

The Tech Lifestyle Report 2024

Making sense of the relationships between people and devices

asurion

***INSIDE:** Data-driven insights, trends, and projections exploring the actions and beliefs of real people grappling with real tech*

The Tech Lifestyle Report 2024

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Why we need a tech lifestyle survey and report

The mainstream tech narrative likes to transport regular people to an irregular world filled with futuristic, shiny objects like robots that think, 3D-printed food, and smart prosthetics—not to mention entire armies of AI tools plotting to take our jobs.

While these storylines are undoubtedly engaging, usually they amount to little more than a fun distraction from our day-to-day. The vast majority of tech consumption is crammed into the hectic schedules of regular people who are just trying to make their devices—and their lives—work a little better.

With that in mind, welcome to the 2024 tech lifestyle report, the first edition of an annual publication that will explore and unpack the everyday relationships between people and their devices.

The backbone of this report is an extensive, original survey that looks beyond the mainstream narrative and into the daily lives of real people grappling with real tech. We collected responses from more than 1,000 people in the U.S., focusing on 21 different smart devices, which we sorted into five tech groups (right).

We then parsed that data and pulled out six original stories full of insights and trends. First, we paint a detailed picture of consumer tech, covering device ownership, intent to buy and replace, motivations, actions, beliefs, and other dynamics. Then we present five additional storylines, each generated from an exhaustive analysis of the data.

What we learned along the way both surprised and delighted us. We hope you feel the same way.

Technology Key



Personal connectivity

- Smartphone
- Tablet
- Smart watch
- Fitness tracker



Home office tech

- Desktop/laptop
- Router
- Display/monitor



Entertainment systems

- Smart TV
- Streaming device
- Gaming console
- Home audio
- Gaming PC
- Home theater
- VR/AR headset



Smart home devices

- Smart speaker/voice asst.
- Security device
- Automation device



Smart appliances

- Smart oven/stove
- Smart refrigerator
- Smart washer/dryer
- Smart dishwasher




Executive summary

Five profound and surprising takeaways
from the first tech lifestyle survey

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Five profound and surprising takeaways

The tech lifestyle report dives into how people actually use tech every day, drawing on exclusive, new data to uncover patterns and trends. Here are five of this year's most profound and surprising insights.

<p>1</p> 	<p>Households with children buy and use far more tech than those without them</p>	<p>People with kids don't tend to wait until new tech is popular—they're among the first to try it. They're also far more likely to own smart devices, smart appliances, and entertainment systems. From keeping their families safe to improving their mental health, parents are more likely to want to use new tech to help manage their lives.</p>
<p>2</p> 	<p>The number one reason people buy tech has little to do with features, functions, or brands—they buy tech for entertainment and fun.</p>	<p><u>Research</u> has shown that when people evaluate brands for buying decisions, they primarily use emotions (personal feelings and experiences) rather than information (brand attributes, features, and facts). Our research backs this up. By far the top reason for buying tech overall is for entertainment and fun, followed by it being cool, exciting, and new. These are both emotional drivers. Even in the home office category, incredibly, entertainment and fun narrowly beat out supporting work and livelihood. When we look at the different positive emotions that tech evokes, we see that the most exciting device is the gaming PC, the trendiest are virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) headsets, the happiest is the gaming console, and the most empowering is the fitness tracker.</p>
<p>3</p> 	<p>Reaching out to people who are not comfortable with technology is no longer an opportunity—it's an imperative.</p>	<p>When we asked people whether they are comfortable with technology, only one-third of respondents said they were tech savvy. More than half (54%) of the <i>not</i>-savvy majority, however, are <i>still</i> the primary tech decision makers for their households. And these people don't seem to know where to go for help. It might be time to reach out to them in a different way.</p>

Five profound and surprising takeaways

The tech lifestyle report dives into how people actually use tech every day, drawing on exclusive, new data to uncover patterns and trends. Here are five of this year's most profound and surprising insights.

4



People want future tech products to help them take care of their homes and loved ones ahead of their own needs.

We asked people in what areas of their lives they need tech to help them the most. The top answer, cited by almost half of our respondents, is to keep their homes and loved ones safe. In fact, three of the top four responses relate to getting help running their households and looking after their families. Much further down the list of tech priorities are more familiar topics like health, finances, and careers.

5



People aren't rushing out to buy smart appliances ... yet.

Smart appliances (refrigerators, ovens, washers and dryers, and dishwashers) are fairly new, and so their ownership rates are relatively low. We wanted to know why. The most surprising result: Many respondents worry that smart appliances "will break and need fixing." Around twice as many people cited this reason for not purchasing smart appliances than for any other type of device (except smartphones). Manufacturers might do well to emphasize the reliability and durability of their products and offer clarity around warranties and protection plans. This might help reassure the growing number of people upgrading old appliances with smart products

Part 1

Let's talk about tech

What devices people own and use, which ones they plan to buy soon, and how they make decisions

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How people are buying, using, and thinking about devices

To paint an accurate picture of the trends in consumer tech, Asurion deployed a large survey designed to uncover what devices people currently own and use, what they plan to buy in the next 12 months—and what’s driving people’s decisions and underpinning their expectations.

We asked more than 1,000 consumers to share details of their daily interactions with technology, and the insights they gave us range from pretty obvious to beautifully obscure.

We focused on 21 different devices, which we sorted into five broad tech categories: personal connectivity, entertainment systems, home office tech, smart home devices, and smart appliances. For the full details of the devices and categories, see “Overview,” page 3. All insights in this report are drawn from data at the 95% confidence interval.

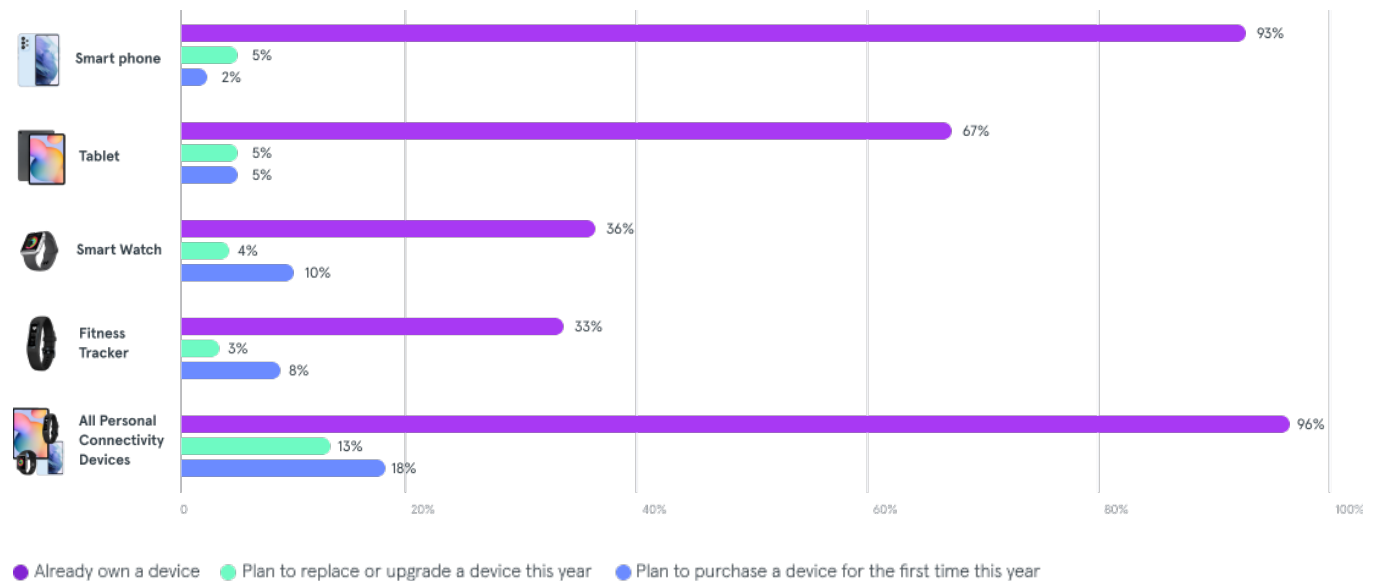
Overall ownership and intent to buy

Let’s start with the obvious (Fig 1.1): 93% of U.S. adults own a smartphone. Two-thirds also own a tablet, while around one-third own a smart watch, with a similar number owning a fitness tracker. The one surprise here is that just 5% of consumers say they are planning to replace their phone in the next 12 months. This seems surprisingly low, given the upgrade culture prevalent among consumers in the U.S.

Fig 1.1

Personal connectivity

Ownership and intent to purchase among all consumers



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

Q: For each of the following smart devices/technology, please select all the options that apply to you.

How people are buying, using, and thinking about devices

As for entertainment systems (Fig 1.2), it is perhaps unsurprising that smart TVs are the most-owned devices (77% of all respondents have one), followed by streaming devices (64%) and gaming consoles (48%). What’s interesting is that although VR/AR headsets are the least-owned entertainment devices (17%), when you factor in that 8% are planning to buy one for the first time in the next 12 months, the result is an impressive 1 in 4 consumers will own a VR/AR headset within a year.

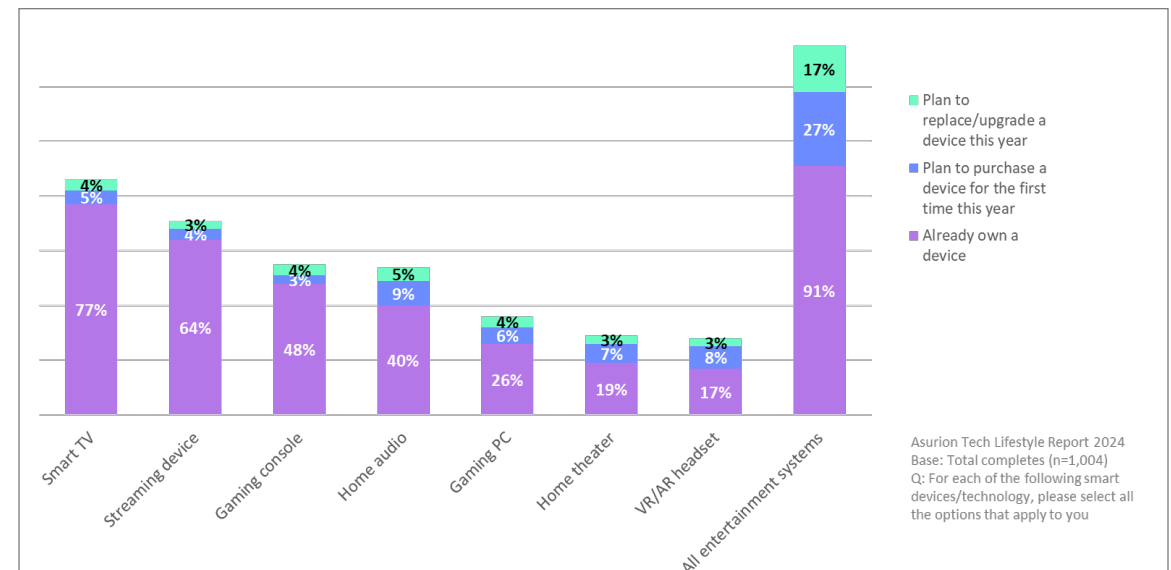
That’s a healthy ownership rate for such an expensive and relatively new device. Plus, we closed this survey before the release of the Apple Vision Pro™ headset, which analysts predict will sell between 400,000 and 1.5 million units in its first year—despite the hefty starting price of \$3,499.

The ownership rates for home office tech (Fig 1.3) are fairly unremarkable, with 70%–80% owning a desktop/laptop and a router, and four in 10 owning a computer monitor. Smart home devices are more interesting (Fig 1.4). The first thing that stands out: The market for smart speakers/voice assistants appears to have reached some semblance of maturity, with around half of all consumers owning one of these devices. Smart home security devices are not far behind, with around one-third of respondents owning one and another 14% planning to buy one for the first time this year. Even smart home automation devices, which includes items like thermostats, locks, and curtains, are becoming more popular, with 38% of people expected to own one within the next 12 months. It’s unclear how extensively owners of smart home tech are using the features these gadgets offer. But maybe it doesn’t matter so long as the devices meet people’s expectations.

Fig 1.2

Entertainment systems

Ownership and intent to purchase among all consumers



Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.3

Home office tech

Ownership and intent to purchase among all consumers

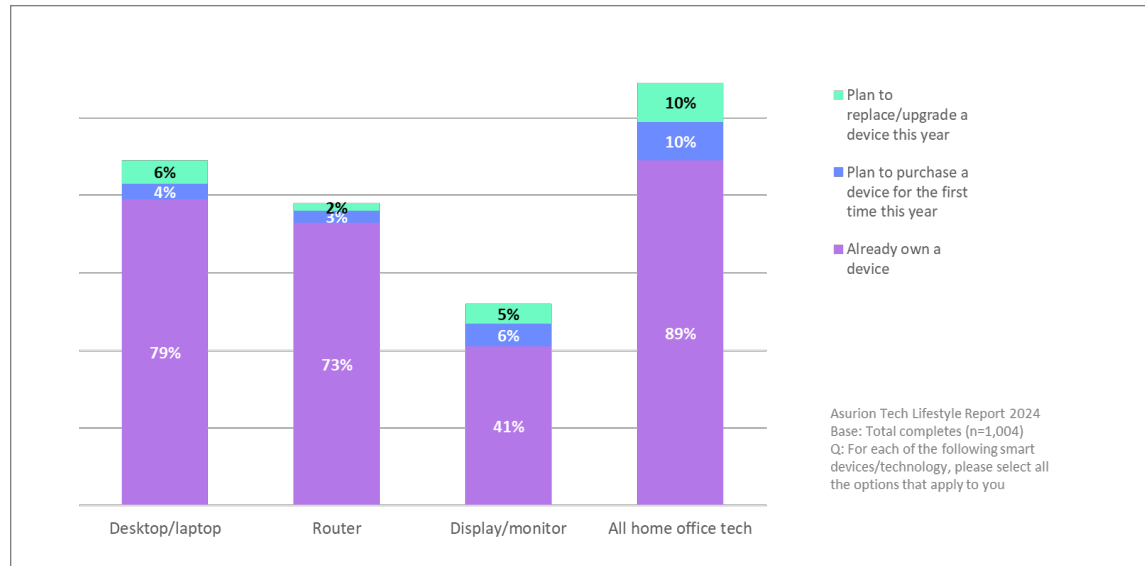
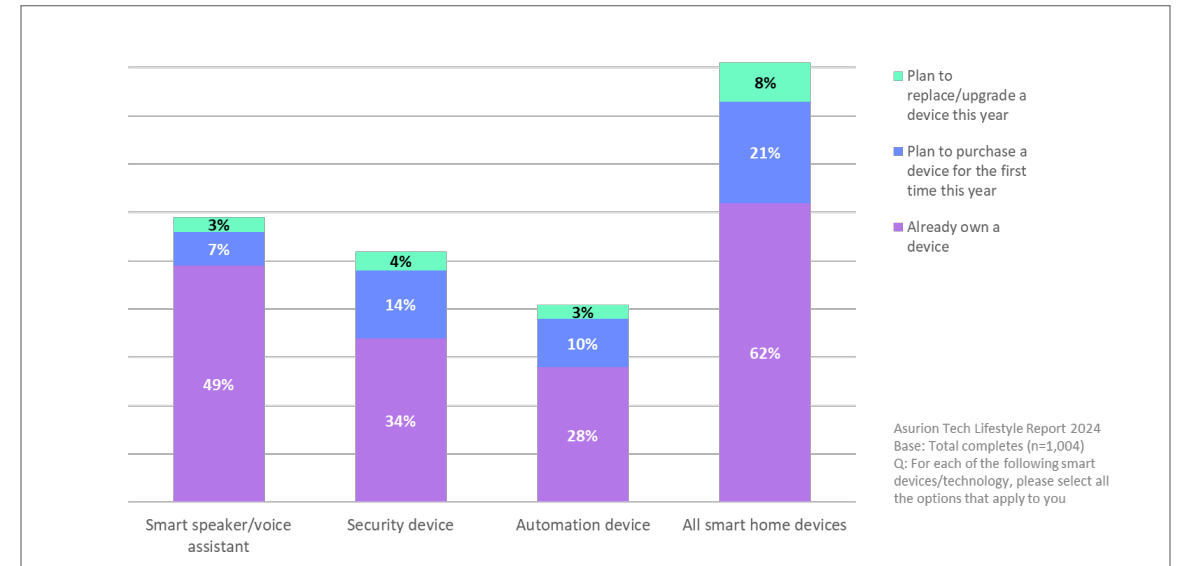


Fig 1.4

Smart home devices

Ownership and intent to purchase among all consumers



How people are buying, using, and thinking about devices

No kitchen sync

The smart appliance category is clearly the most new-fangled, with only about 1 in 4 people currently owning one (Fig 1.5). That said, 16% plan to buy one for the first time in the next 12 months, which will take ownership to 42% overall. It’s likely that people will need to replace traditional versions of these items with newer options that increasingly feature smart technology. So, before long, it might become difficult to replace an appliance with one that isn’t smart.

