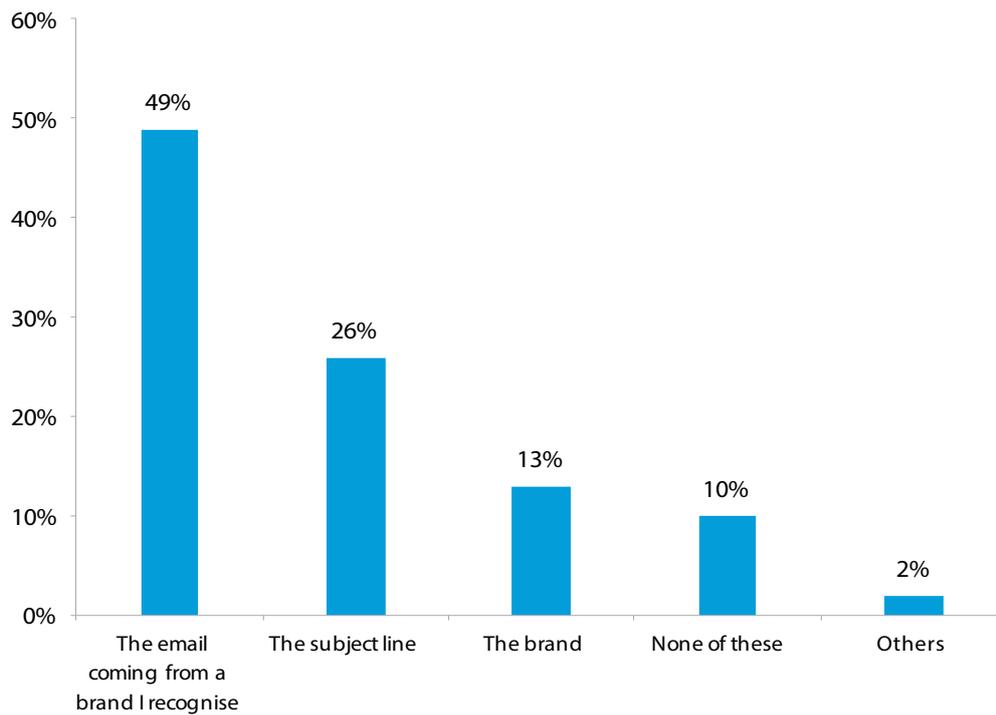


■ Over half ■ Under half

Consumers estimate they open, on an average, 57% of the emails they receive. Coincidentally, 57% also report opening and reading over half the emails they receive. However, we know from [marketers' open rate metrics](#) that only around 1 in seven marketing emails are opened.

This suggests that consumers are receiving large amounts of non-marketing emails that they are opening, they are overestimating the amount of emails they open, or they do not realise that a lot of emails they receive constitute marketing.

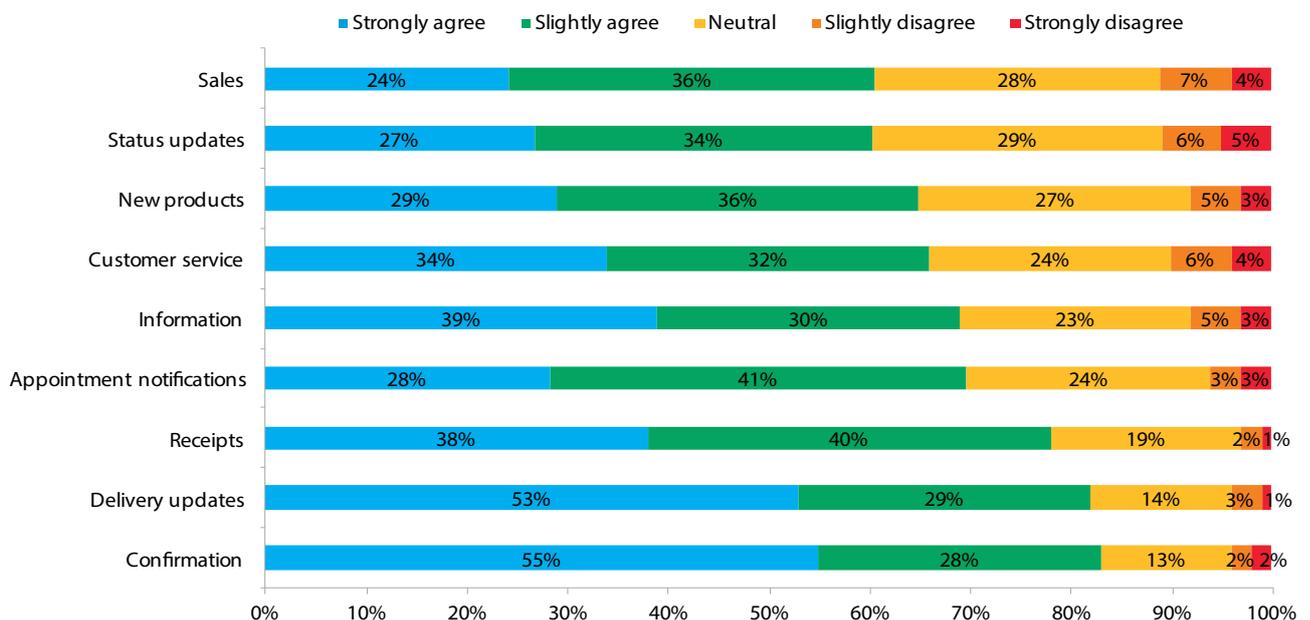
### What is the most important factor in opening an email?



Almost half of consumers have to recognise the brand before even opening the email – highlighting the importance of your customer knowing who is emailing them and why, at the risk of simply being ignored. While the vast majority of brands are not spamming their customers, the risk for marketers is of consumers simply forgetting when or why they signed up to receive emails from a brand. A quarter also need an engaging subject line in order to open.

### Preferences

We also asked what consumers like best about email, and about the relevance of marketing emails. What purposes are best served by email? What sorts of emails do consumers like? Which brands do email best? What proportion of emails do consumers think are relevant to them?

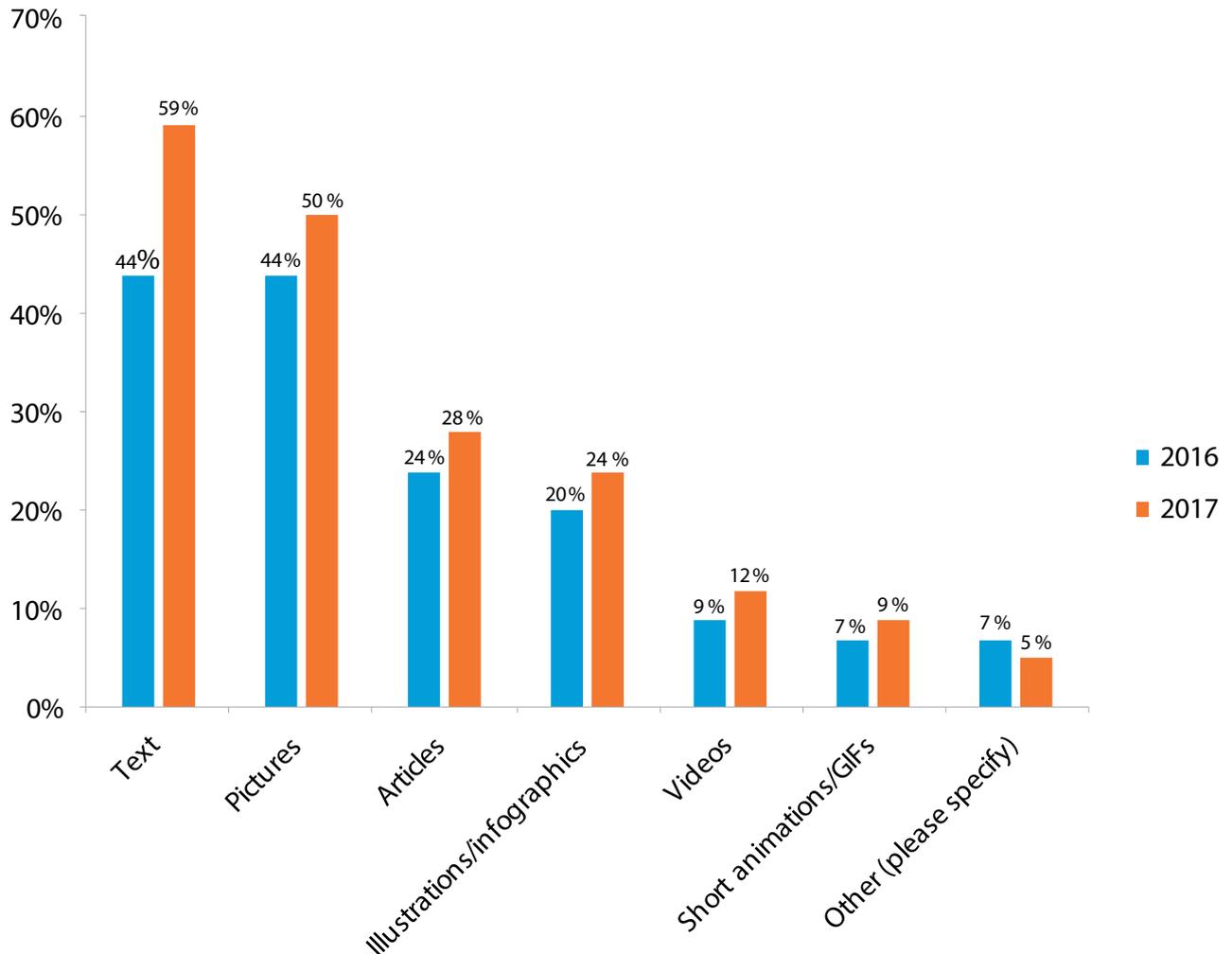


Across the board, consumers tend to agree that a variety of needs are best served by email.