Variations by gender, age, household composition, and income

Once we delve a little deeper into the data, interesting patterns start to emerge. For example, looking at gender* within personal connectivity devices, we find that although more women than men currently own a smart watch (40% vs. 32%) and fitness tracker (36% vs. 29%), more men than women say they plan to buy these devices in the next 12 months (13% of men intend to buy a smart watch for the first time vs. 8% of women, and 9% of men plan to buy a fitness tracker vs. 6% women).

Once we delve a little deeper into the data, interesting patterns start to emerge. For example, looking at gender* within personal connectivity devices, we find that although more women than men currently own a smart watch (40% vs. 32%) and fitness tracker (36% vs. 29%), more men than women say they plan to buy these devices in the next 12 months (13% of men intend to buy a smart watch for the first time vs. 8% of women, and 9% of men plan to buy a fitness tracker vs. 6% women).

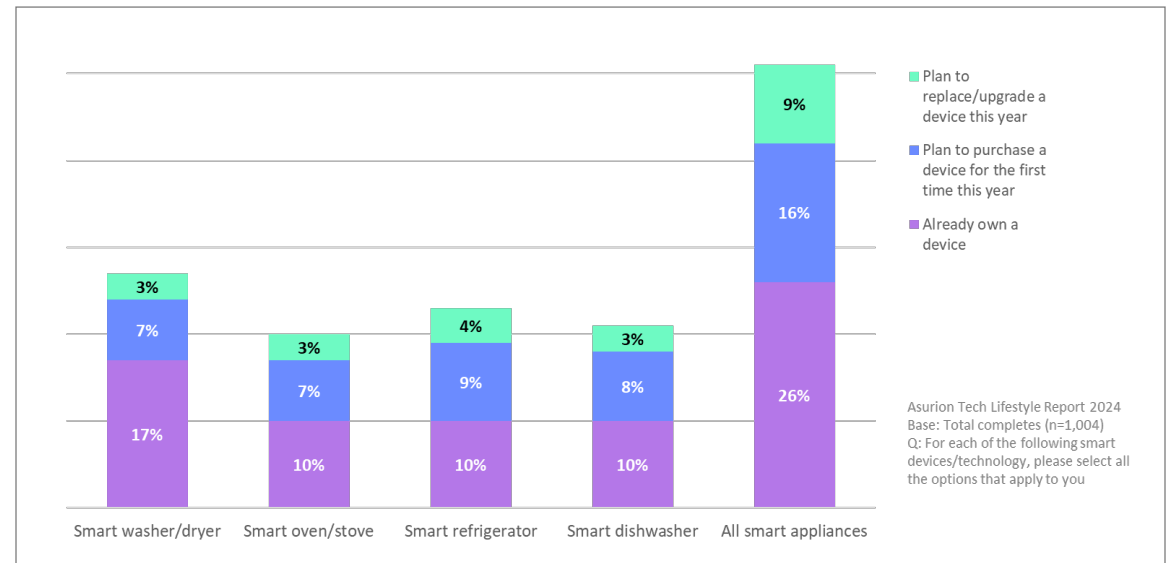
* Most respondents self-identified as male or female, but we did not restrict responses to this binary classification.

One of our major findings is that households with children are far more likely to own a number of smart devices than households without children. This includes a home audio system, gaming console, gaming PC, smart home security device, streaming device, tablet, smart TV, smart speaker/voice assistant, smart watch, and VR/AR headset. In fact, they are twice as likely to own the latter. For more on these insights, see “Part 3: Child’s play,” page 29.

Fig 1.5

Smart appliances

Ownership and intent to purchase among all consumers



How people are buying, using, and thinking about devices

Another consistent predictor of consumption is whether people are comfortable with tech. By responding to the question, “Do tech projects come naturally to you,” only about one-third (34%) of respondents said they were comfortable with tech (we’ll call these folks “tech savvy” and the remainder “not tech savvy”). The two groups differ greatly in terms of ownership and buying patterns. Tech-savvy consumers are far more likely than not tech savvy people to own 13 of the 21 smart devices. For more on these insights, see “Part 2: The tech-savvy phenomenon,” page 22.

Two other particularly interesting patterns of device ownership and purchasing intent concern generation (Fig 1.6) and income levels (Figs. 1.7 and 1.8).

It is perhaps expected that members of Gen Z and Millennials are at least three times as likely as Boomers to own a gaming PC and a gaming console, and they’re more than twice as likely to own a VR/AR headset (Fig 1.6). Most of the intent to buy smart home appliances in the next 12 months is also coming from these two youngest generations.

Yet Boomers are still interested in new tech: 7% are planning to buy a smart watch in the next 12 months, meaning around one-third of all Boomers would own one. And don’t forget, more Boomers than members of Gen Z currently own fitness trackers. Boomers also dominate desktop computer and laptop ownership at 85%, with 6% planning to replace their computer this year. Finally, 3 in 10 Boomers already own a smart home security device, with an additional 9% planning to buy one for the first time over the next 12 months.

For the purposes of this study, we categorized respondents’ income levels as lower (<\$50K a year), mid (\$50K–\$100K a year) and higher (>\$100K a year). Along the way, we uncovered some fascinating patterns of ownership and intent to buy new tech.

Current tech ownership by category (Fig 1.7) mirrors the income bracket for all three levels, with ownership getting progressively higher with income. Not only that, for all 21 smart devices, we find current ownership is highest for the higher income bracket (Fig 1.8).

However—and this is where things get interesting—the higher income bracket only tops two of the 21 devices when it comes to plans to buy a device for the first time in the next 12 months. So there appears to be an element of “catch-up” at play with the people in the higher income bracket racing to get new tech first but those in the lower and mid income levels making up more of the future plans to buy.

Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.6
Current device ownership and plans to buy
 By generation/age group

	Already own				Plan to purchase for the first time this year				Plan to replace this year			
	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer
Smartphone	91%	91%	91%	96%	3%	2%	2%	1%	4%	7%	6%	3%
Tablet	56%	74%	69%	63%	7%	6%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%	4%
Smart watch	43%	46%	35%	26%	13%	12%	10%	7%	7%	5%	4%	2%
Fitness tracker	26%	38%	32%	32%	12%	10%	8%	4%	5%	4%	2%	2%
Smart TV	73%	83%	75%	74%	4%	7%	6%	4%	7%	4%	3%	3%
Streaming device	70%	69%	68%	54%	5%	5%	2%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Gaming console	67%	68%	46%	21%	4%	4%	3%	2%	4%	7%	7%	1%
Home audio	39%	46%	42%	35%	7%	11%	10%	6%	6%	7%	7%	3%
Gaming PC	42%	36%	22%	13%	13%	10%	5%	1%	4%	7%	7%	0%
Home theater	13%	23%	22%	16%	4%	14%	9%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%
VR/AR headset	23%	25%	15%	9%	11%	13%	8%	3%	5%	1%	1%	2%

Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total completes (n=1,004)

Q: For each of the following smart devices/technology, please select all the options that apply to you

Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.6 (cont’d)

Current device ownership and plans to buy

By generation/age group

	Already own				Plan to purchase for the first time this year				Plan to replace this year			
	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer	Gen Z	Millennial	Gen X	Boomer
Desktop/laptop	76%	75%	78%	85%	7%	7%	3%	1%	6%	5%	7%	6%
Router	68%	75%	74%	74%	4%	5%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%	1%
Display/monitor	34%	40%	42%	45%	10%	8%	6%	1%	4%	6%	7%	2%
Smart speaker/ voice assistant	50%	55%	51%	41%	9%	7%	8%	4%	2%	6%	3%	1%
Security device	30%	40%	37%	29%	16%	17%	15%	9%	5%	4%	4%	2%
Automation device	29%	32%	27%	26%	9%	13%	11%	6%	2%	3%	4%	3%
Washer/dryer	26%	21%	14%	13%	8%	12%	6%	4%	4%	4%	4%	2%
Oven/stove	18%	15%	5%	6%	6%	11%	5%	4%	3%	4%	3%	1%
Refrigerator	18%	12%	9%	5%	13%	16%	5%	4%	3%	4%	6%	2%
Dishwasher	19%	11%	6%	7%	10%	15%	4%	2%	5%	1%	4%	2%

Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total completes (n=1,004)

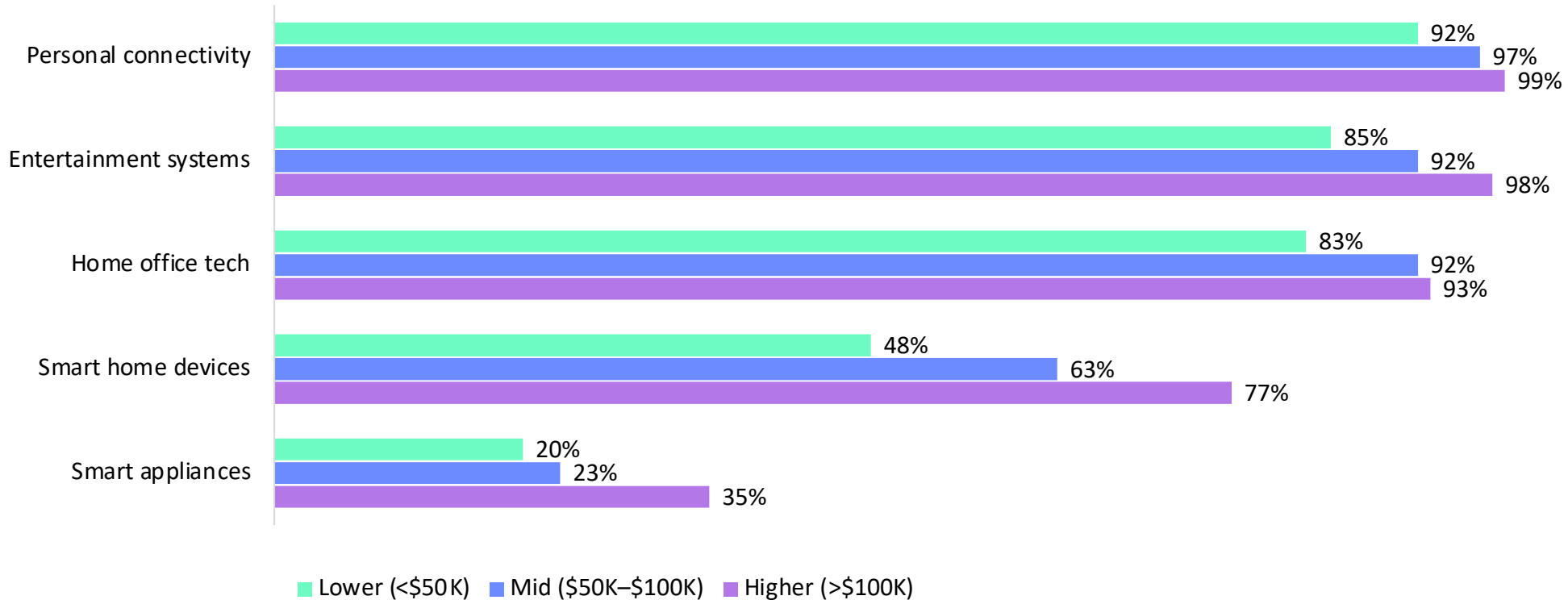
Q: For each of the following smart devices/technology, please select all the options that apply to you

Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.7

Tech categories

Ownership by income bracket



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total completes (n=1,004)

Q: For each of the following smart devices/technology, please select all the options that apply to you

Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.8
Current device ownership and plans to buy
 By income bracket

	Already own			Plan to purchase for the first time this year			Plan to replace this year		
	Lower (<\$50K)	Mid (\$50k–\$100K)	Higher (>\$100K)	Lower (<\$50K)	Mid (\$50k–\$100K)	Higher (>\$100K)	Lower (<\$50K)	Mid (\$50K–\$100K)	Higher (>\$100K)
Smartphone	88%	94%	96%	2%	2%	2%	6%	5%	3%
Tablet	54%	71%	78%	6%	6%	2%	8%	5%	3%
Smart watch	26%	36%	50%	8%	12%	10%	4%	6%	2%
Fitness tracker	22%	34%	45%	6%	9%	8%	4%	3%	2%
Smart TV	67%	79%	86%	8%	6%	2%	5%	4%	5%
Streaming device	57%	66%	70%	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%	1%
Gaming console	41%	48%	55%	3%	3%	3%	6%	5%	2%
Home audio	30%	40%	54%	10%	11%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Gaming PC	22%	27%	30%	8%	6%	5%	6%	3%	3%
Home theater	14%	18%	28%	7%	7%	8%	3%	5%	3%
VR/AR headset	12%	18%	21%	7%	10%	8%	4%	2%	3%

Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total completes (n=1,004)

Q: For each of the following smart devices/technology, please select all the options that apply to you

Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.8 (cont’d)

Current device ownership and plans to buy

By income bracket

	Already own			Plan to purchase for the first time this year			Plan to replace this year		
	Lower (<\$50K)	Mid (\$50k–\$100K)	Higher (>\$100K)	Lower (<\$50K)	Mid (\$50k–\$100K)	Higher (>\$100K)	Lower (<\$50K)	Mid (\$50K–\$100K)	Higher (>\$100K)
Desktop/laptop	70%	83%	84%	5%	5%	3%	8%	5%	6%
Router	65%	78%	78%	4%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%
Display/monitor	30%	43%	51%	7%	5%	5%	6%	3%	4%
Smart speaker/ voice assistant	38%	52%	59%	7%	7%	5%	2%	4%	3%
Security device	24%	34%	49%	14%	14%	12%	4%	4%	3%
Automation device	15%	31%	41%	7%	10%	12%	3%	3%	3%
Washer/dryer	14%	14%	25%	6%	9%	6%	4%	4%	3%
Oven/stove	7%	10%	14%	5%	6%	10%	1%	4%	3%
Refrigerator	6%	8%	17%	7%	11%	9%	5%	3%	4%
Dishwasher	8%	7%	15%	5%	9%	9%	2%	2%	5%

Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total completes (n=1,004)

Q: For each of the following smart devices/technology, please select all the options that apply to you

How people are buying, using, and thinking about devices

What’s prompting consumers to buy tech?

In general, the top three reasons people are buying gadgets across all categories (Fig 1.9) are for entertainment and fun (cited by 43% of respondents), because it’s cool, exciting, and new tech (27%) and a tie for third between a product upgrade and because I/we can’t live without it (both 22%).

More men than women buy tech because it's cool, exciting, and new (31% vs. 24%). Also, more consumers in the Northeast purchase tech for entertainment and fun than those in the West, South, and Midwest (47% vs. 41% vs. 42% vs. 42%). Meanwhile, more tech-savvy people buy tech on a trusted recommendation than not tech savvy people (16% vs. 13%).

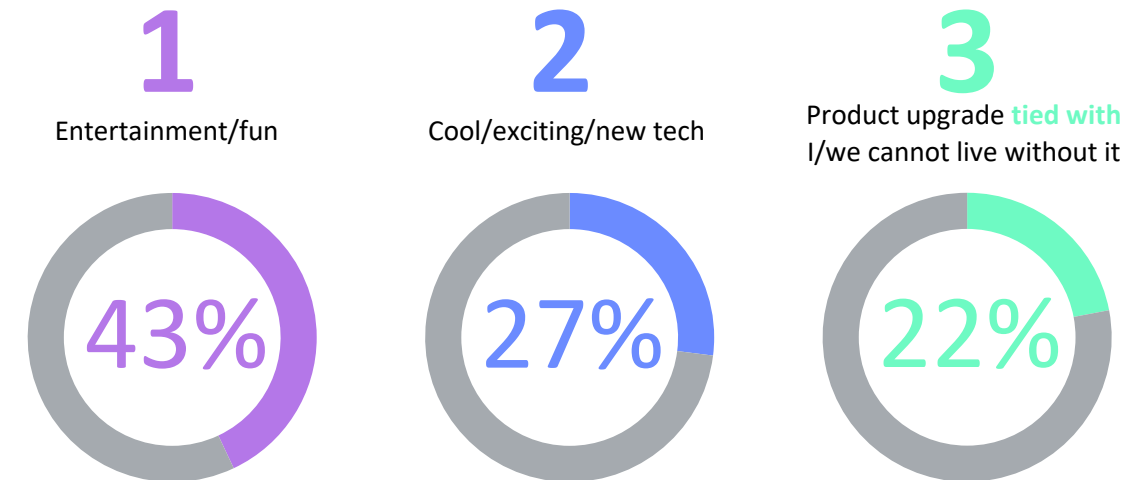
As for age groups, more members of Gen Z buy tech to support work and livelihood than Boomers (23% vs. 15%), whereas more Boomers than members of Gen X buy tech for safety and security (19% vs. 15%). More Gen Zers purchase tech for school than do Millennials, Gen Xers, and Boomers (17% vs. 12% vs. 5% vs. 3%), while more members of Gen Z and Millennials buy tech for environmental reasons than members of Gen X and Boomers (8% vs. 9% vs. 4% vs. 6%).

When we look at our five main tech categories (Fig 1.10), the results get even more interesting. For the personal connectivity category, to support health and wellness is tied for second (with I/we can’t live without it) in reasons for buying tech. This appears to be the result of another gender split; more women than men report that they buy tech to support health and wellness (36% vs. 28%), and more women than men currently own tablets, smart watches, and fitness trackers.

Fig 1.9

Top 3 reasons for buying tech

Across all consumers and all devices



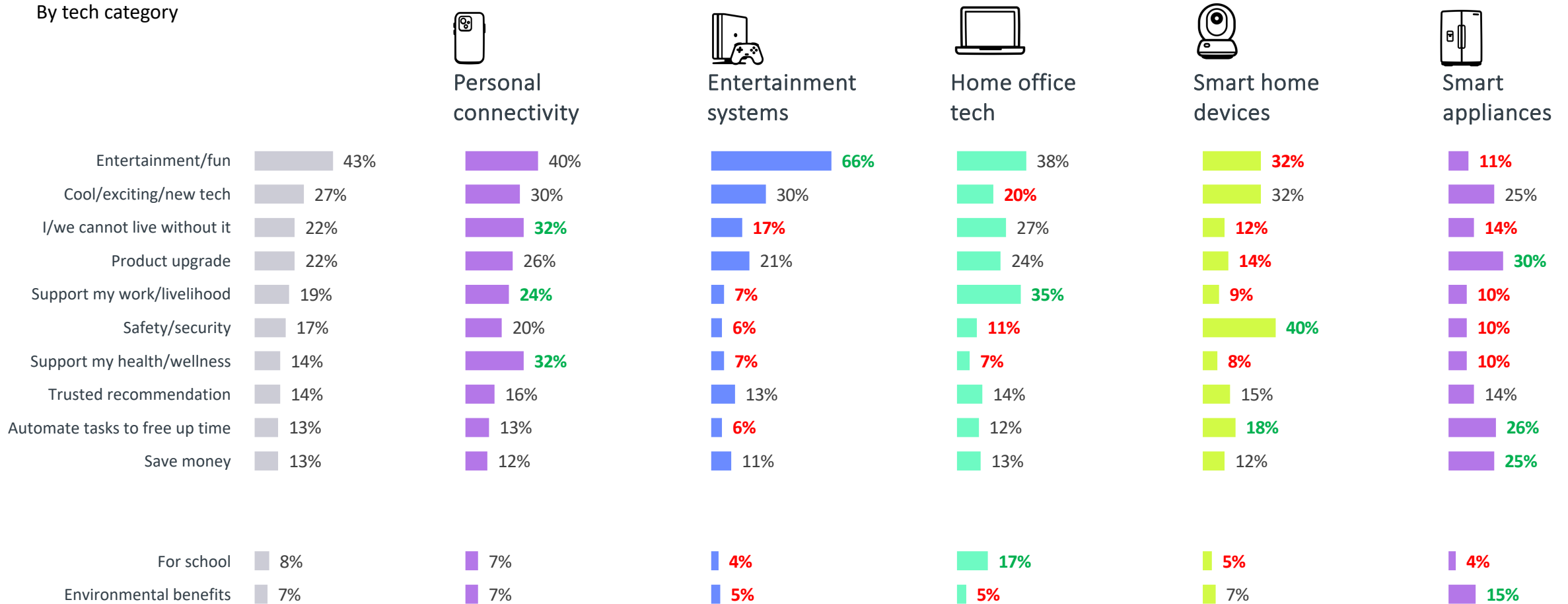
Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total completes (n=1,004)

Q: For each of the following smart technology categories, what were your reasons for buying/using it

Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.10
Motivation to buy new devices
 By tech category



How people are buying, using, and thinking about devices

That’s entertainment

While entertainment and fun is the number one reason for buying tech in three of the five categories, it grabs a whopping 66% of the vote in the entertainment systems category—as you might expect. Using a similar logic, you might also assume that supporting work and livelihood would top the home office tech category. But the winner is, again, entertainment and fun (38%), with work and livelihood a close second (35%). Perhaps the lesson here is that even laptops, routers, and monitors are entertaining and fun, on some level.

Rounding out the five categories, safety and security (40%) is the top prompt for making a purchase in smart home devices, which makes sense. Meanwhile, product upgrade (30%) is the top motivation in smart appliances, adding further weight to the theory that people are increasingly replacing conventional appliances with smart ones (whether they intend to or not).

For each of the 21 featured devices, we asked our respondents whether they are using these products more, less, or about the same as they had been expecting to use them (Fig 1.11).

This is an arbitrary measure, but the responses are interesting. For every device, a greater number of people reported they were using it more than they expected than the number who said they were using it less than they expected.

The highest disparity? The smartphone. To our surprise, 66% of users said they were using it more than expected vs. just 3% who are using it less. Equally surprising, 60% said they were using their smart refrigerator more than expected vs. only 14% who said they were using it less. (It’s unclear whether they are referring to the smart functionality of the fridge or its ability to keep food fresh. We suspect it might be a bit of both.)

Polarizing patterns of use

The most mixed results were with VR/AR headsets (39% using more, 35% using less) and gaming consoles (39% more, 27% less). Both are the kinds of devices that have the potential to become addictive or to just sit there unused, in near equal measure.

We also see a slew of interesting differences according to factors such as age, income, and location.

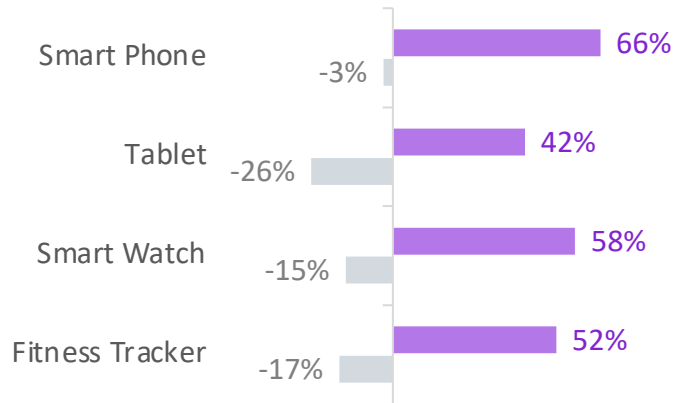
Let’s start with age. Far more members of Gen Z than Gen X and Boomers report they are using their home audio more than they expected (75% vs 41% vs 27%). Far more Millennials than members of Gen X and Boomers say they are using their streaming device more than they expected (82% vs 40% vs 57%).

Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

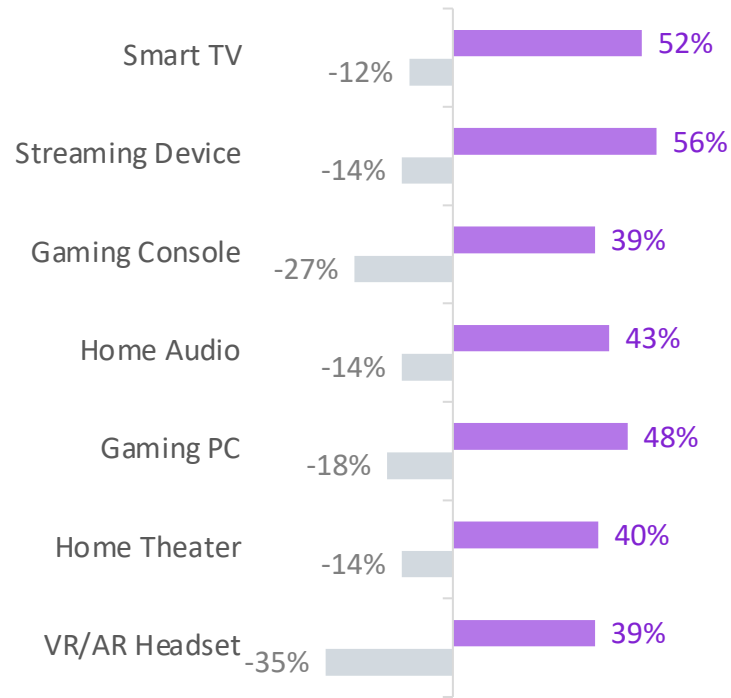
Fig 1.11
Actual use vs. expected use of devices
 By tech category



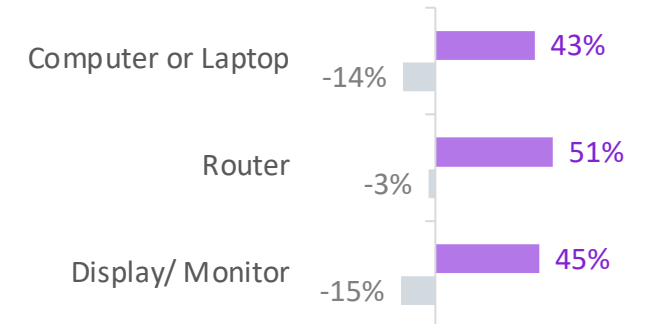
Personal connectivity



Entertainment systems



Home office tech



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024
 Base: Total category evaluations (n=3,776)
 Category evaluations – personal connectivity (n=972);
 entertainment systems (n=940); Home Office Tech (n=925)
 Q: How would you describe your usage of each of the
 following smart device(s)/technology?

■ Using more than expected
 ■ Using less than expected

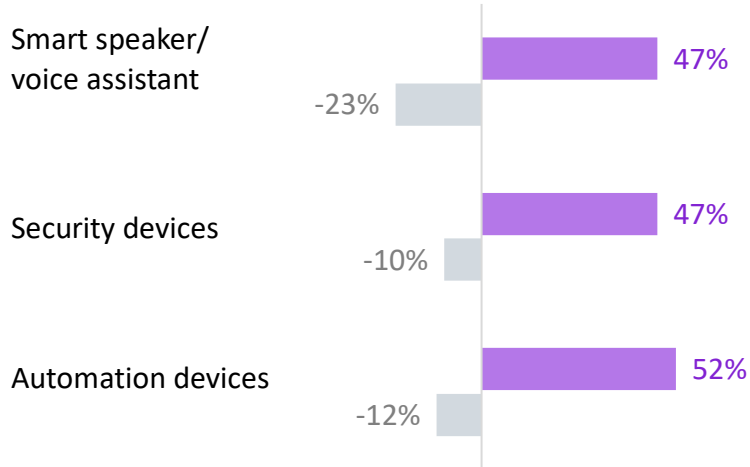
Part 1 – Let’s talk about tech

Fig 1.11 (cont’d)

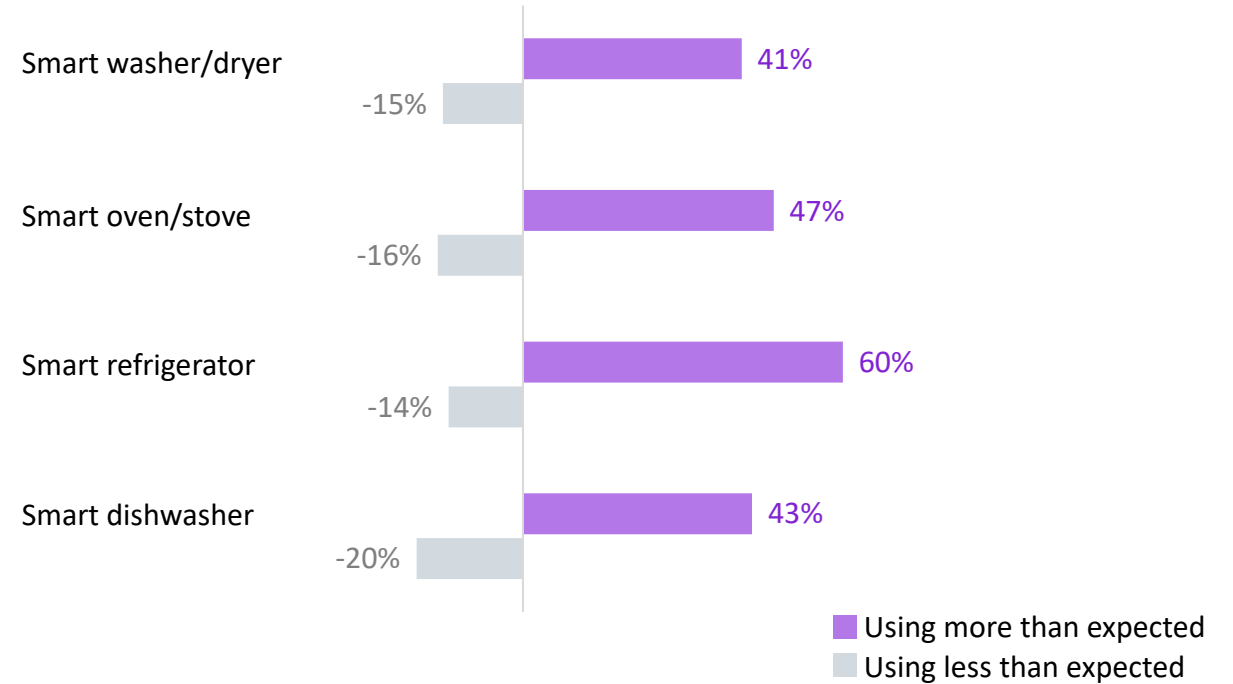
Actual use vs. expected use of devices

By tech category

Smart home devices



Smart appliances



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024
Base: Total category evaluations (n=3,776)
Category evaluations – personal connectivity (n=972);
entertainment systems (n=940); Home Office Tech (n=925)
Q: How would you describe your usage of each of the
following smart device(s)/technology?

How people are buying, using, and thinking about devices

And significantly more Boomers than members of Gen Z say they are using their smart watch more than they expected (65% vs 43%). (As we previously mentioned, 1 in 4 Boomers owns a smart watch and a further 1 in 10 plan to buy one this year.) Meanwhile, more Millennials than Boomers report they are using their tablet less than expected (33% vs 18%).

Significantly more mid income than higher income people are finding they are using their smart TV more than they expected (62% vs 37%). More Midwesterners than Northeasterners say they are using their fitness tracker more than they expected (62% vs 40%). Finally, around twice as many people who live in cities than those who live in the suburbs or rural areas report they are using their home theater more than they expected (64% vs 32% vs 36%). Who knew?

Who's in charge of the household tech?

More than 6 in 10 of our respondents (62%) categorized themselves as the primary tech decision maker for their household. Here are a few of the key characteristics of this role:

- Men are more likely than women to be the primary tech decision maker in their household (72% of men vs. 55% of women).
- Millennials and members of Gen X are more likely to be the primary tech decision maker in their household than members of Gen Z and Boomers (70% vs. 68% vs. 49% vs. 56%). That means Gen Zers, widely considered to be the most tech-savvy people,

are the least likely to be making their household's tech decisions. There is a logical reason for this: A higher number of Gen Zers live with a parent, so it is likely the parent who makes most of the tech decisions.

- Of course, self-described tech savvy people are far more likely to be the primary tech decision maker in their household than self-described not tech-savvy consumers (78% vs. 54%).
- People who live in cities are more likely to be the primary tech decision maker in their household than those who live in the suburbs or rural areas (72% vs. 59% vs. 57%).

Part 2

The tech-savvy phenomenon

Two-thirds of all consumers report they are not comfortable with tech, yet most of them are the primary tech decision maker for their household



What it is, what it looks like, and what it means

In Part 1, we touched on a number of interesting patterns of tech consumption within and between different demographics. One of these focuses on peoples' self-assessed levels of comfort with technology in response to the question, "Do tech projects come naturally to you?" (paraphrased). Only about one-third (34%) of our respondents said yes, they did feel comfortable with tech projects (we'll call these folks "tech savvy"), which means that the remaining two-thirds are less than comfortable with tech (or "not tech savvy") (Fig 2.1).

You could argue that, for most people, tech savvy is a state of mind. And, of course, there are bound to be one or two folks claiming to be tech experts whose knowledge is limited to "try turning it off and on again." Likewise, others who say they're not tech savvy will be quietly adept at researching and setting up new devices. It doesn't really matter, though, because the tech-savvy classification is a fairly accurate indicator of tech consumption, ownership, purchasing patterns, and beliefs.