Modern necessities in retail like order confirmations, delivery updates and e-receipts come out on top, with 83%, 82% and 78% of consumers agreeing these are best served by email, respectively.

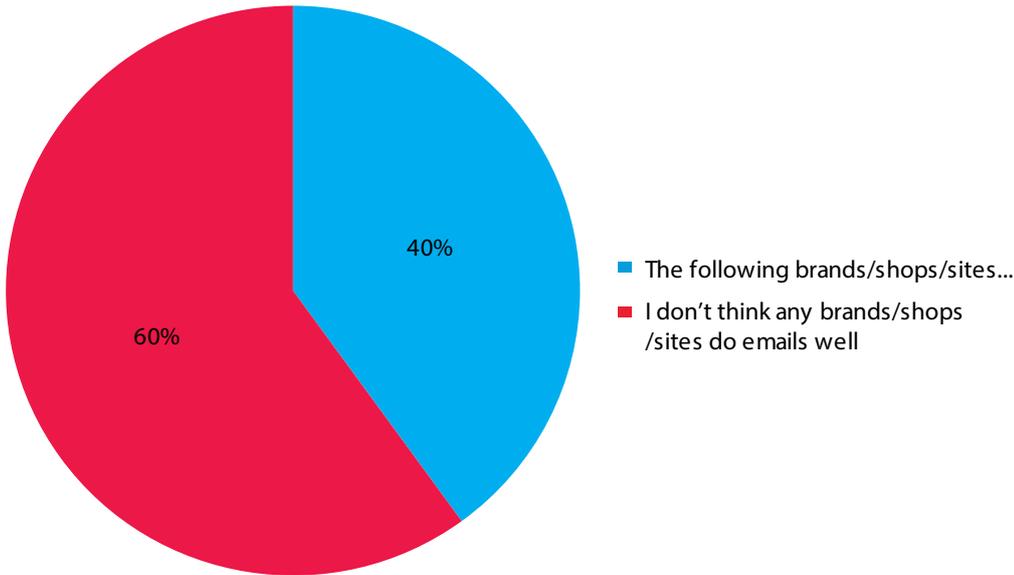
Interestingly, despite consumers leaning heavily towards promotional content, sales come bottom of the list here, with only 60% agreeing.

#### What do you like best in emails?



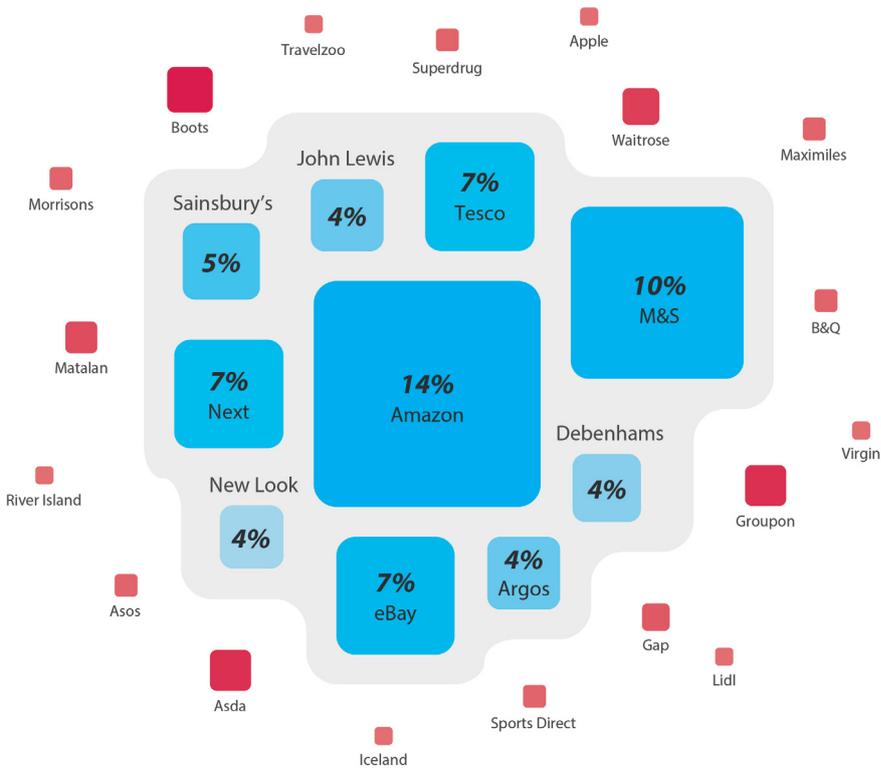
In terms of types of content, text and pictures top the bill – underlining the need to do the basics well. Good news for the copywriters is that consumers care about what you write: if your copy isn't up to scratch it'll be hard to rescue your email. The continued importance and power of the craft of copywriting is something the DMA supports through its [Campaign for great British copywriting](#).

Which brands/shops/sites do you think do email well?



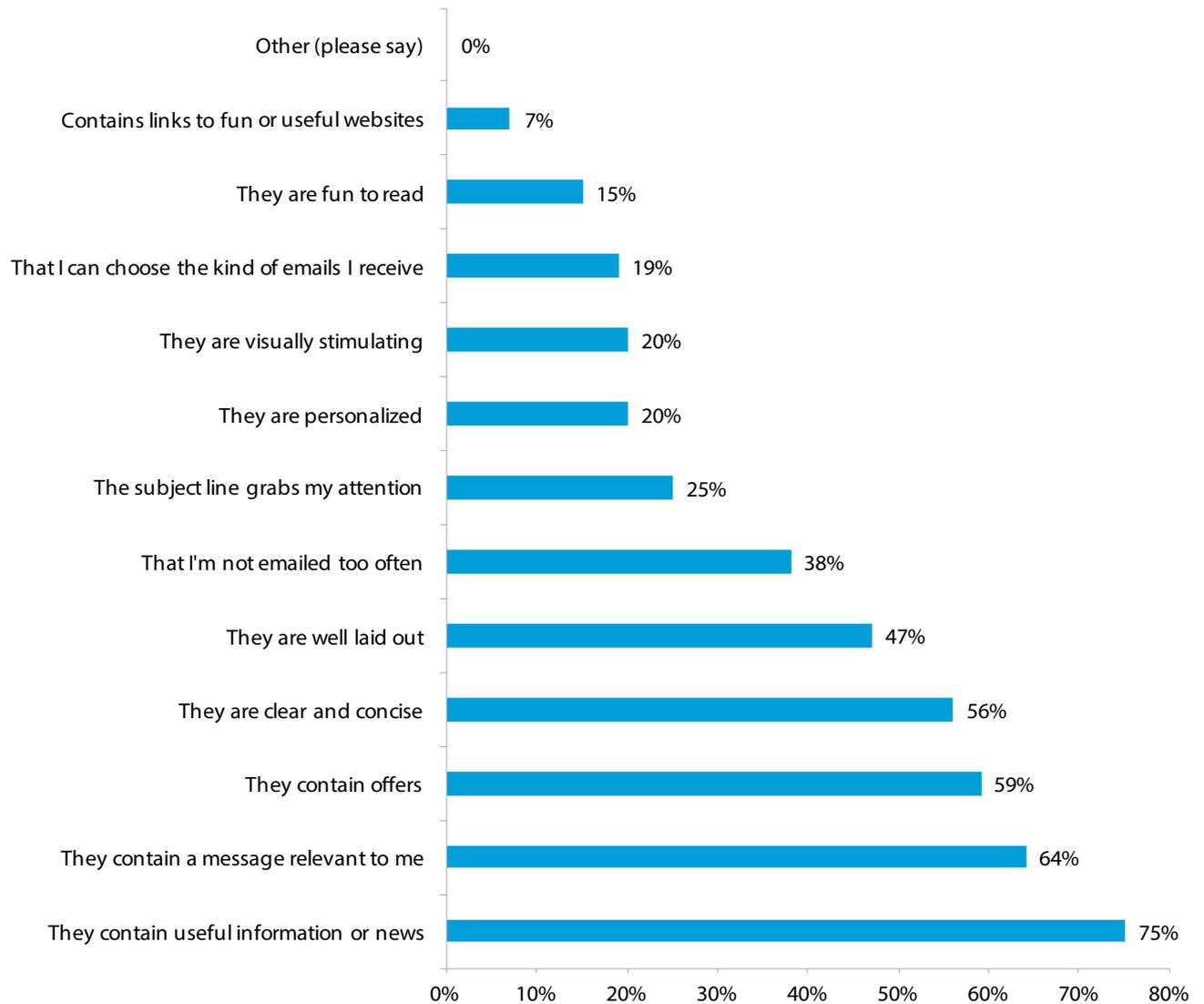
60% of consumers don't think any brands do email well, suggesting that a number of brands are not delivering what consumers want. 40% named at least one brand.