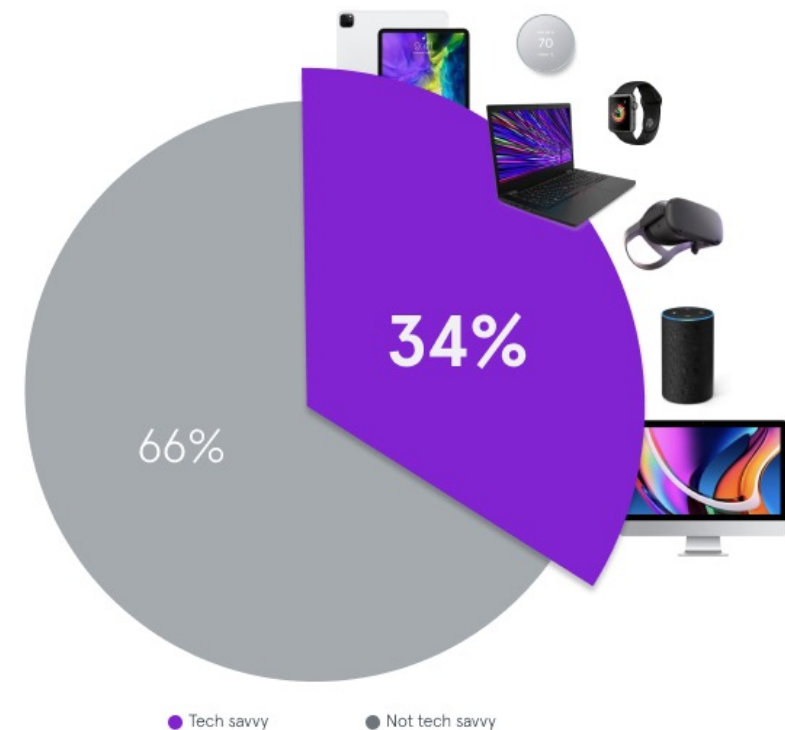
So, what do we know about these tech savvy folks? Well, there is a major gender split, with 50% of men saying they are tech savvy and only 22% of women (Fig 2.2). We also find a significant generational gap, with twice as many tech-savvy Millennials as tech-savvy Boomers (44% vs. 22%).

As previously mentioned, households with children also appear to consume more tech than those without kids—40% of those living with kids say they are tech savvy compared to 32% of people without kids who say they are tech savvy.

Fig 2.1

Tech savvy vs. not tech savvy

Consumers who say they are comfortable (or not) with tech

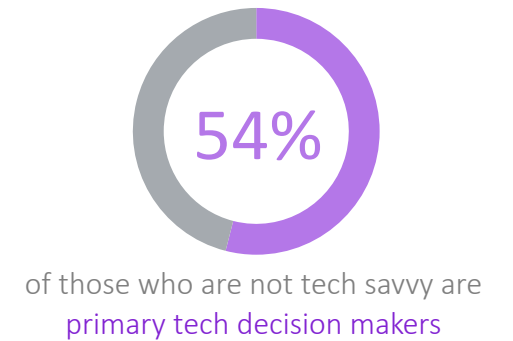
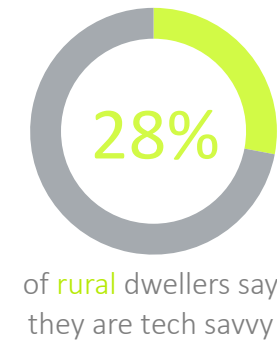
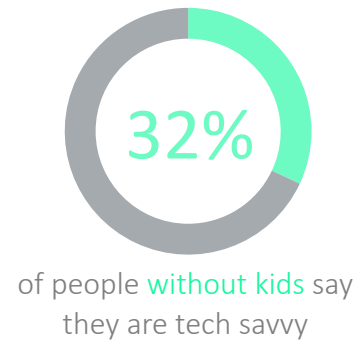
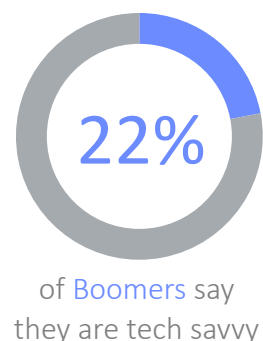
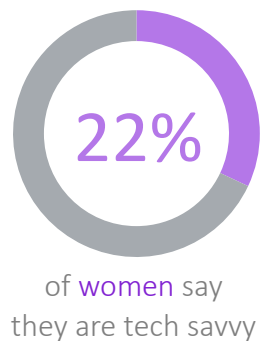
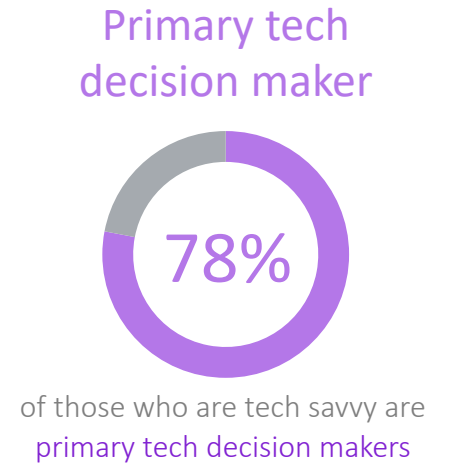
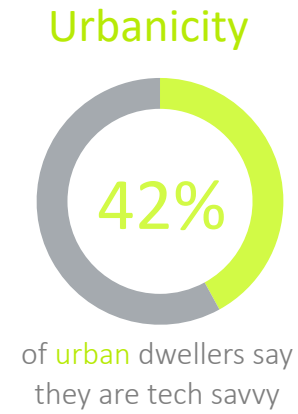
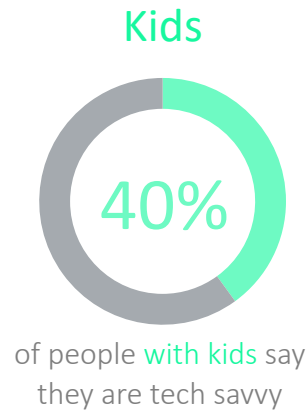
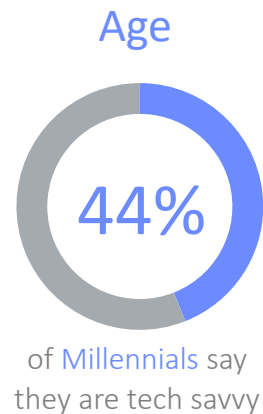
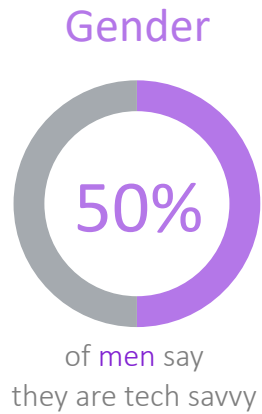


Part 2 – The tech-savvy phenomenon

Fig 2.2

What tech savvy looks like

People who are most comfortable using tech



What it is, what it looks like, and what it means

We also see a sizable split between people who live in cities and those who live in rural areas—42% who live in cities say they are tech savvy vs. just 28% who live in more rural parts of the country.

Of all those claiming to be tech savvy, 8 out of 10 (78%) are also the primary tech decision maker for their household. What’s more interesting, however, is that more than half of those who are not tech savvy (54%) are also the primary tech decision maker for their household.

What does it mean to be tech savvy?

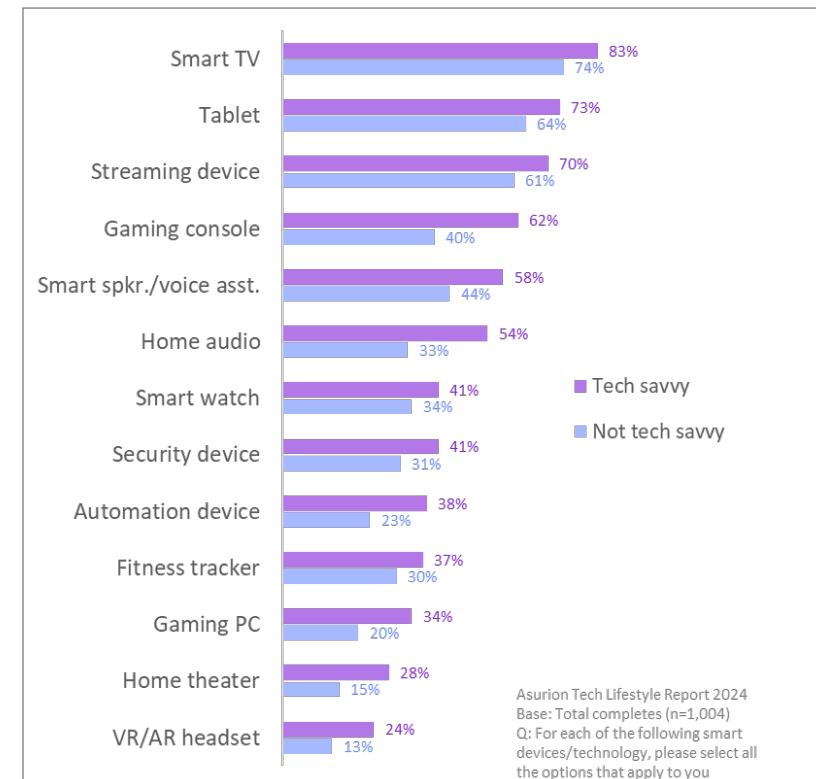
For starters, it greatly increases the likelihood of owning 13 of the 21 smart devices we focused on in this study (Fig 2.3). Tech-savvy consumers are more likely to own a tablet, smart watch, fitness tracker, smart TV, streaming device, gaming console, home audio system, gaming PC, home theater system, VR/AR headset, voice assistant, home security device, and home automation device. Notice that a lot of these devices fall into the realm of cool, contemporary tech.

In the next 12 months, the tech-savvy group plans to buy (for the first time) significantly more smart devices within four of our five tech categories (Fig 2.4): personal connectivity, entertainment systems, smart home devices, and smart appliances. Only in the home office category are there few differences between the buying plans of the two groups.

In addition, the tech-savvy group plans to replace or upgrade more devices in the next 12 months in four of the five categories, including the home office one (Fig 2.5). And in terms of handheld devices, twice as many tech-savvy as not-tech-savvy consumers plan to replace or upgrade their smartphone in the next 12 months.

Fig 2.3

Increased likelihood of owning 13 smart devices
Tech savvy vs. not tech savvy



Part 2 – The tech-savvy phenomenon

Fig 2.4

Plans to purchase for the first time in the next 12 months
Tech savvy vs. not tech savvy by tech category

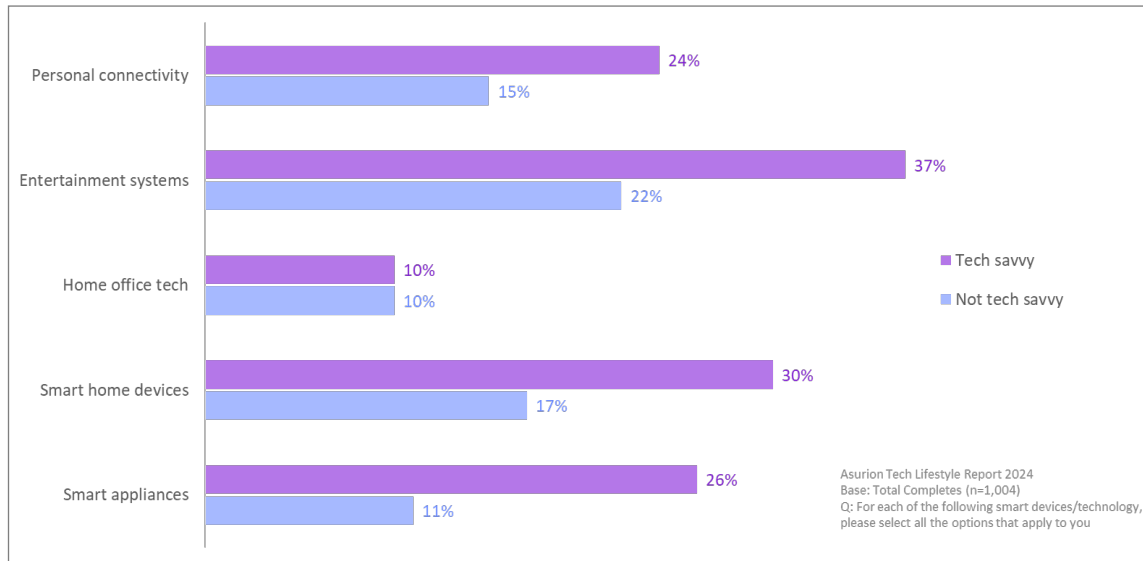
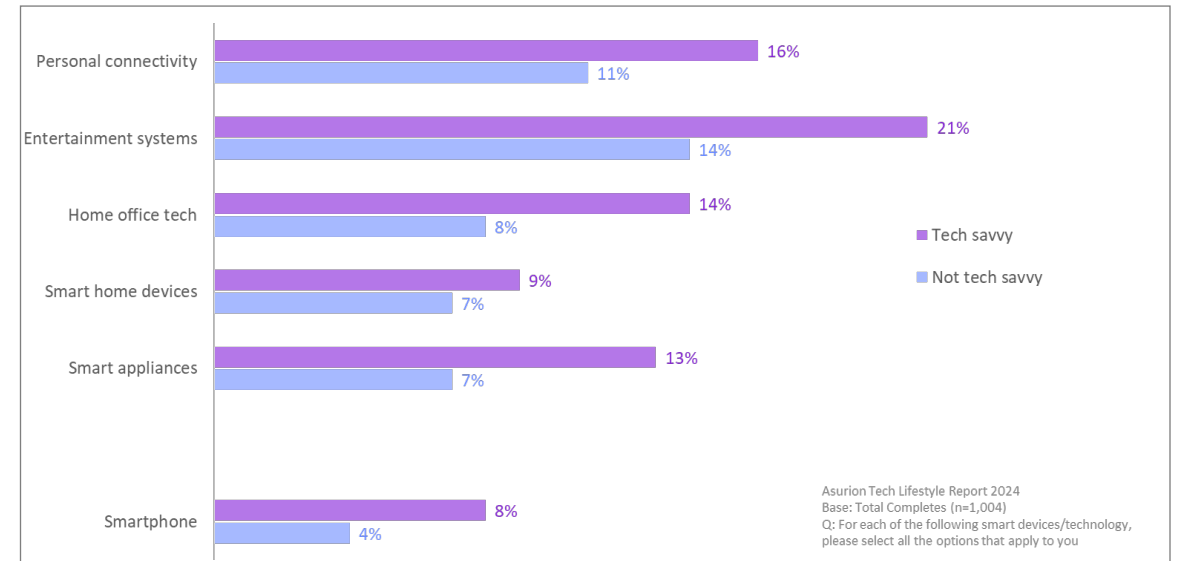


Fig 2.5

Plans to replace/ upgrade in the next 12 months
Tech savvy vs. not tech savvy by tech category (plus smartphone)



What it is, what it looks like, and what it means

What is motivating these people? There are 10 reasons for purchasing technology in which being tech savvy makes a difference (Fig 2.6). For example, one-third of tech-savvy consumers will buy tech because it's cool, new, and exciting vs. just 1 in 4 not tech-savvy people.

Similarly, significantly more tech-savvy consumers than not-tech-savvy ones will buy devices for the following reasons:

- To upgrade a product
- To support their work and livelihood
- For safety and security reasons
- To automate tasks and save time
- To support health and wellness
- Based on a trusted recommendation
- As part of a smart home transformation
- To upgrade a brand
- For environmental reasons

In terms of how people actually use their devices, tech-savvy people reported using these five devices more than they had expected, and significantly more than not-tech-savvy people (Fig 2.7): gaming consoles, gaming PCs, computer monitors, speaker and voice assistants, and smart ovens and stoves. So, again, it's a wide variety.

Fig 2.6
Reasons for buying tech
Tech savvy vs. not tech savvy (significant variations only)

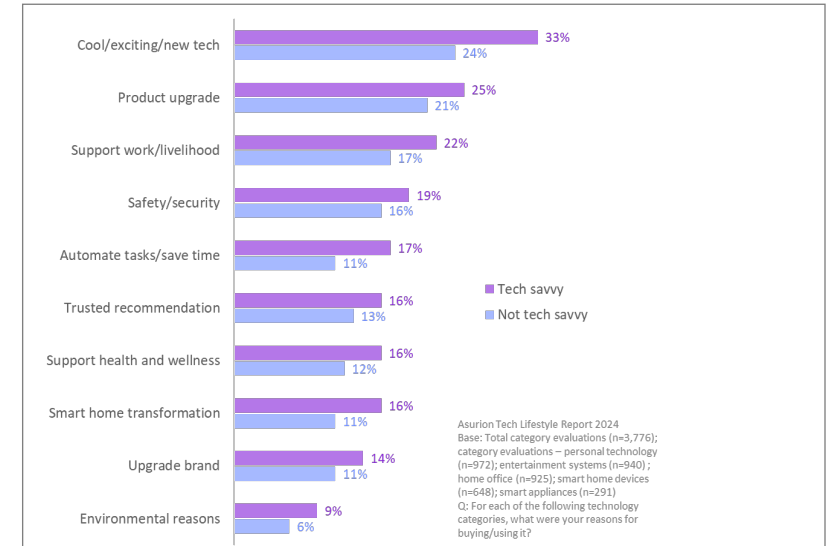
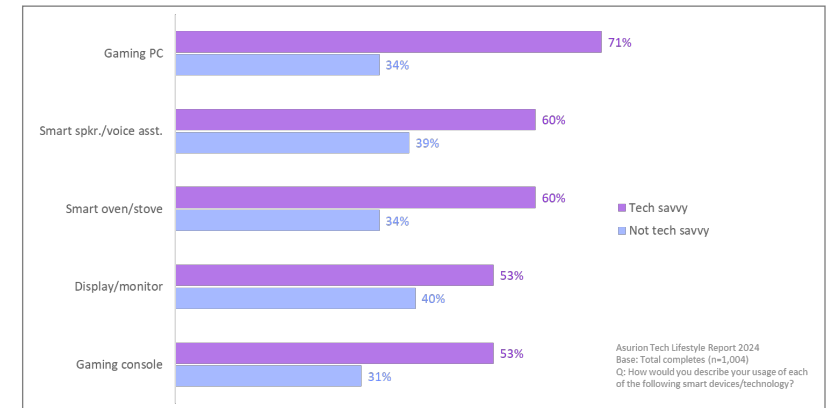


Fig 2.7
Devices that consumers are using more than they expected
Tech savvy vs. not tech savvy



What it is, what it looks like, and what it means

Conversely, for both gaming PCs and VR/AR headsets, considerably more not-tech-savvy people than tech savvy people said they are using these products less than they expected (Fig 2.8).