Which brands/shops/sites do you think do email well? [Top brands by mentions]



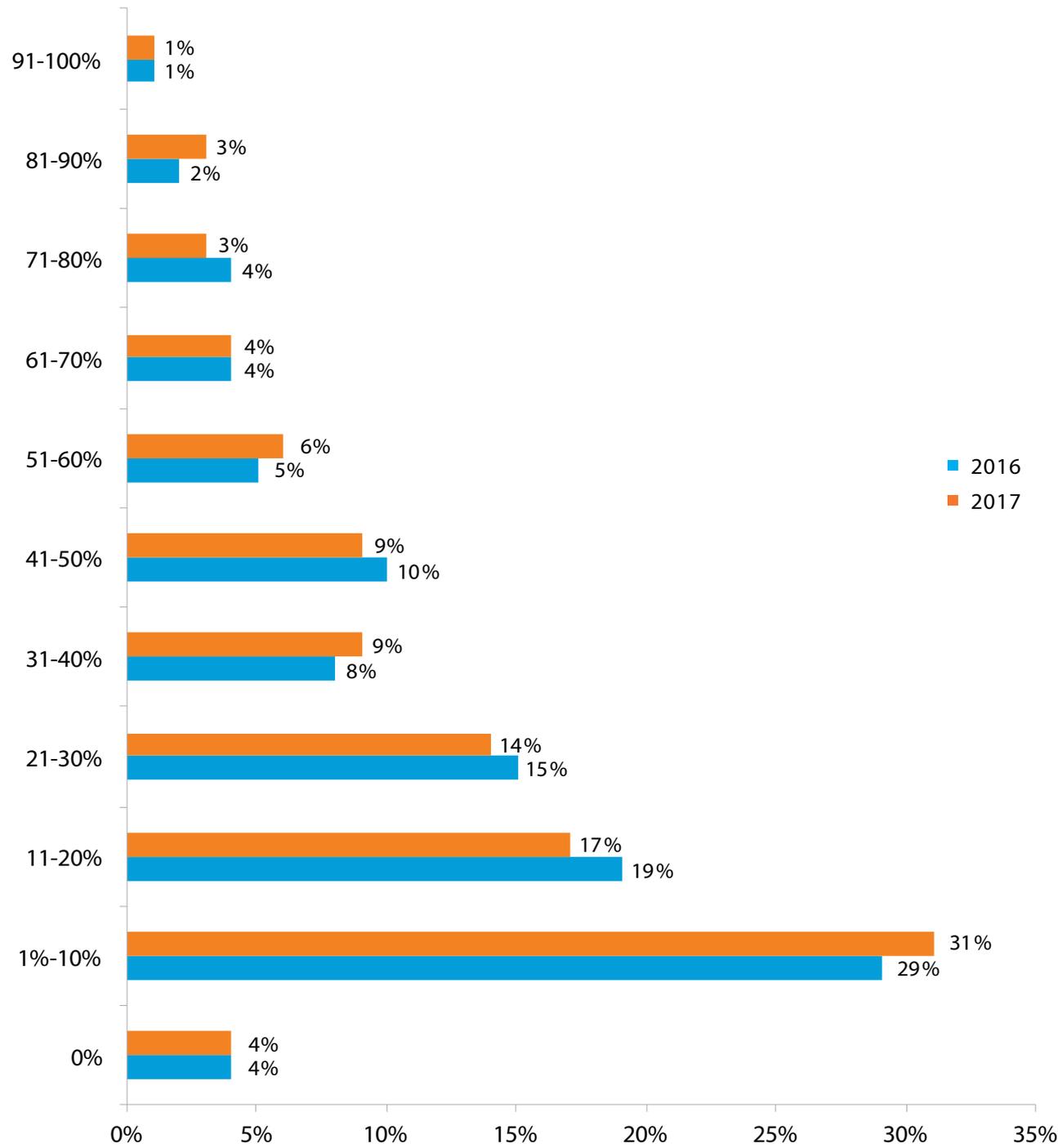
When it comes to naming brands that do email well, we see a dominance of online and retail brands in consumers' minds. The top brand, Amazon, is notable both for the volume of emails it sends to its customers and its use of email – simply doing the basics well. It's therefore no wonder that it tops the list in consumer mentions.

### When we say 'do email well', what does that mean to you?



Only one of the top five – “they contain offers” – is unequivocally tactical, with 59% of respondents selecting this. “Useful information” (75%) and “relevant message” (64%) highlight the necessity for relevance and targeting. Meanwhile, high responses for “clear and concise” (56%) and “well laid out” (47%) show the need to make things easy for your consumers.

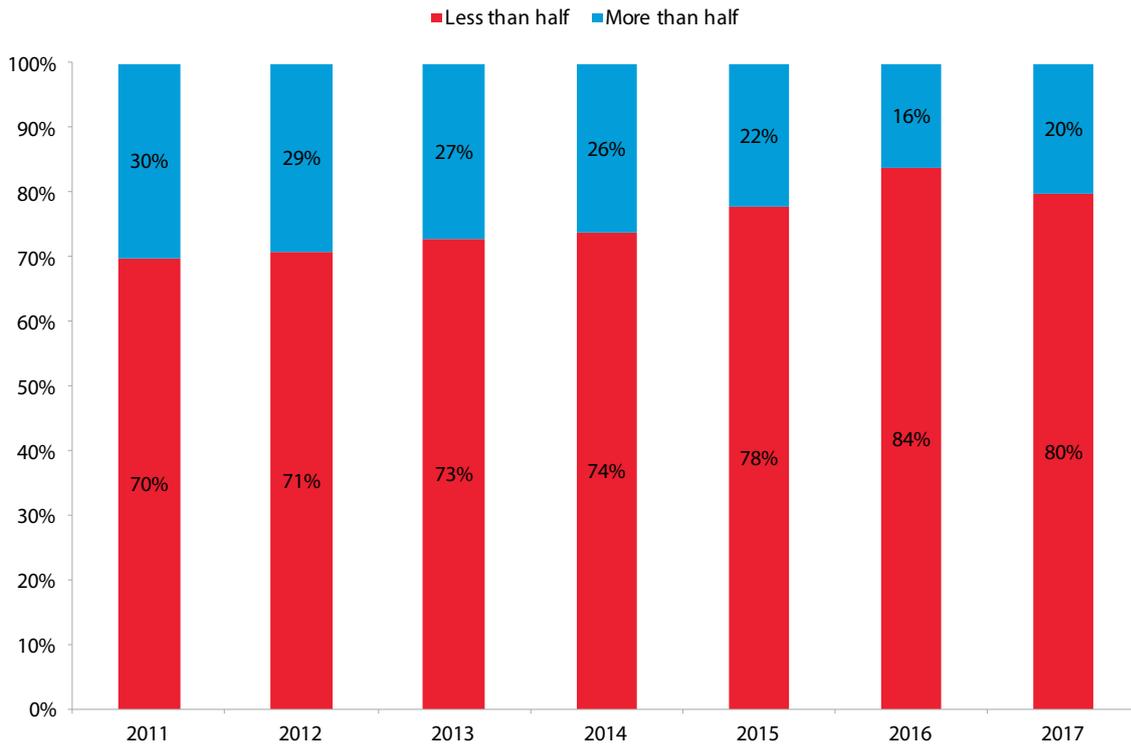
What percentage of those that you receive do you consider relevant to you?



Compared to last year, consumers report a slight increase in the numbers of relevant marketing communications.

While only 4% of users don't think any marketing they receive is relevant, 31% think less than one in 10 messages they receive are relevant. The majority of people report that no more than three in 10 messages are relevant – we estimate an average of 27% of marketing communications are deemed relevant by their recipients.

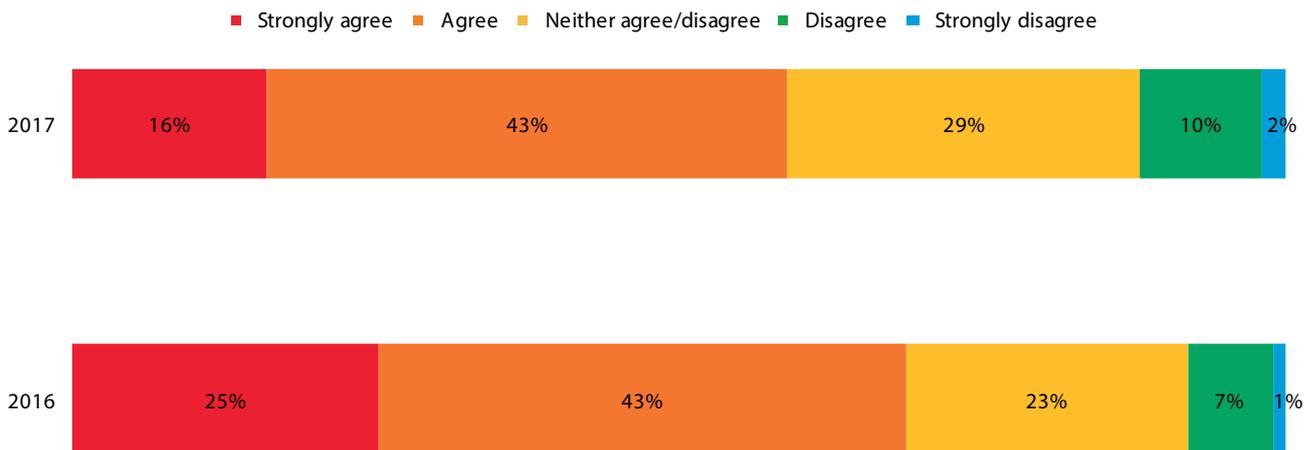
**What percentage of those that you receive do you consider relevant to you? [Less than half vs mess that half]**



If we split the respondents into two groups – those who said less than half their messages were relevant, and those that said more than half were – we can see the change in gross relevance over time.

From 2011 to 2016, we have seen a gradual reduction in relevance over time. Those reporting that more than half of their marketing emails were relevant dropped to a low of 16% last year. However, we have seen a small improvement this year, suggesting that email marketers are making some headway in targeting and relevance.

**How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement? "Most of the emails from brands/shops/sites I receive include no information or offers that are of interest to me."**



The number of consumers agreeing that most marketing emails are irrelevant has also fallen compared to last year, while the number disagreeing has risen.

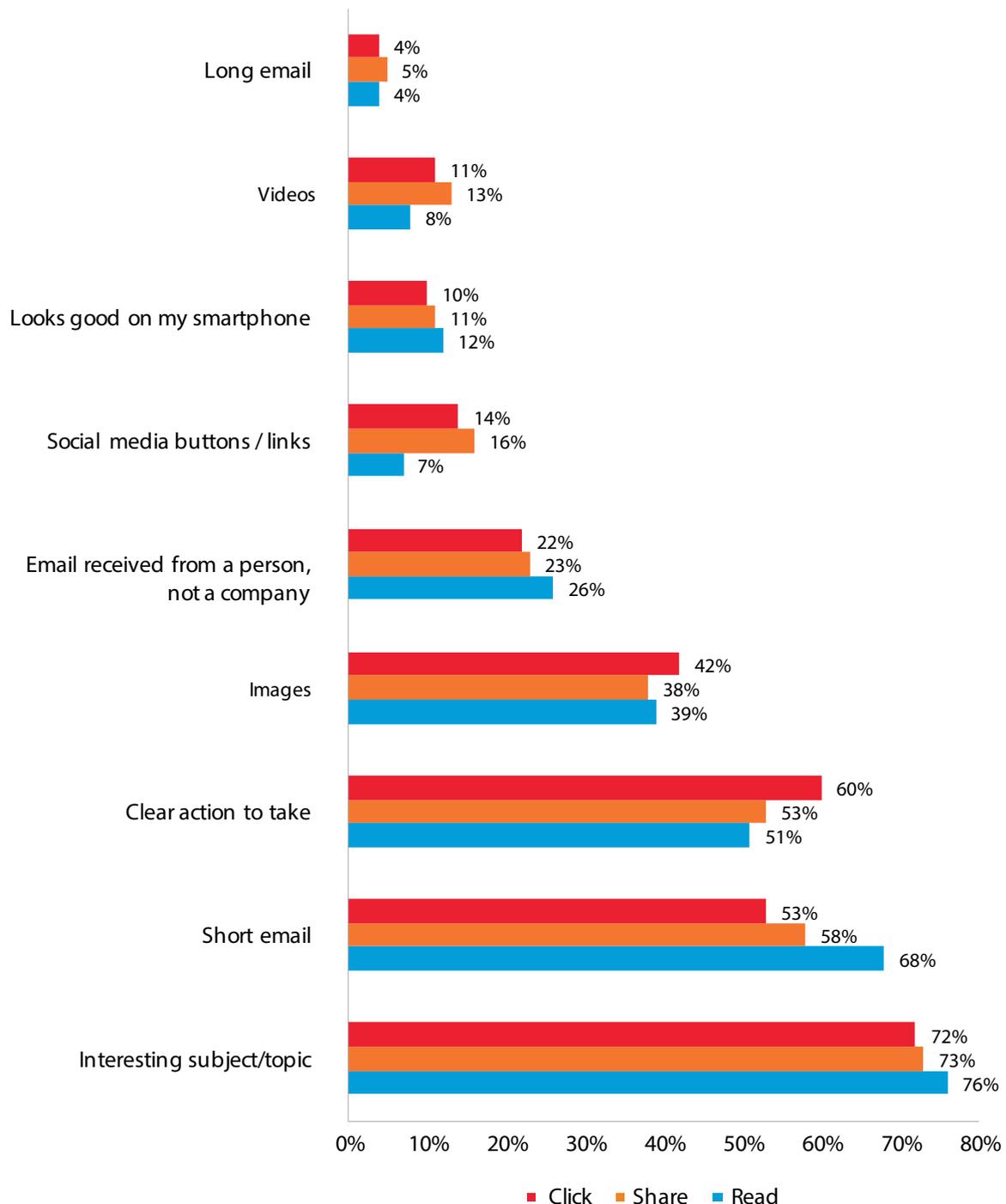
59% of consumers say most marketing is irrelevant, compared with 68% last year. The number of people saying that most of the emails they receive are relevant has also risen from 8% to 12%.

Overall, these are positive statistics for marketers who hoped to increase the relevance of their communications – and shows the industry is moving forwards.

## Responding to email

Next, we asked what factors make consumers likely to take action from email. What drives reading, sharing and clicking? What are the most likely actions? And do consumers behave differently on their mobiles?

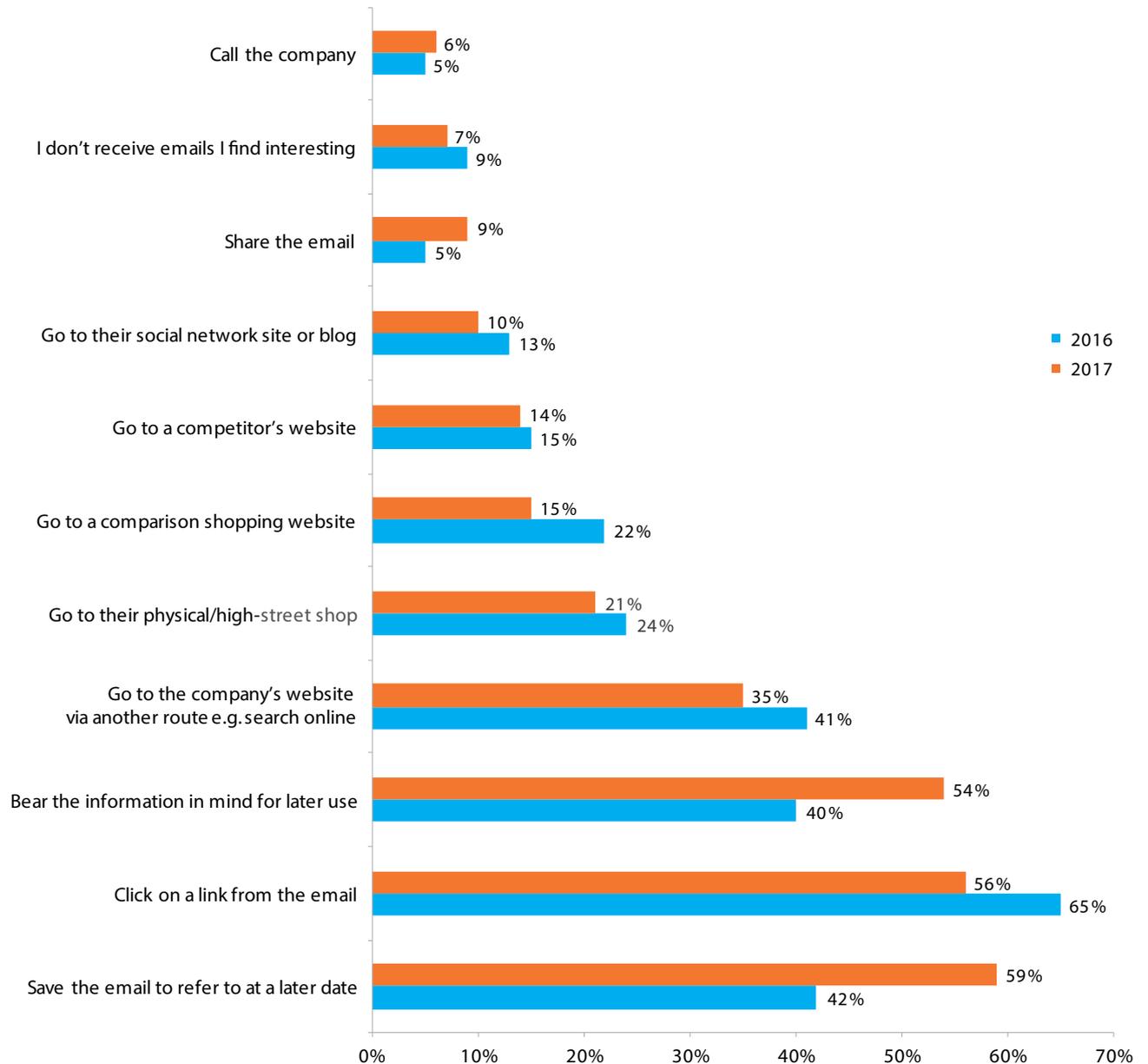
**Which of the following email characteristics are more likely to encourage you to take one of the following actions? Read the email; share the email; click a link.**



No matter the action - read, share or click - engagement is typically driven by three things: the subject being relevant; the email being short; and the action being clear. This drives home the need for communications to be targeted, relevant and concise, while making the objective of your email apparent to the consumer.

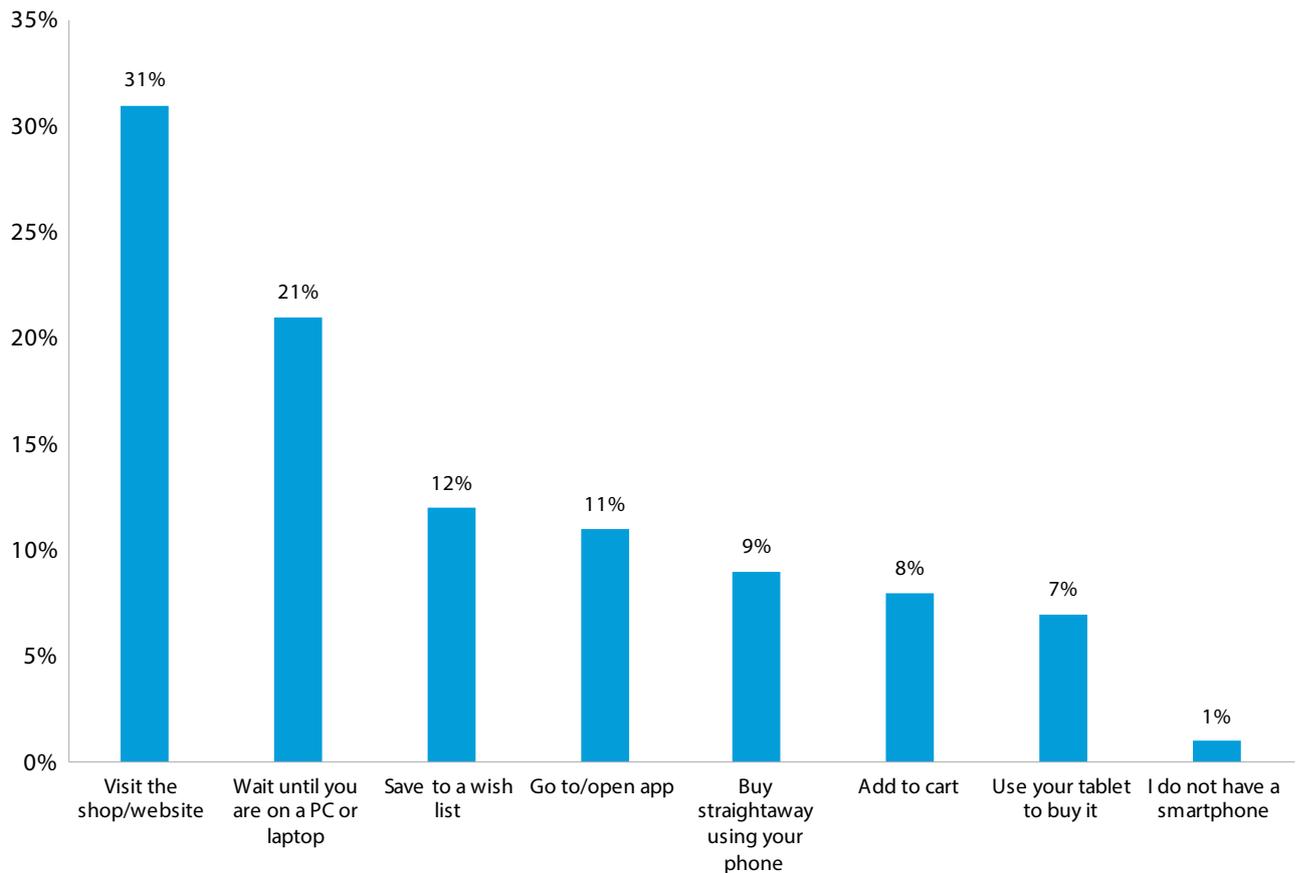
Earlier, we saw that clear, concise and relevant emails were consumers' favourites. A marketers' idea of what makes email good is what makes an email enjoyable for consumers, too. An enjoyable email makes for an engaging email.