Another question we asked respondents is how long does it take them to adopt new technology (Fig 2.9). The answer: Most people wait until new tech is popular before they try it. But within the tech-savvy group, the majority claim to be either the very first (30% vs. 16% for all consumers) or among the first (38% vs. 23%) to try new devices.

Fig 2.8
Devices that consumers are using less than they expected
Tech savvy vs. not tech savvy

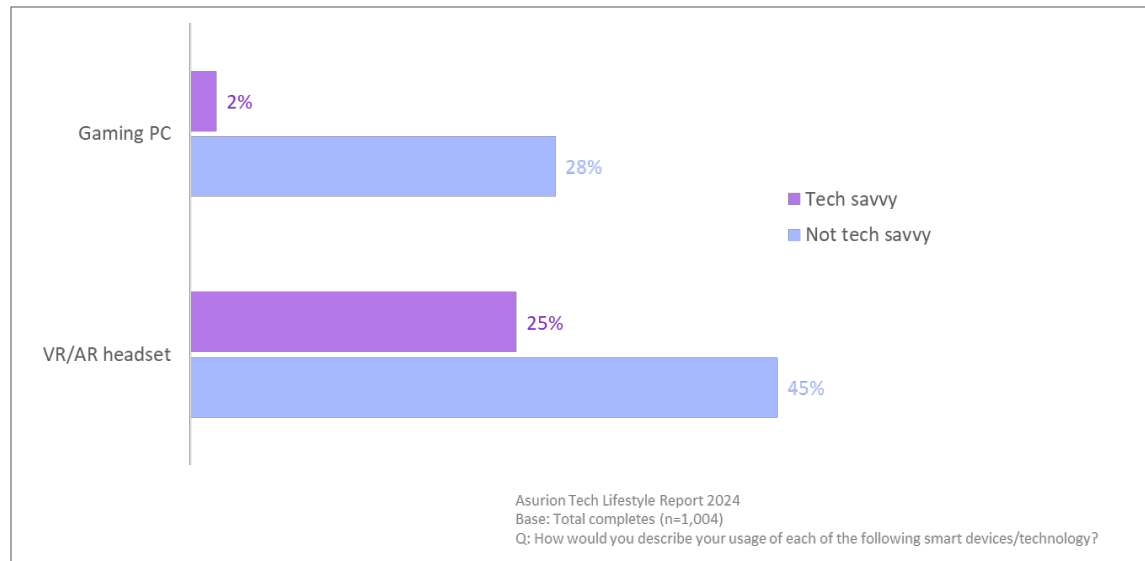
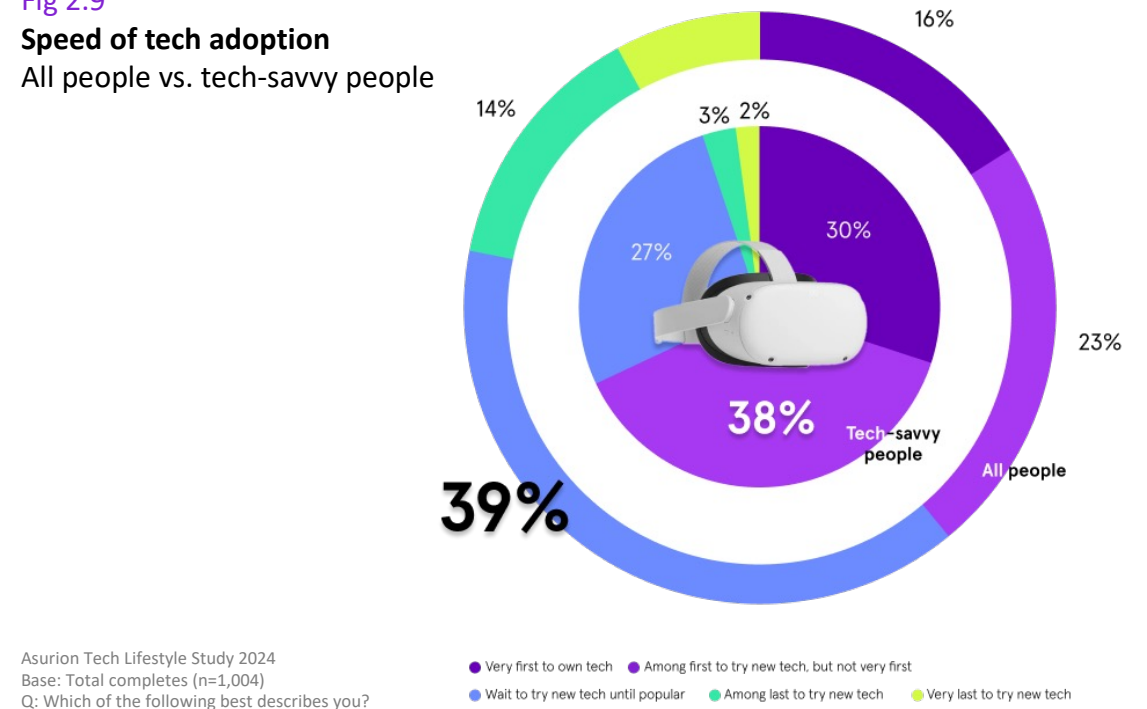


Fig 2.9
Speed of tech adoption
All people vs. tech-savvy people



Child's play

Households with children buy and consume more tech than those without—why?



How kids drive the tech-buying behaviors of adults

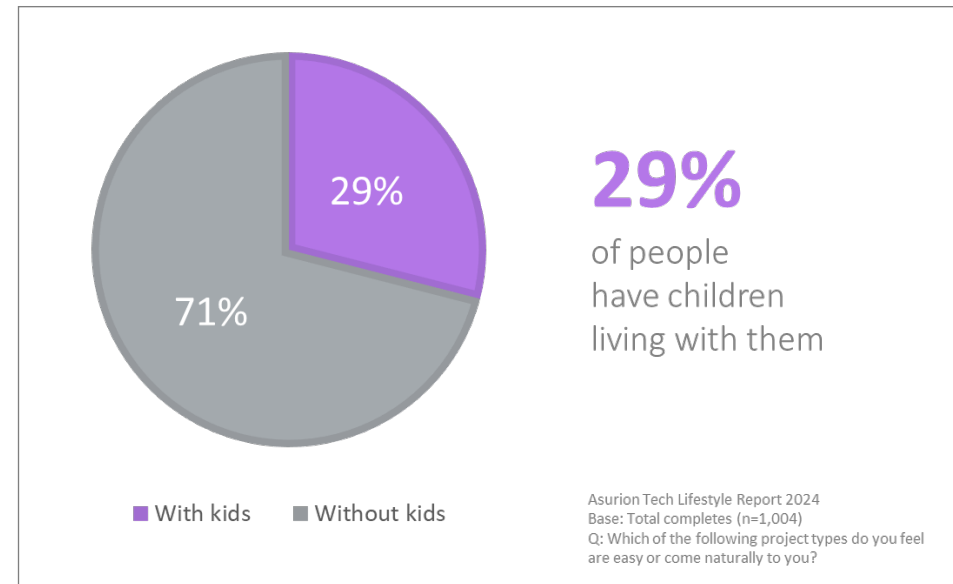
One of the most surprising and accurate predictors of what tech people buy that we uncovered is whether respondents live with children. Households with kids tend to buy more tech than those without kids. There are a few reasons why this might be the case, but let’s first look at this phenomenon.

Around 3 in 10 of our respondents are living with children (Fig 3.1) and the remainder without. The former’s patterns of buying tech often mirror those of the tech-savvy consumers we just explored in Part 2. One reason for this: Parents and caretakers tend to adopt new tech quickly (Fig 3.2). Most people tend to wait until new tech is popular before they try it, but those with children are often either the very first (22% vs. 16% for all consumers) or among the first (29% vs. 23%) to it.

People with kids are far more likely to own a number of smart devices—like tablets, smart watches, smart TVs, streaming devices, home audio equipment, gaming PCs, and home security devices—than those without kids (Fig 3.3). They are also twice as likely to own a gaming console and a VR/AR headsets.

Looking at what they plan to buy over the next year, far more people with kids intend to make a first-time purchase of an entertainment system, a smart home device, or a smart appliance than those without children (Fig 3.4). In fact, 1 in 4 consumers with kids will buy a smart appliance in the next 12 months.

Fig 3.1
People who have children living with them
Across all demographics and all tech

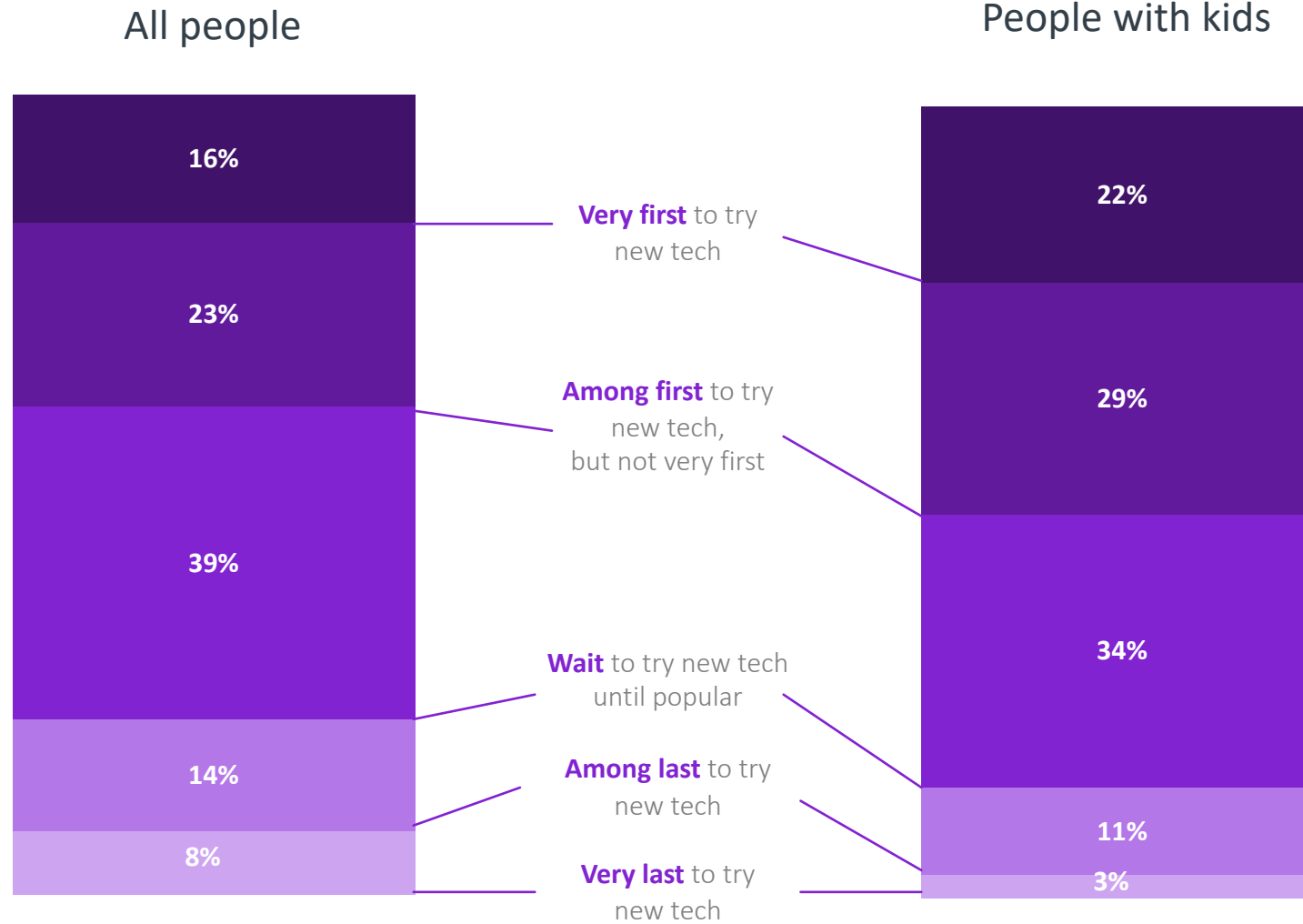


Part 3 – Child’s play

Fig 3.2

Speed of tech adoption

All people vs. people with kids



Part 3 – Child’s play

Fig 3.3
Increased likelihood of owning 10 smart devices
With kids vs. without kids

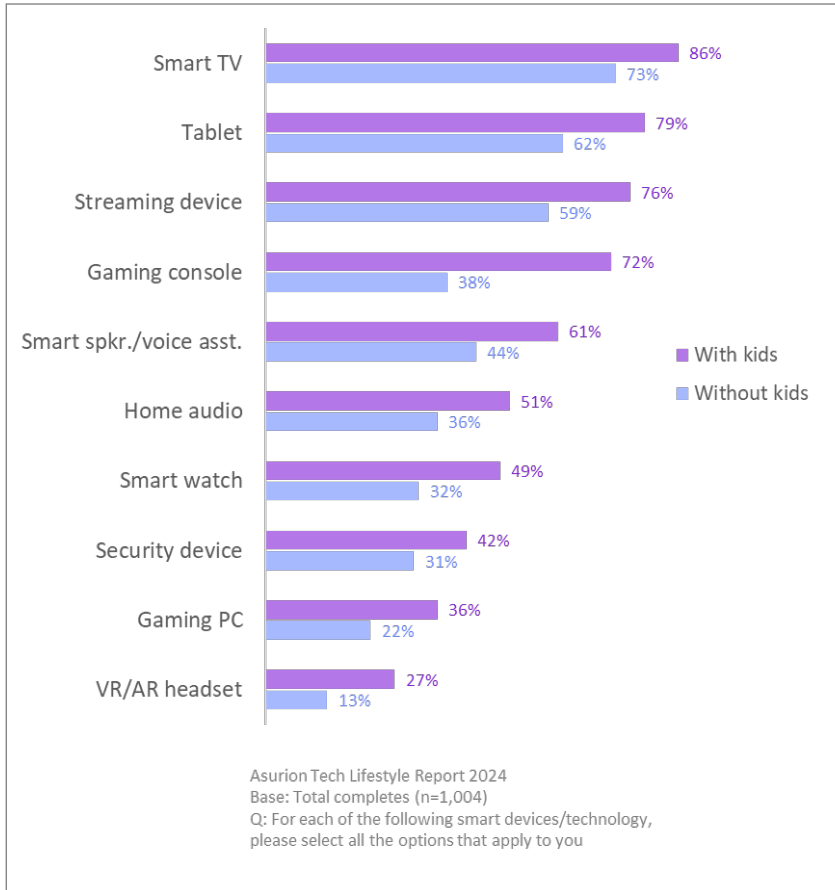
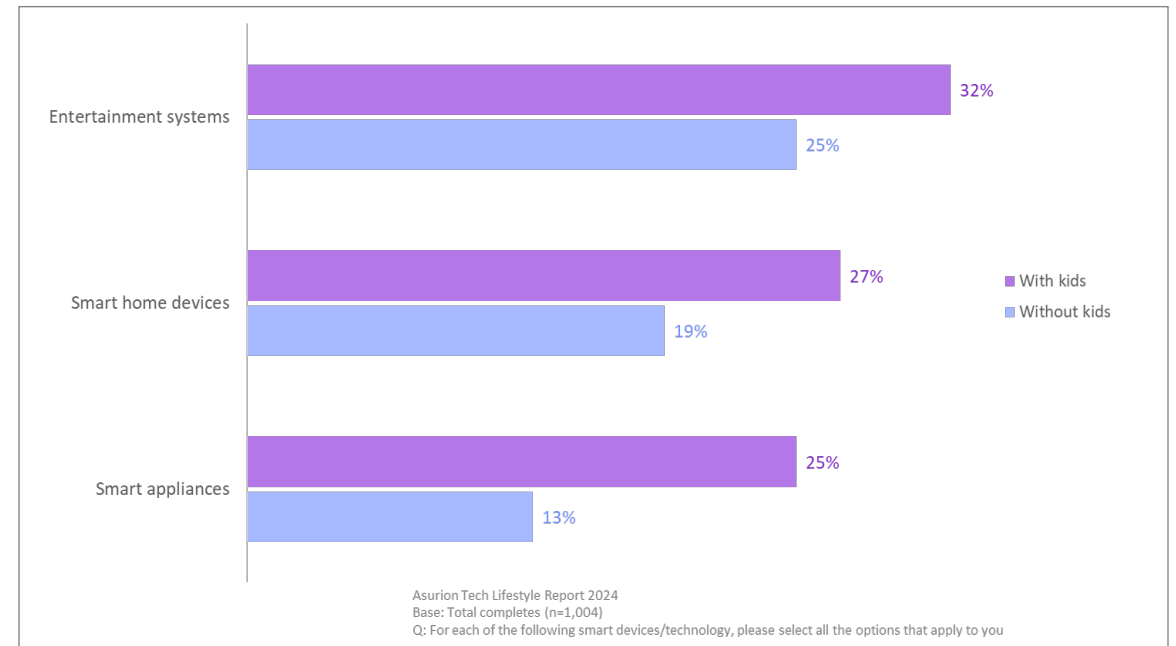


Fig 3.4
Plans to purchase for the first time in the next 12 months
With kids vs. without kids



How kids drive the tech-buying behaviors of adults

In addition, significantly more households with kids are planning to replace or upgrade an entertainment system or device in the year ahead than those without kids (Fig 3.5). What’s possibly more surprising is that they also intend to replace an above-average amount of smart appliances in the next year.