**After receiving an interesting email, what are the 3 most likely actions you would take?**



Of the top five actions from an email, only one is a traditional “direct” marketing action – clicking a link from the email. It’s also the only one that will show up in [traditional email marketing metrics](#). The others are saving the email for reference; bearing information in mind; visiting the website through another route; visiting a physical outlet. The prevalence of these sorts of actions suggest that email serves a dual role as both a direct response medium and a more traditional, broadcast medium.

**f you see something you want to buy in an email on your smartphone, you are most likely to...**



Only two of the top five is a direct response – “go to/open app” and “buy straight away” – with around one in 10 likely to do each of these. Other common behaviours like “visit the website” (three in 10) and “Wait until you’re on a computer” (two in 10) are more indirect.

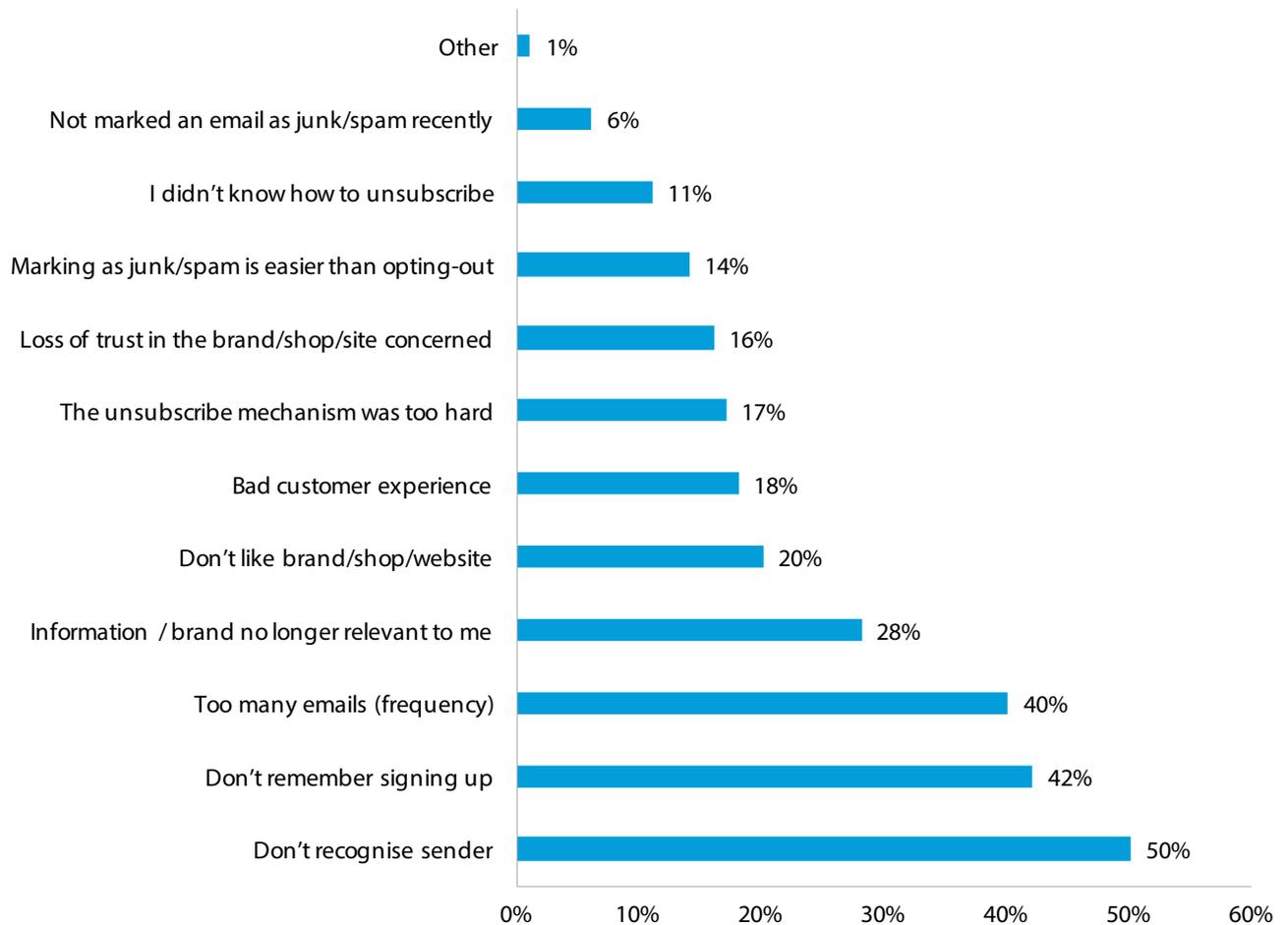
As with email in general, on mobile these messages appears to have a clear potential for a direct response, but can also have a longer term impact on the recipient. This could also be a case of consumers reading email on their smartphones, but waiting until they’re on their computer or tablet to make a purchase.

# Responsible use of email

## Spam

Next, we asked about consumer behaviour with regards to controlling the emails that enter their inbox. What makes consumers mark messages as spam? And if given the option, how would consumers change the marketing they receive?

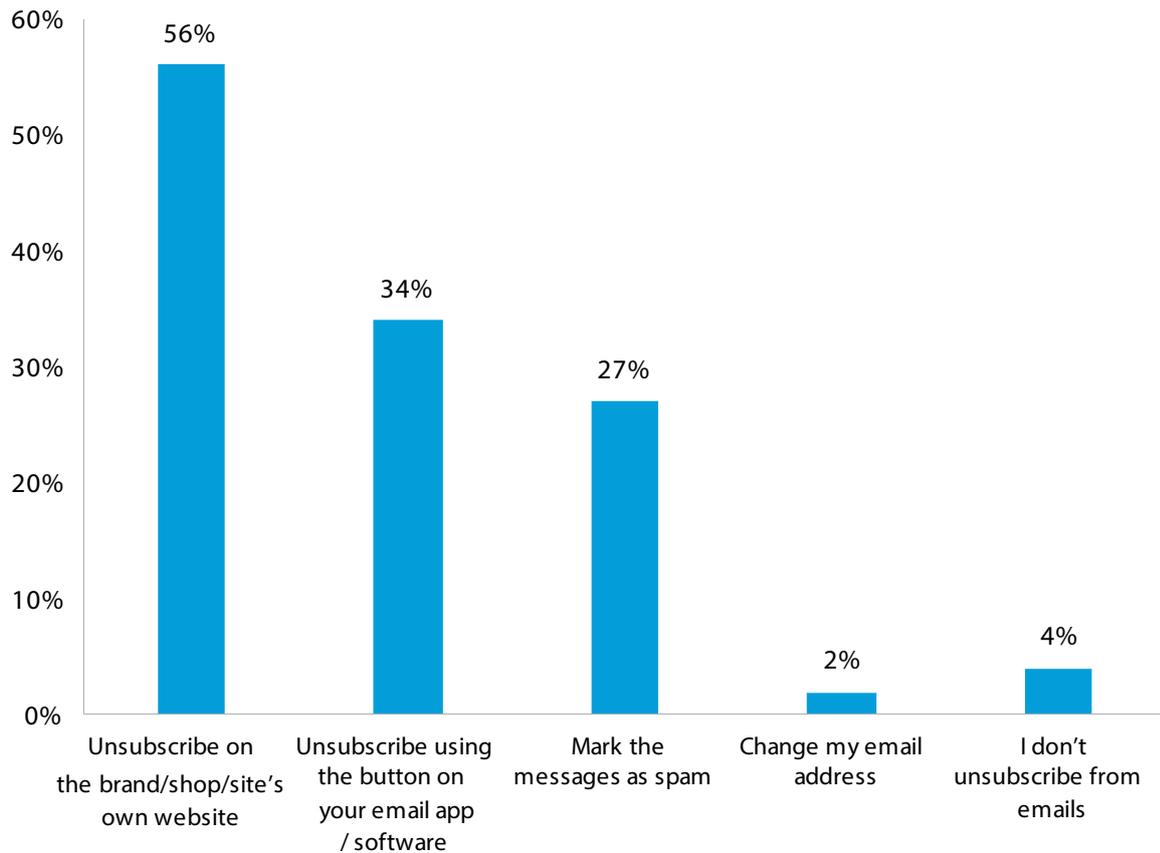
### What is most likely to prompt you to mark an email from a brand/shop/site you know as junk/spam?