As we mentioned in Part 1, this insight may be skewed by the semantics around upgrading and replacing household appliances and that some respondents may be referring to merely replacing a conventional appliance with a smart version, not replacing smart with smart—although those with kids may intend to do just that.

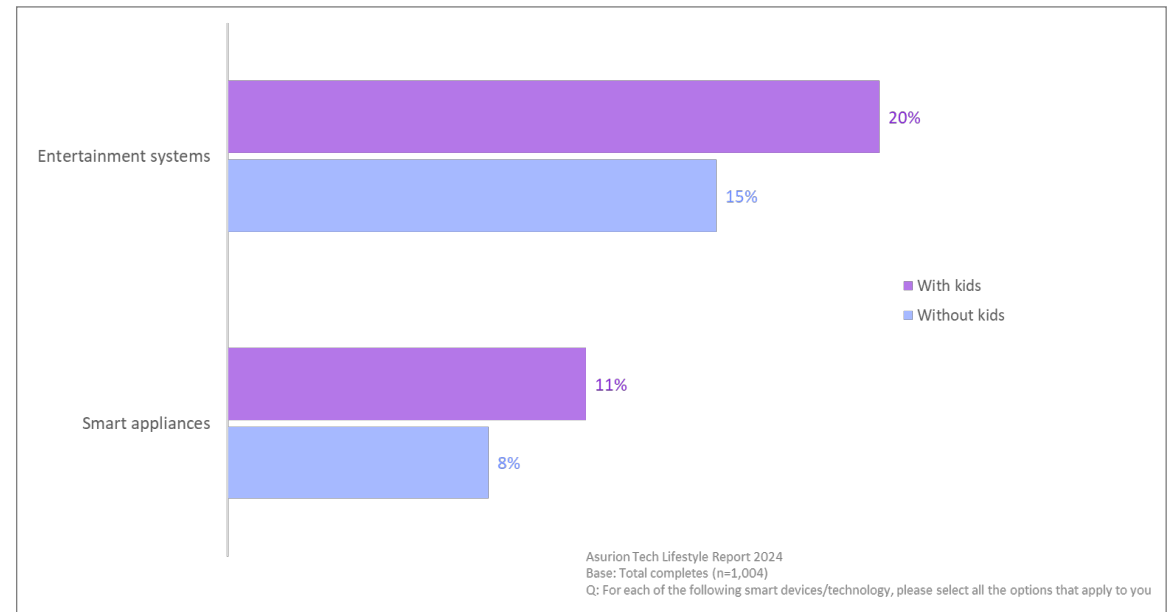
When it comes to motivation for buying tech, there are statistically significant differences between the two groups (kids vs. no kids) within five key reasons (Fig 3.6). More people with kids buy tech as part of a smart home transformation, for school, and for environmental reasons, than those without kids. While these are three different motivations, each makes sense: A tech-embracing demographic is likely to turn their household to a smart home; households with kids need tech for schoolwork; and, as we saw with the tech savvy folks in Part 2, the heavier tech consumers seem to consider environmental concerns more prominently in their buying decisions.

Turning the tables

In contrast, there are two buying motivation categories that consumers without kids outscore those with children: product upgrade and I/we can’t live without it. Perhaps these are related to having potentially higher levels of disposable income.

Moving on, there are five devices that people with kids say they’re using more than they expected (Fig 3.7). Around two-thirds or more report they are using their gaming PC, home audio system, router, and smart refrigerator more than they expected, and more

Fig 3.5
Plans to replace or upgrade in the next 12 months
With kids vs. without kids



Part 3 – Child’s play

Fig 3.6

Reasons for buying tech

With kids vs. without kids (significant variations only)’’

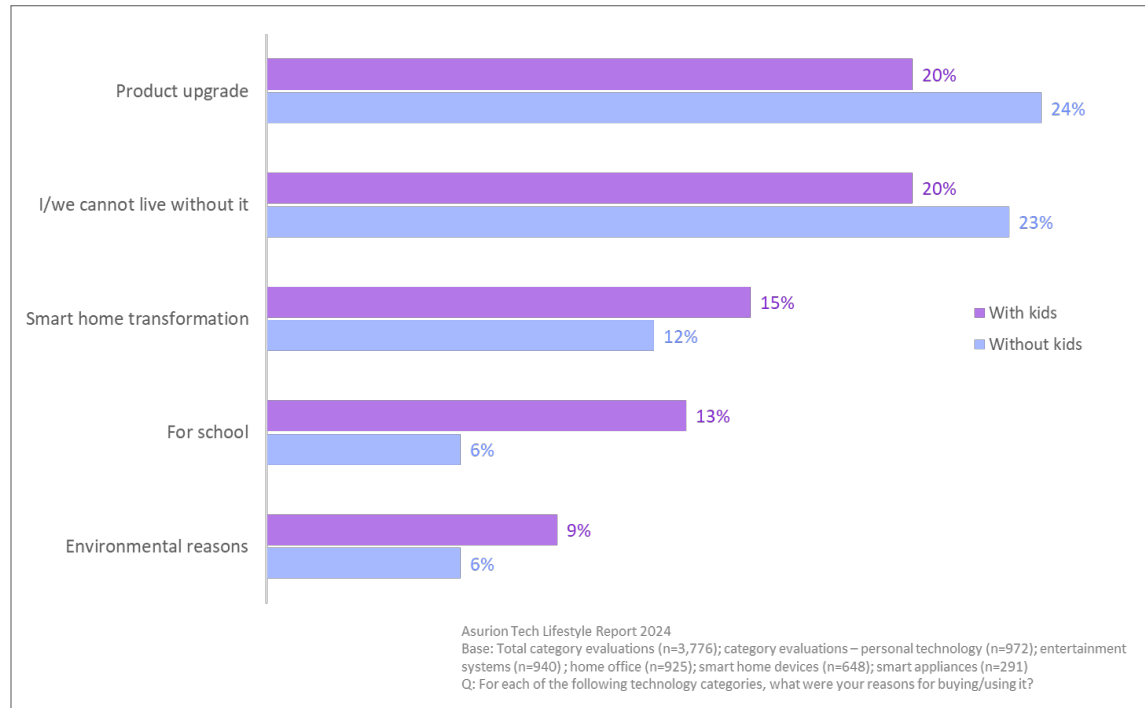
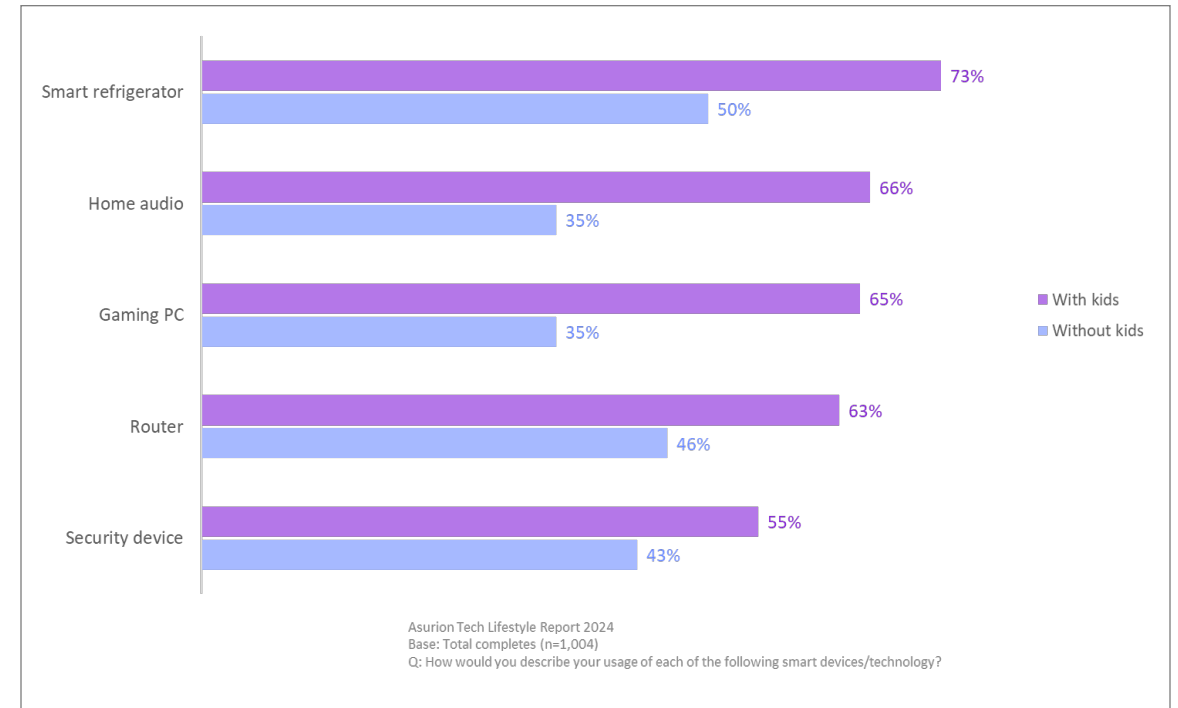


Fig 3.7

Devices that consumers are using more than expected

With kids vs. without kids



How kids drive the tech-buying behaviors of adults

than half say they’re using a smart security device more than they expected. For each of these five device categories, significantly more consumers with kids are reporting an unexpected, additional use than those without children. Again, this is an eclectic group of devices and some of the responses were a bit perplexing, such as a surprisingly higher use of routers (Fig 3.7).

Conversely, more than a quarter of people without kids say they’re using their gaming PC less than they expected vs. just 5% for those with kids.

As for the key demographics of this segment, here’s what we found (Fig 3.8):

- Around one-third of women say they live with children, compared to one-fourth of men.
- Almost half of Millennials live with children, while one-third of both Gen Z and Gen X—and only 5% of Boomers—live in households with kids.
- Around 34% of tech-savvy consumers and 26% of not-tech-savvy ones live with children.
- The likelihood of kids being part of a household seems to increase with level of earnings: 36% of higher income consumers are living with kids, vs. 29% of mid income, and just 22% of lower income.
- Geographically, there's a disparity between the South and the Northeast, with around one-third of Southerners living with children compared to just 1 in 5 Northeasterners.

Why are kids driving tech consumption?

There are a few possible reasons why having children in your household often predicts the way you buy and use tech:

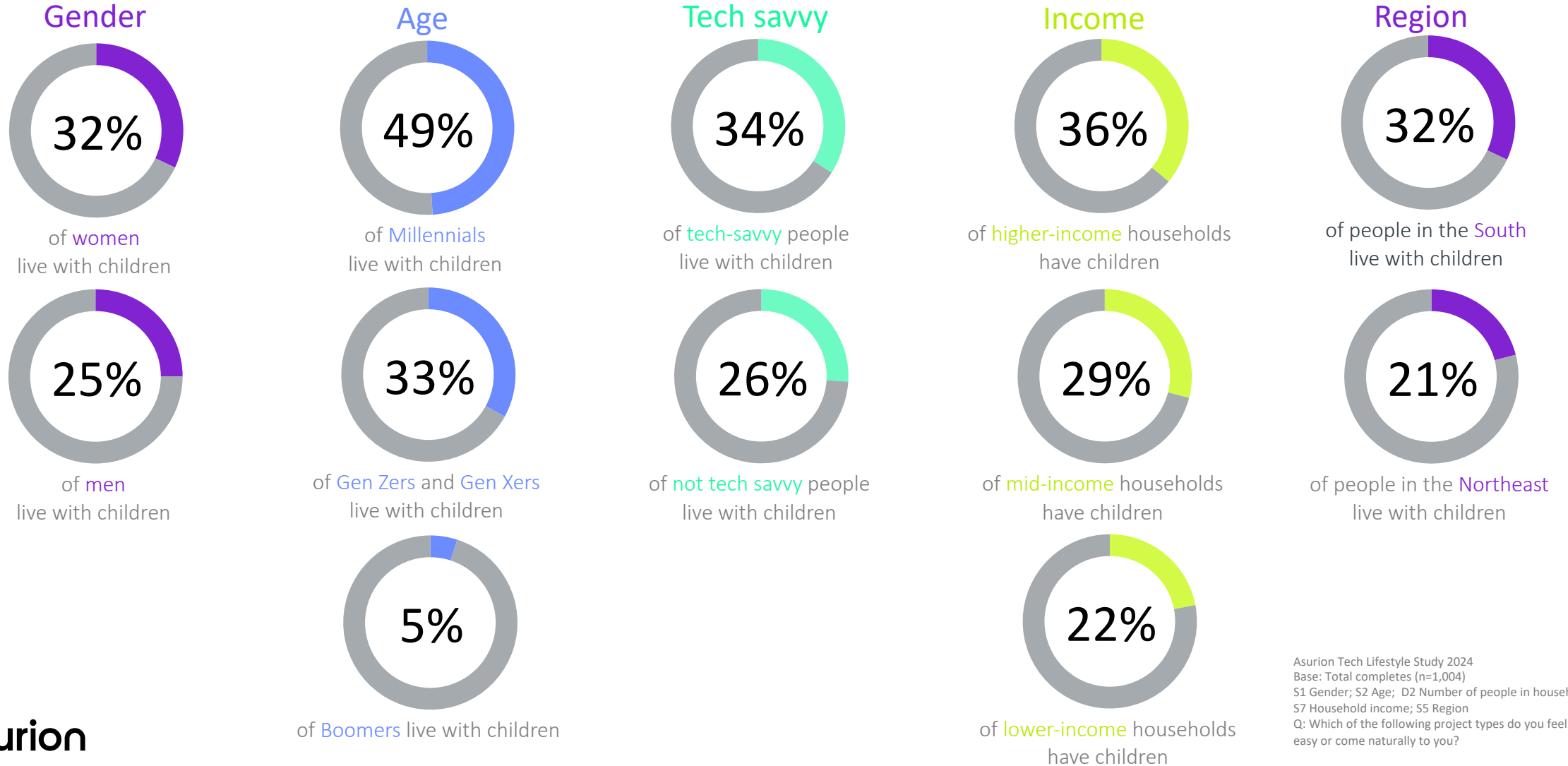
- Living with children helps adults stay up to date with the latest devices. The kids demand it.
- Adults are looking to technology to help them both “entertain” and “educate” their kids, which would explain the higher ownership of devices like tablets and gaming consoles.
- Adults are determined to keep up with tech to give their children what they will see as an essential strong grounding in tech fluency.
- Adults are tasking their children with either influencing, or wholly making, tech decisions in the household. As part of its 2018 US Monitor, data insights and consulting company Kantar highlighted the increasing influence of children in tech buying decisions (Fig 3.9).
- Adults are turning to tech to give them back a little time from their hectic daily schedules via automated smart home products that control household functions, like lighting, thermostats, and curtains.
- In most households with children, the parents will likely be Millennial-age or younger, so there is a skew toward a younger, more tech-centric demographic.