Unrecognised senders come out as top reason to mark a message as spam (50% of consumers), followed by not remembering signing up to the mailing list (42%). This suggests "tricking" consumers into signing up might not be a particularly effective strategy. Unambiguous consent being brought in under GDPR is therefore not likely to have a large impact on marketing.

Another big concern is frequency, with two in five consumers expressing concern about receiving too many emails, demonstrating the need to make each message targeted and relevant.

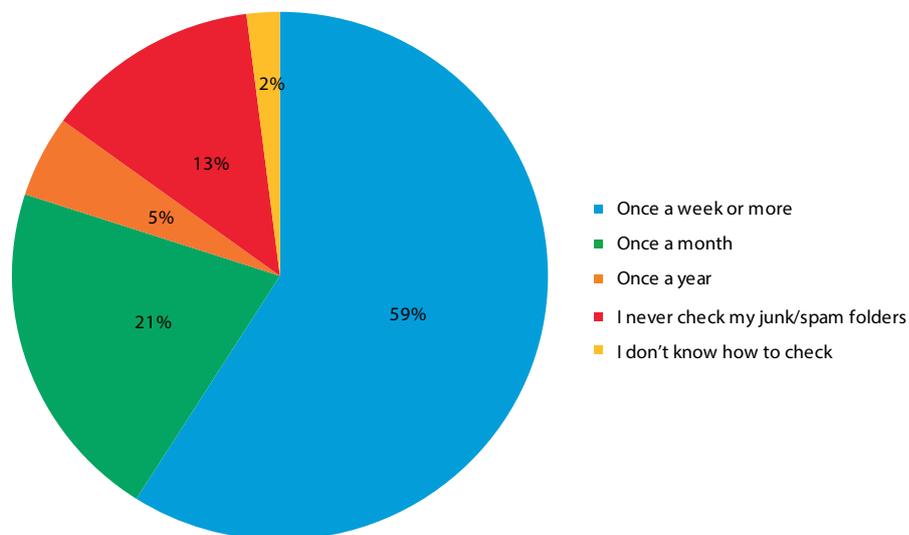
**What is the main method you use to stop receiving unwanted emails?**



The majority (56%) of consumers are unsubscribing in a visible manner on the organisations' own websites. There are however a number of consumers unsubscribing in other ways – a significant minority just mark the messages as spam (27%). 2% opt to change their email address entirely.

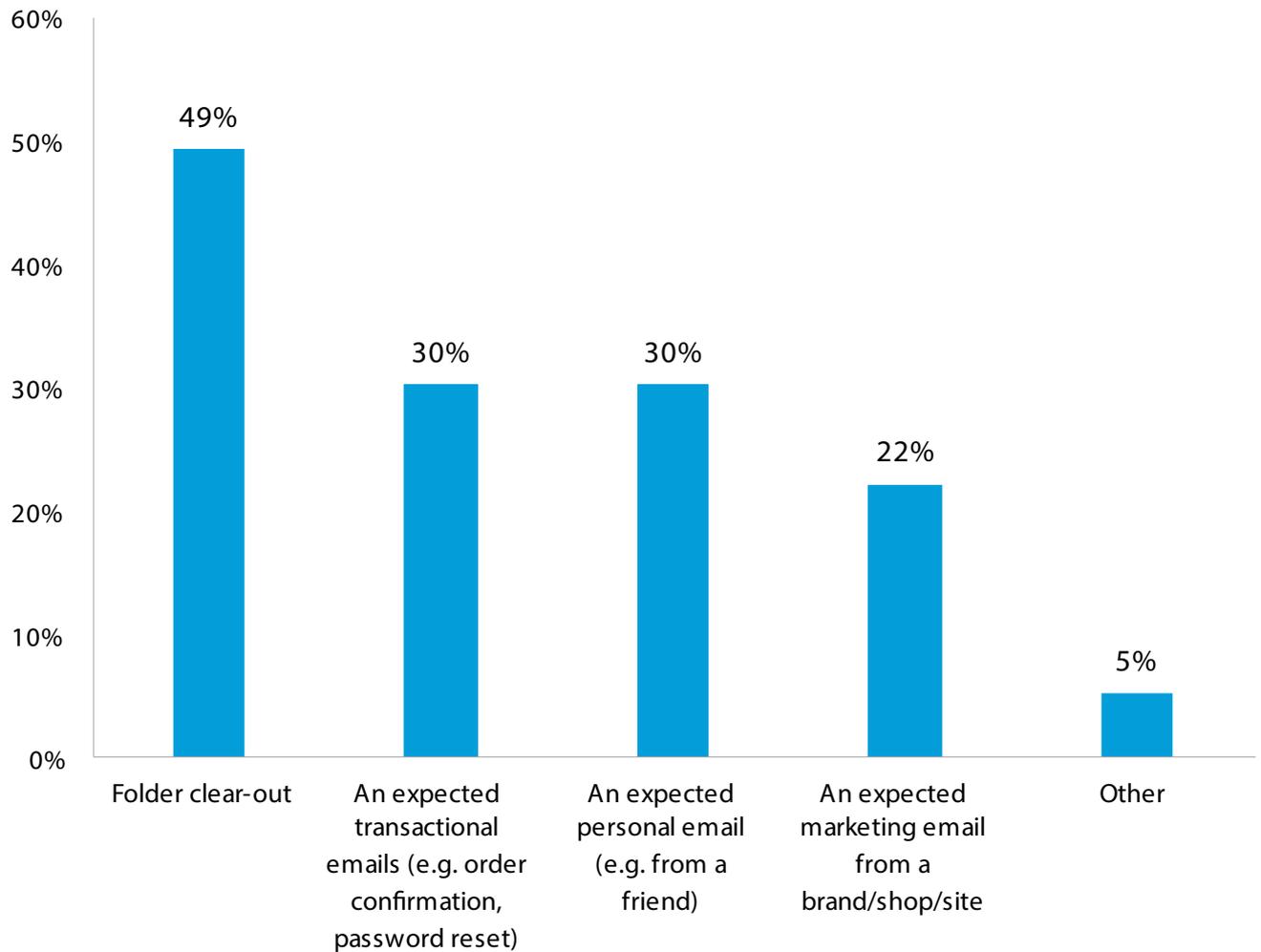
Around one in 20 never unsubscribe, suggesting it is very important to run reactivation emails or to hibernate unresponsive accounts. Due to the requirement to have a legal basis to send marketing to consumer under GDPR – i.e. unambiguous consent - any unresponsive contacts may have to be removed from the mailing list altogether.

**How often do you check your junk/spam folder for interesting or relevant emails?**



A majority (59%) of consumers check their spam folder once a week or more, with a further 21% checking once a month. Only 13% never check their spam folder.

### What were you looking for?

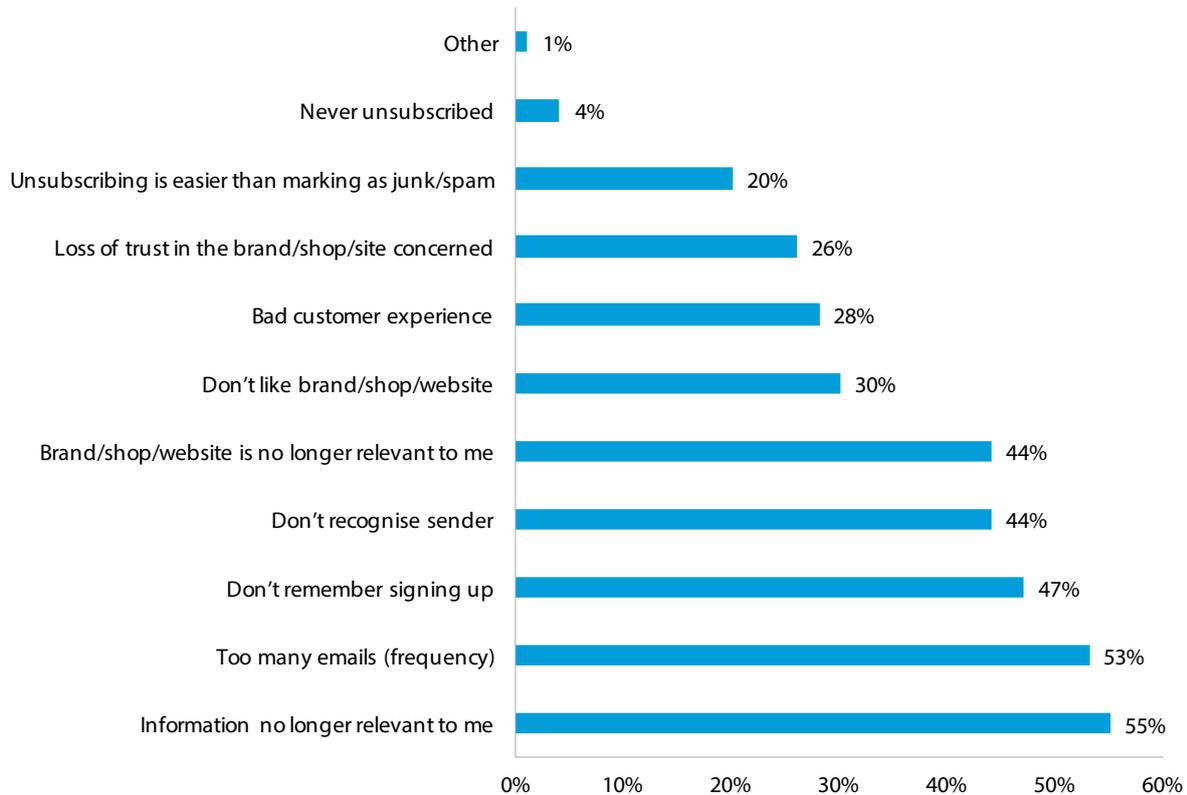


Most commonly, users are not looking for anything, and merely check their spam folder to clear it (49%). Therefore, a focus on inbox placement is vital – half of consumers will not pay attention to anything that ends up in their spam.

Searching for expected emails is common, though, with three in 10 looking for transactional emails and one in 5 looking for marketing emails landing in their spam. On the one hand, this hints at inbox mismanagement by consumers. On the other, these consumers are expecting to receive and engage with your marketing; another reason to avoid spam filters.

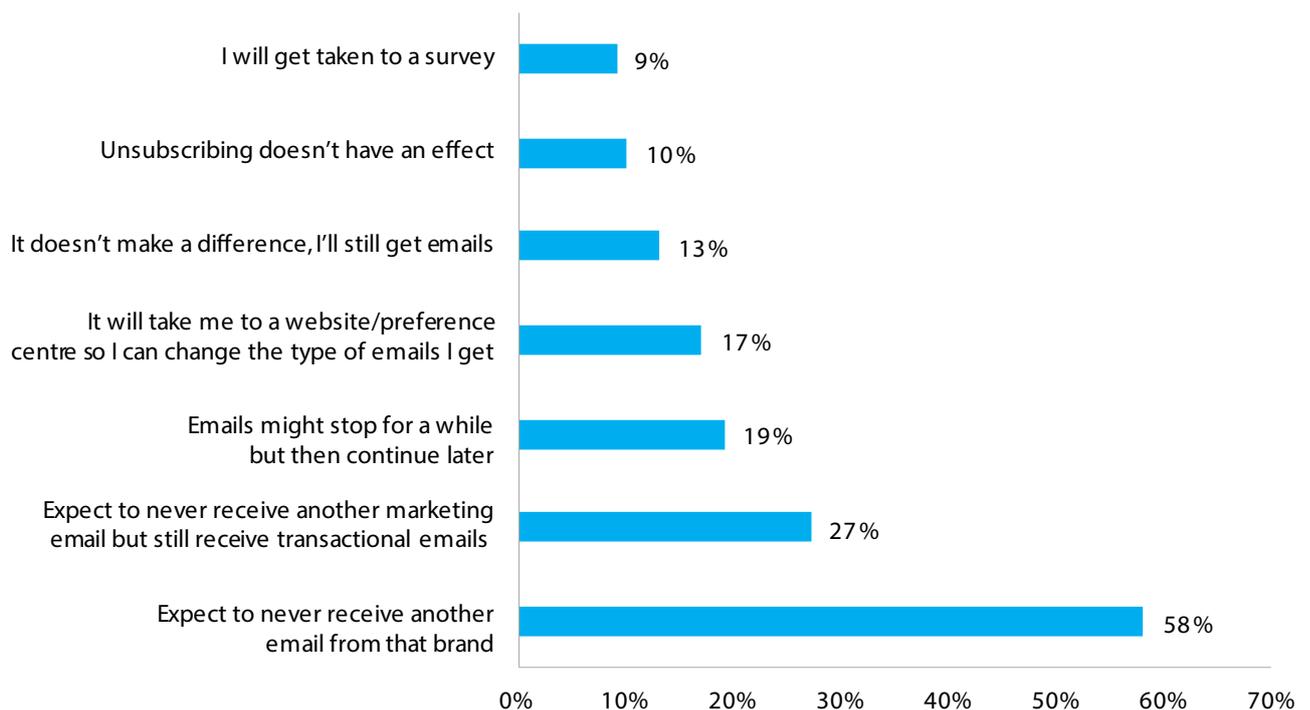
## Unsubscribing

### What makes you unsubscribe from a brand/shop/site's emails?



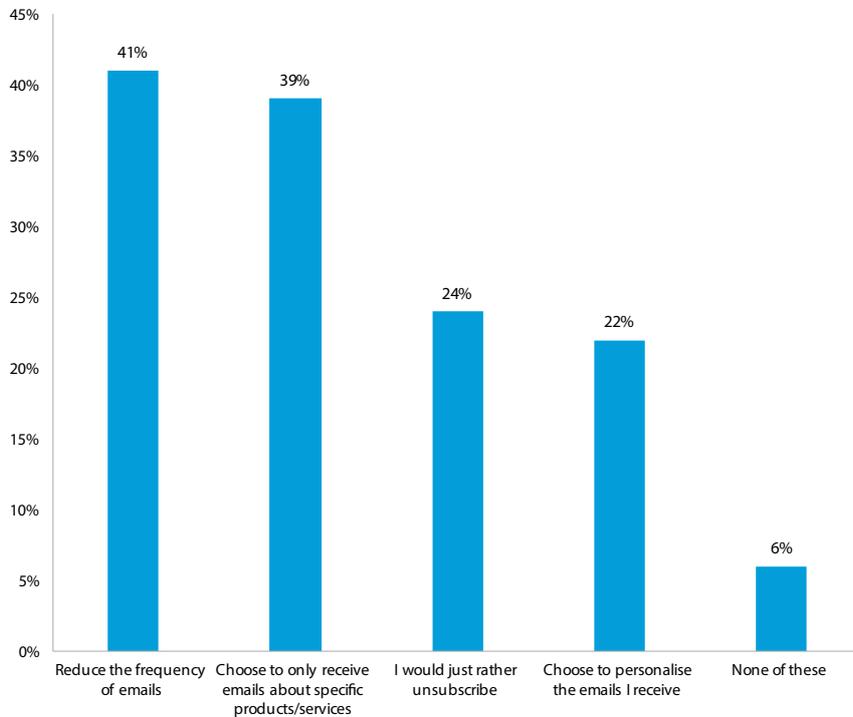
The top reason for unsubscribing is customers moving on, with the information in the marketing emails no longer having relevance to the consumer (55%); 44% also cited loss of brand relevance. However, other reasons relate to pestering consumers ("too many emails", 53%) or lack of transparency ("don't remember signing up", 47%, and "don't recognise sender", 44%).

### When you unsubscribe, what do you expect to happen?



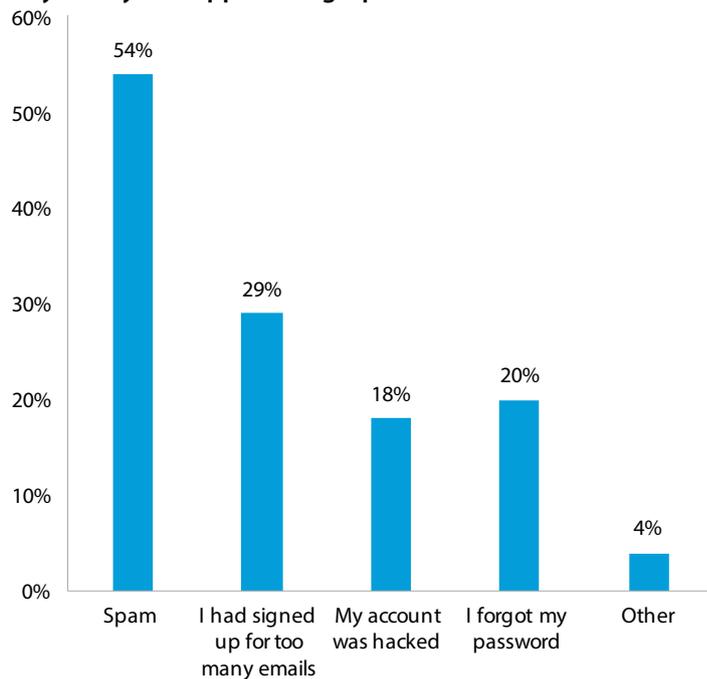
When consumers unsubscribe, they usually expect never to receive a single email from the brand ever again – including transactional emails (58%). Highlighting the potential need for brands to clarify exactly what types of emails they may still receive if they are an existing customer.

**If you were able to manage emails you receive from brands/shops/sites, which of the following options would you choose?**



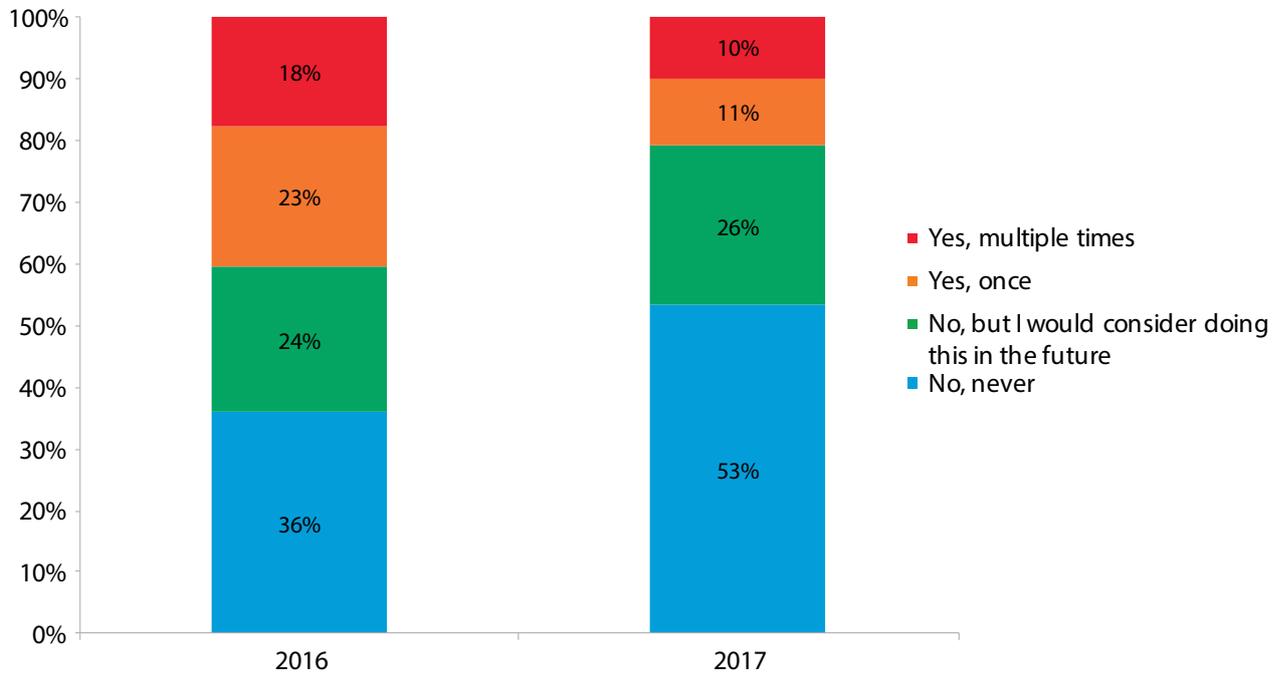
If given the option, four in 10 consumers would reduce the numbers of emails they get. A further four in 10 would choose to select the topics they receive – this could be good news for those targeting emails behind the scenes, but could suggest that in many cases people are receiving inappropriate marketing. Given the possibility of testing there is the option for marketers to measure engagement directly, and ease off on the numbers of communications if necessary.