Part 3 – Child’s play

Fig 3.8

People who are most/least likely to live with children

Within five population segments

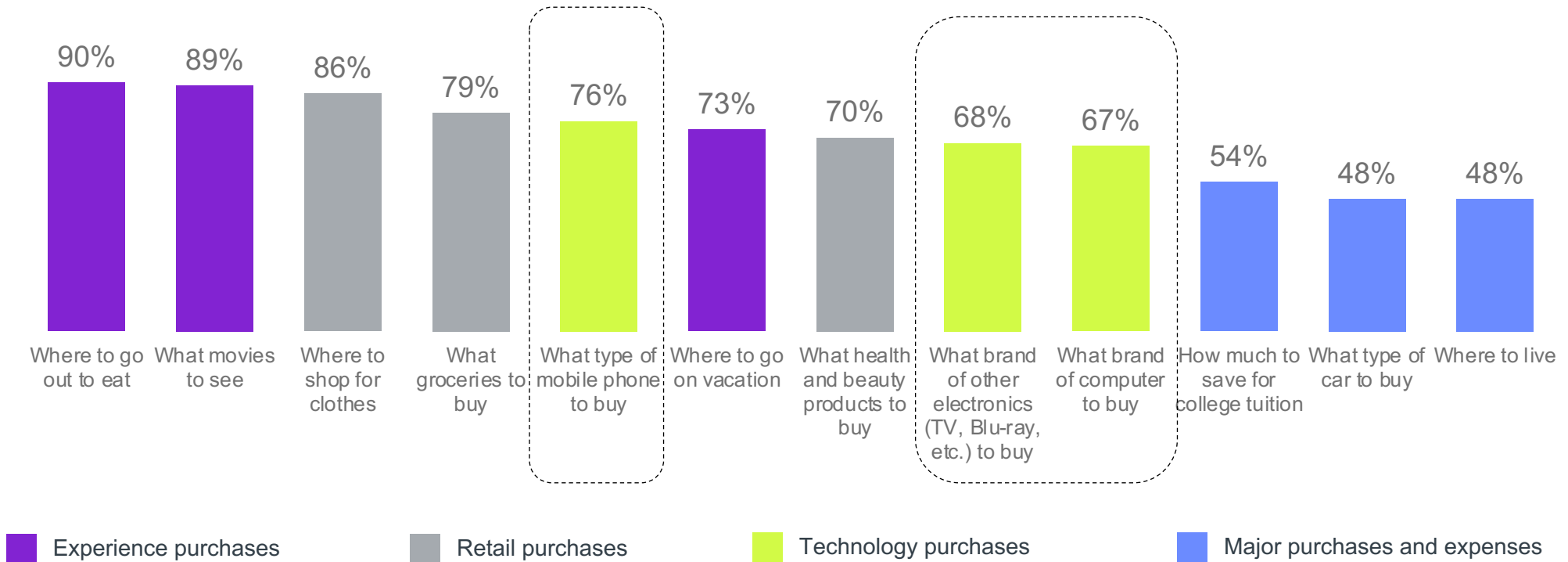


Part 3 – Child’s play

Fig 3.9
Children increasingly influence tech decisions
Kantar 2018 US Monitor

I have input when it comes to deciding ...

Among those 18 and younger



Part 4

Human hurdles

What's stopping people from adopting tech—
and are their concerns legitimate?



Exploring people’s concerns about buying and using technology

We’ve spent a bit of time looking at peoples’ motivations for buying tech, but what are some of the barriers—perceived and otherwise—to using new tech? What’s stopping people from embracing new devices? What are their pain points and fears? And are their concerns justified?

As part of our tech lifestyle survey, we prompted our respondents with a list of potential reasons why they might hesitate to buy or use different types of smart devices and technologies. The deeper we probed, the more insights we uncovered.

Let’s start with what you might expect. The top barrier to people buying and using new tech for each of our five categories (Fig 4.1) is “I don’t need it.” Other top reasons are largely made up of similar concerns such as “I won’t use it enough,” “it doesn’t interest me,” “it’s too expensive,” and “the tech will go out of date soon.” The only other responses to break into the top five reasons are concerns over a “short product life” (home office tech), data security and privacy (smart home devices), and that the products will break and need repairing (smart appliances). More on that last one in a moment.

What we’re seeing is how people naturally think about the value of tech. If you think you don’t need something or you’re not interested in the technology, then you will probably think it’s too expensive and cannot see yourself using it much. It’s about how much a person is willing to pay for the value they perceive, and that’s especially true of technology.

[Research](#) has shown there is also a strong link between “thinking” and “feeling,” so when people evaluate brands (for buying decisions), they primarily use emotions (personal feelings and experiences) rather than information (brand attributes, features, and facts).

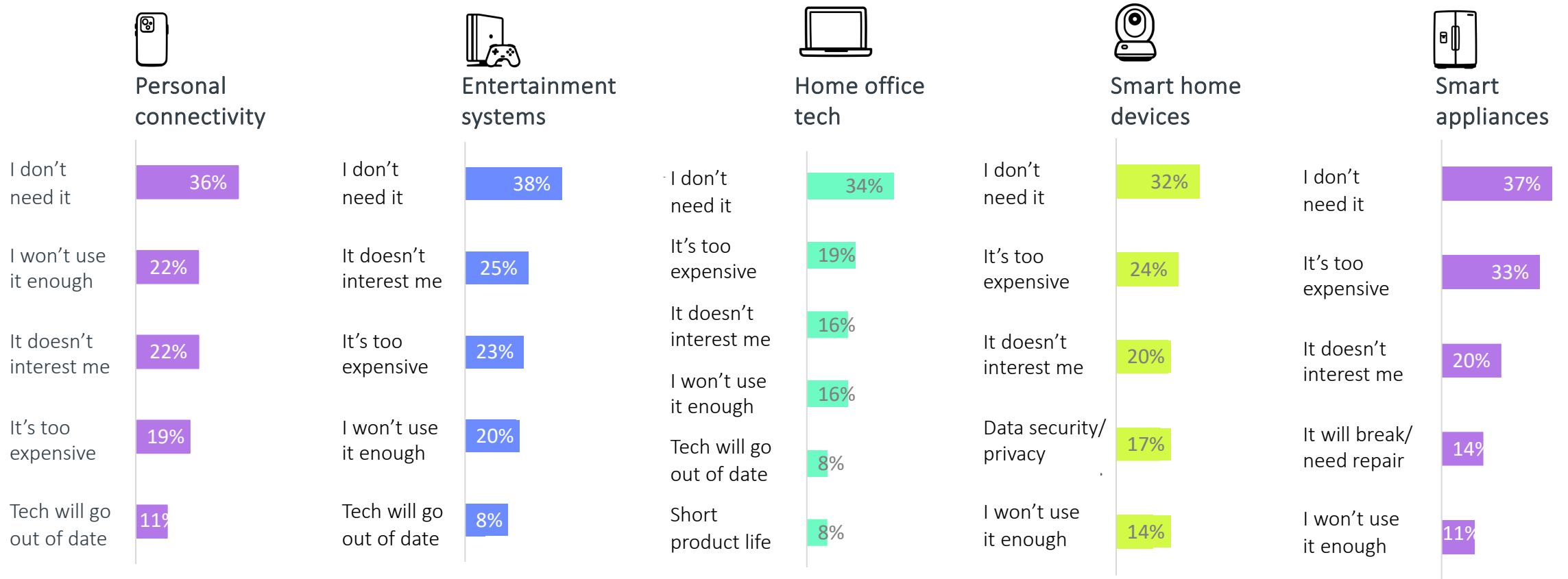
Why smartphones are different

If we look at the device level (Fig 4.2), we see a little more variation. As you might expect, the “I don’t need it” claims are less prevalent for smartphones (although still present), with people instead voicing concerns over the potentially short shelf life of the tech, data security and privacy issues, the break and fix cycle, and of course, the expense associated with buying a new phone. The rest of the personal connectivity category follows the more familiar refrain of people who are into tablets, smart watches, and fitness trackers vs. those who are very much not. The polarization continues across most devices for similar reasons.

It gets more interesting when we study a few of the potential barriers lurking just outside of the top 5—and look at our 21 devices through the lens of each individual concern.

Part 4 – Human hurdles

Fig 4.1
Top 5 barriers to adoption by tech category
 Percent of people who perceive these concerns



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024
 Base: Do not currently own device (n=12,335) | Category evaluations—personal connectivity (n=1,722); entertainment systems (n=4,106); home office tech (n=1,070); smart home devices (n=1,894); smart appliances (n=3,543)
 Q: What are your biggest concerns with owning/using each of the following smart device(s)/technology?

Part 4 – Human hurdles

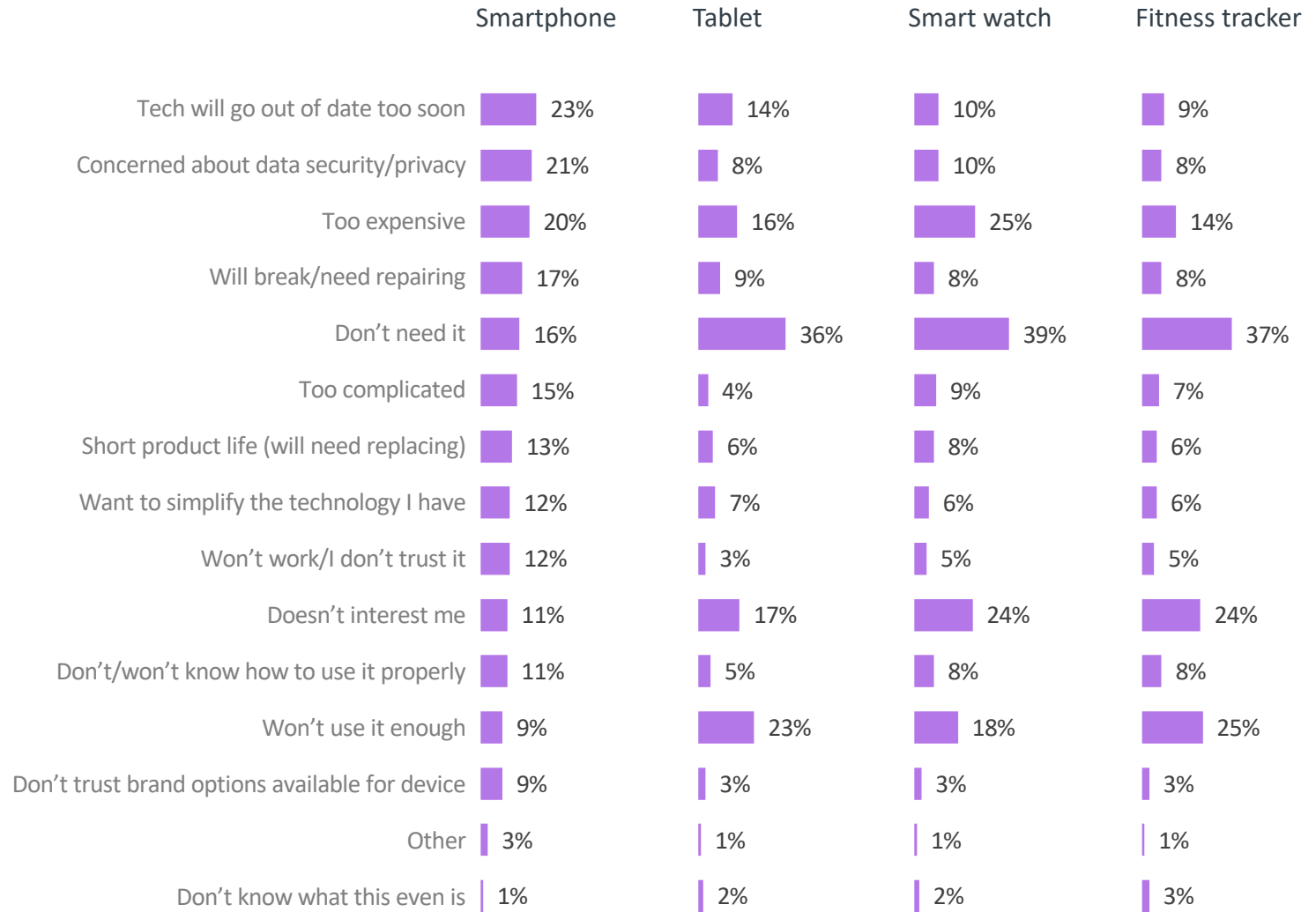
Fig 4.2

Barriers to adoption of different devices

Within the five tech categories



Personal connectivity



Part 4 – Human hurdles

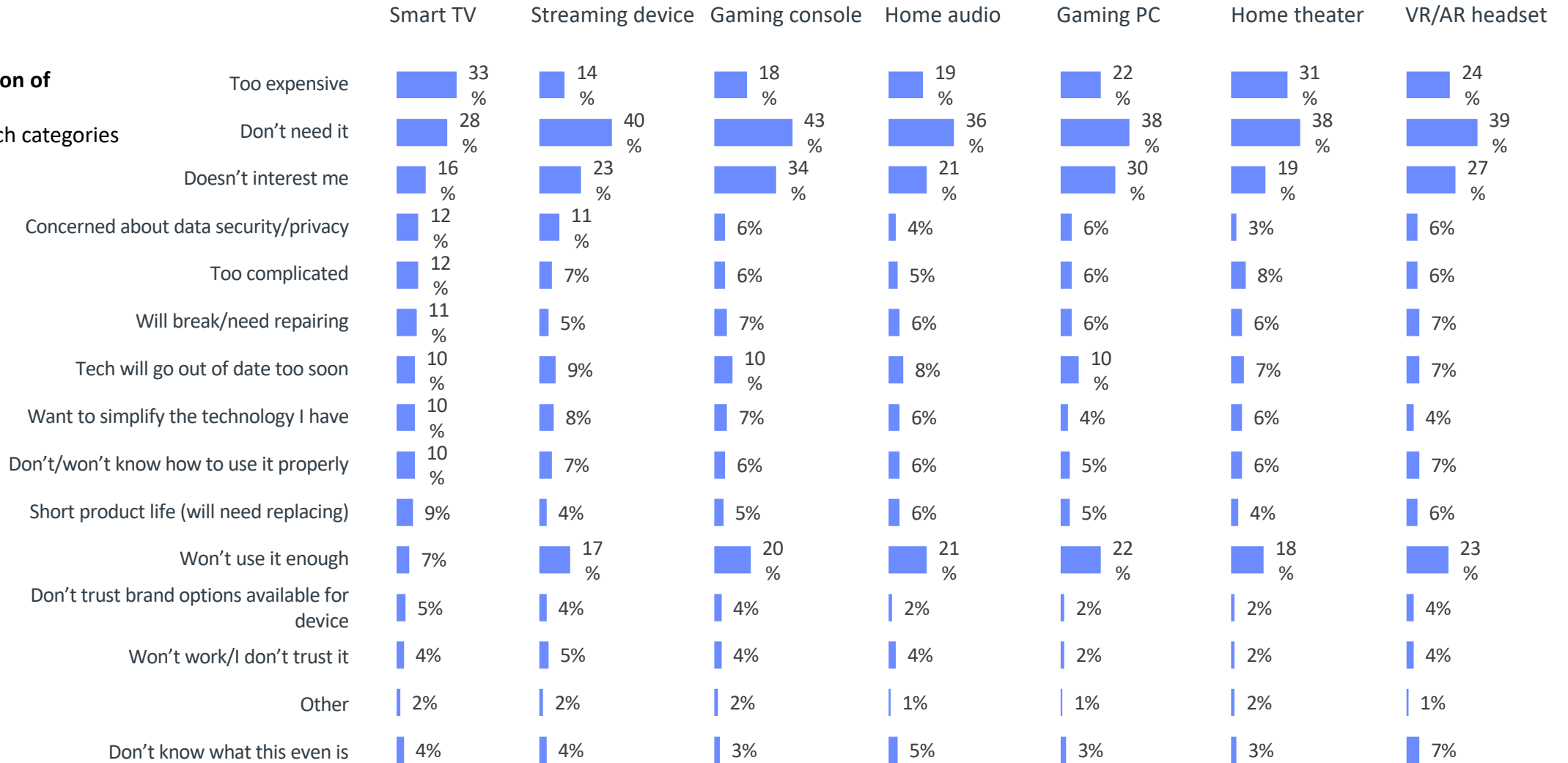
Fig 4.2 (cont'd)