**Why have you stopped using a personal email address?**



Of those that have stopped using emails, a majority (54%) said spam – and three in 10 said they had simply subscribed to too many mailing lists. One out of every 5 has been subject to a hack, and a further one in 5 forgot their password.

**Have you ever stopped using your main personal email address due to the number of emails you received from brands/shops/sites?**



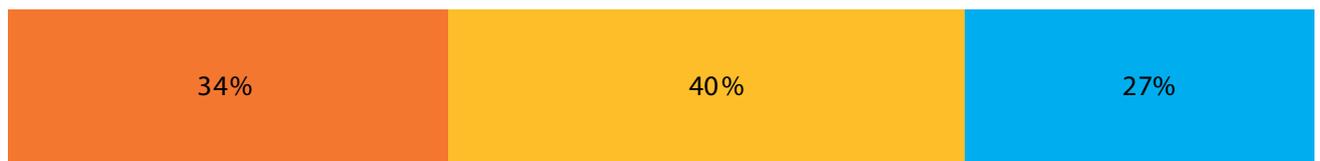
Only 21% of people have abandoned an email address due to marketing emails – four out of 5 have never done so. There’s been a dramatic rise in the number of consumers who would never consider abandoning their email due to volume. This could mean email users are managing their inboxes better, or perhaps more commonly finding themselves ‘locked in’ to their account because of the inconvenience of changing it.

**Data & transparency**

Finally, we asked about consumers’ attitude to a range of data and transparency issues. How can you convince consumers that you will handle their data responsibly?

**Does it matter to you whether marketing emails are marked ‘do not reply’?**

■ It does matter ■ It matters slightly ■ It doesn't matter



Most people (74%) think that an inability to respond to an email matters, suggesting that organisations can build engagement by opening this direct line to their consumer base.

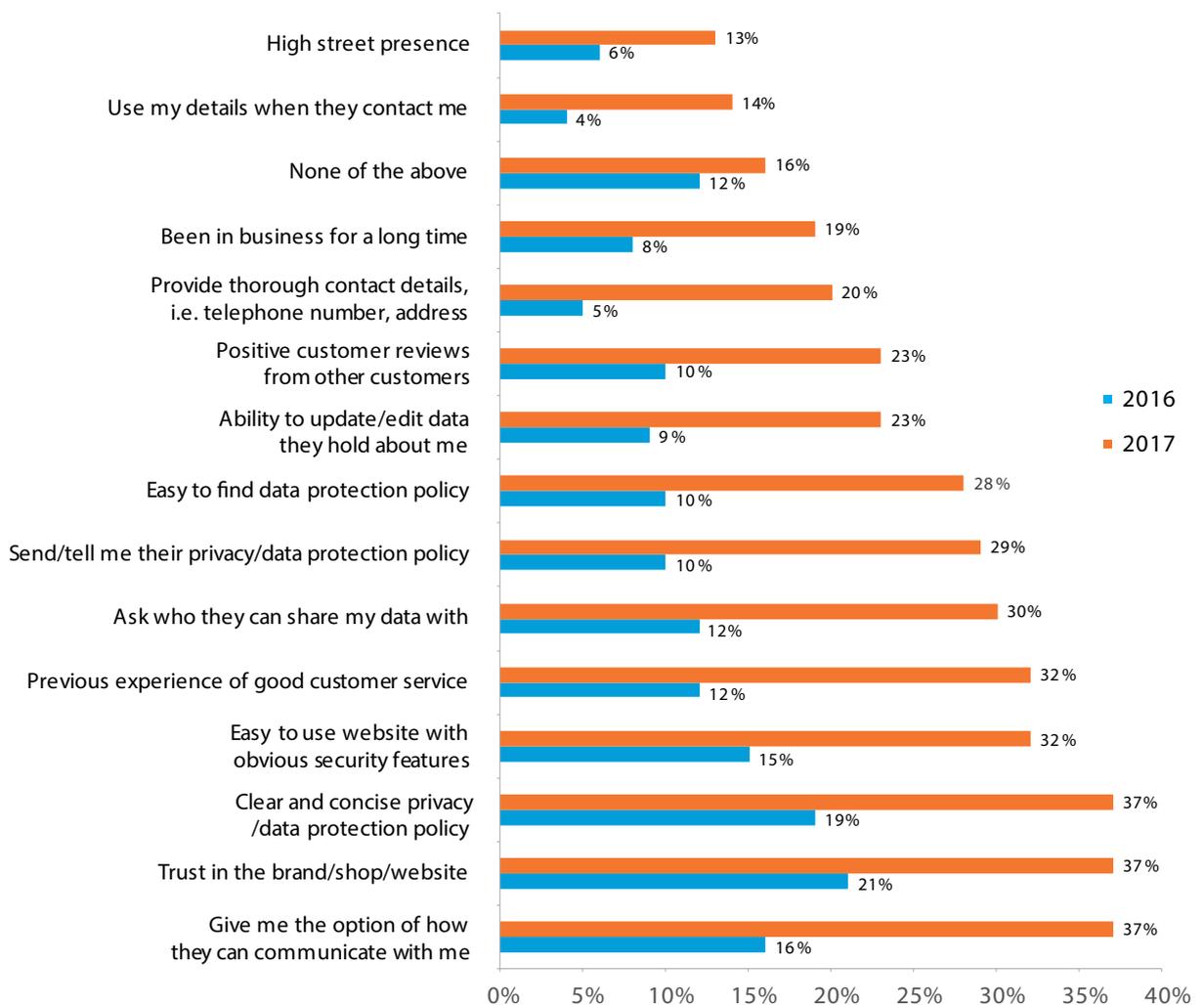
**How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement?  
"I wonder how brands/shops/sites got my email address"**

■ Always ■ Often ■ Sometimes ■ Rarely ■ Never



We've seen a drop in the numbers of consumers puzzled at the organisations holding their email address, suggesting increased awareness of how and when they are giving consent to a company. Given the tightening of the definition of consent under GDPR, we would expect this negative sentiment to decrease.

**Which of the following options are most likely to convince you that a brand/shop/website will handle your personal data responsibly?**



When we asked consumers how businesses could use their data responsibly, tailoring method of communication came out on top (37%), highlighting the importance of having an accessible preference centre for marketing communications. Clarity of privacy policy is also important (37%). Already trusting the brand came just as high at 37%, but this must be fostered somehow – probably through a combination of the other options.

Notably, we have seen an increase across the board when asking consumers about data privacy issues. On average, each answer received 15% more responses than last year. This may well be because of the increase in data-protection related news in the wake of GDPR.



# Methodology

Questions for this survey were scripted by the DMA in collaboration with the DMA Email council research hub, dotmailer, and Beautiful Insights. Wherever possible, questions were routed, and answer choices randomised to avoid top-box bias. In addition, an acceptable survey completion time was set and those answered too quickly were removed.

Beautiful Insights conducted the consumer survey with 1063 responses received from their YouSay customer panel. This is a closed panel which members of the public cannot voluntarily join and comprises approximately 90,000 profiled UK residents, recruited through numerous sources to demographically represent the markets based on gender and age. The online survey was then distributed to a random selection from Beautiful Insights' panel to gain a sample representative of the UK population, with a £250 prize draw as incentive. Participants were naïve to the purpose of the questionnaire prior to consenting to participate.

There were 37 questions in total. The panel was constantly re-qualified to ensure current background variables.

The survey opened on the 7th of September 2017 and closed on the 13th of September 2017.

Where averages are presented, these were calculated by multiplying the number of respondents by the corresponding value (or the middle value where this is a range), summing these, and then dividing by the total number of respondents.

The report was written by the DMA Marketing and Insight departments with input from the DMA Email research hub and dotmailer. The findings were launched at an event on 23rd November 2017.



# About dotmailer

dotmailer is a SaaS marketing platform that enables companies to create, test and send data-driven automated campaigns, including email. Our technology integrates with key business systems such as ecommerce platforms and CRMs, providing access to rich insights in real time; a powerful advantage in today's customer-centric market.

The dotmailer platform has been built in a way that enables SMEs to maximize returns and scale quickly. We don't tie people down with tools they won't use and that's why every customer has access to our directory of partner apps which can be plugged in and changed as their company evolves.



# About the DMA

A DMA membership will grow your business. Our network of more than 1,000 UK companies is privy to research, free legal advice, political lobbying and industry guidance. Our members connect at regular events that inspire creativity, innovation, responsible marketing and more. Most of them are free. A DMA membership is a badge of accreditation. We give the industry best-practice guidelines, legal updates and a code that puts the customer at the heart.

We represent a data-driven industry that's leading the business sector in creativity and innovation. One-to-one-to-millions marketing attracts the brightest minds; individuals that will shape the future. By sharing our knowledge, together, we'll make it vibrant.

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