Barriers to adoption of different devices

Within the five tech categories



Entertainment systems



Part 4 – Human hurdles

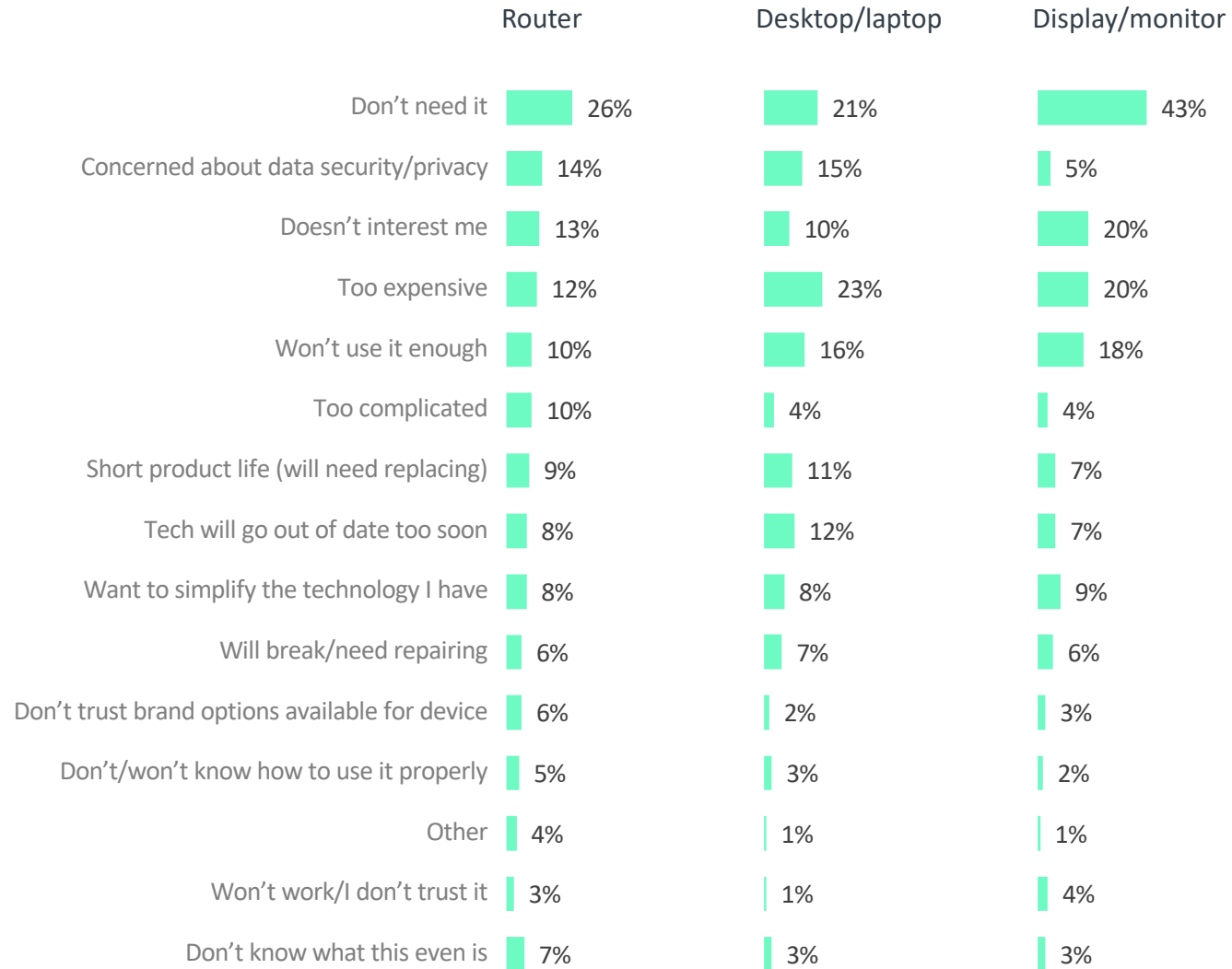
Fig 4.2 (cont'd)

Barriers to adoption of different devices

Within the five tech categories



Home office tech



Part 4 – Human hurdles

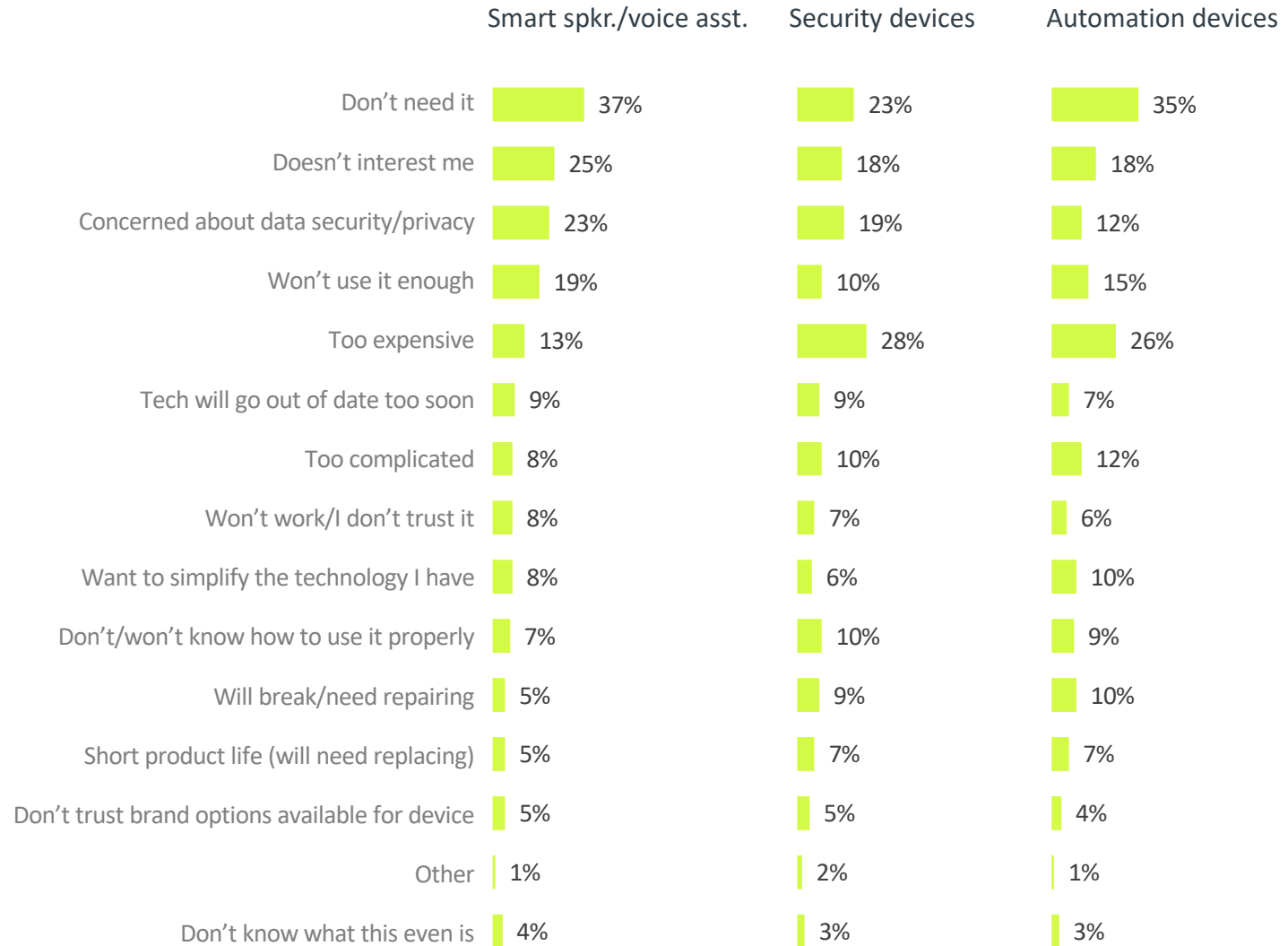
Fig 4.2 (cont'd)

Barriers to adoption of different devices

Within the five tech categories



Smart home devices



Part 4 – Human hurdles

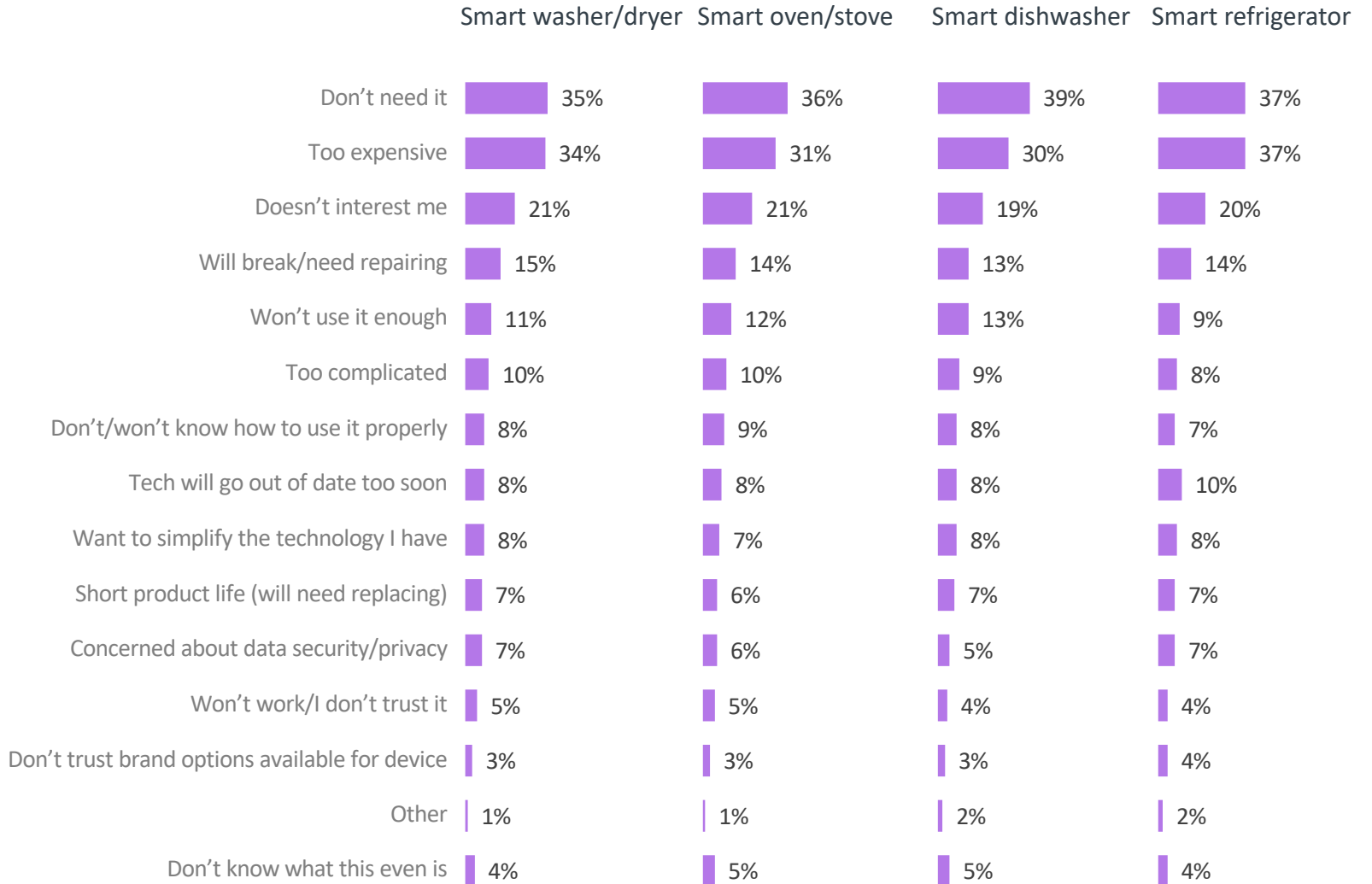
Fig 4.2 (cont'd)

Barriers to adoption of different devices

Within the five tech categories



Smart appliances



Exploring people’s concerns about buying and using technology

Respondents viewed data security and privacy (Fig 4.3) as a significant concern for smart speakers and voice assistants as well as smart home security devices. They also worried about these issues with their smartphones along with their computers and laptops.

There was one particularly interesting insight: How respondents viewed the potential threat of their tech breaking and the subsequent need for repairs (Fig 4.4).

Unsurprisingly, people had this concern the most about smartphones (17%), but they also expressed it more about all smart appliances—refrigerators, ovens and stoves, washers and dryers, and dishwashers—than for any other smart device.

This is a common reaction to tech that’s still new. That said, it does seem as if people really do think these items are vulnerable to breaking and are worried about the cost and hassle of getting them fixed. Manufacturers might want to focus on conveying the reliability and durability of these appliances as well as providing clear reassurances via warranties and protection plans.

As we have already discussed, cost is a common gripe across the board. However, when looking at all the devices together through that lens (Fig 4.5) we can see that it’s the nice-to-have items—smart TVs and home theater equipment—along with many of the newer technologies—home security devices, home automation tech, and smart appliances—that people seem most worried about in terms of price. VR/AR headsets would likely have scored higher if our survey hadn’t closed a few days before the launch the Apple Vision Pro™, which sells for \$3,499 and up.

Gender and other variations

Women are more likely than men to think personal connectivity tech is too complicated (9% vs. 6%). They are also more likely to say they don’t need an entertainment system (39% vs. 36%), that it doesn’t interest them (26% vs. 24%) and that it’s too complicated (8% vs 5%). Men are more likely to worry that the entertainment system’s technology will go out of date soon (10% vs 8%) and that it will break and need repairing (8% vs 5%). Be aware that, while these margins may look slim, they are statistically significant at the 95% interval due to the large sample sizes.

When it comes to smart appliances, this time it’s women who are more worried the tech will break and need repairing (15% vs 13%). More women than men are also worried these devices are too expensive (35% vs 31%). And this time, men are more likely to say they don’t need them (39% vs 35%) and that they don’t interest them (22% vs. 19%).

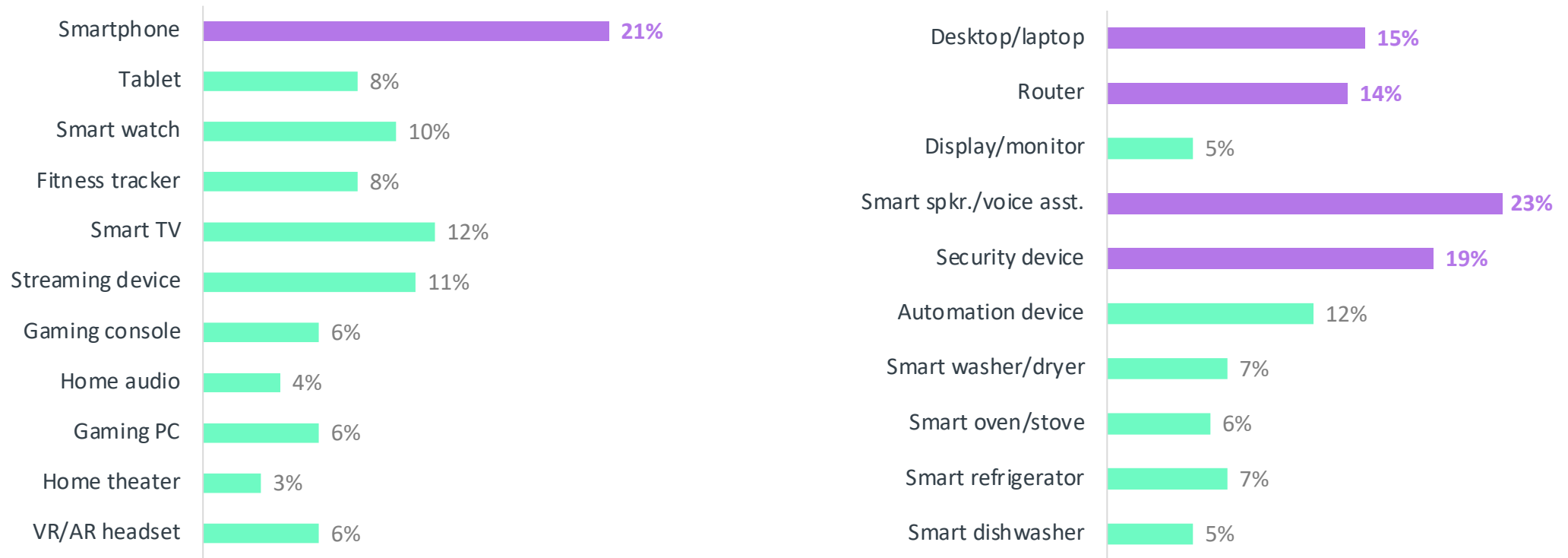
Meanwhile, for all five tech categories, Boomers are far more likely than the three other generations to say they don’t need a device. Similarly, rural consumers are more likely than urban ones to say they don’t need tech, and again, this is true across all categories.

Part 4 – Human hurdles

Fig 4.3

Data security/privacy concerns as a barrier to tech adoption

For people who don't own these devices



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Do not currently own device (n=12,335) | Device evaluations—smartphone (n=75); tablet (n=333); smart watch (n=638); fitness tracker (n=676); smart TV (n=232); streaming device (n=360); gaming console (n=526); home audio (n=598); gaming PC (n=745); home theater (n=812); VR/AR headset (n=833); router (n=267); desktop/laptop (n=212); display/monitor (n=591); smart speaker/voice assistant (n=514); security device (n=658); automation device (n=722); smart washer/dryer (n=829); smart oven/stove (n=902); smart dishwasher (n=908); smart refrigerator (n=904)

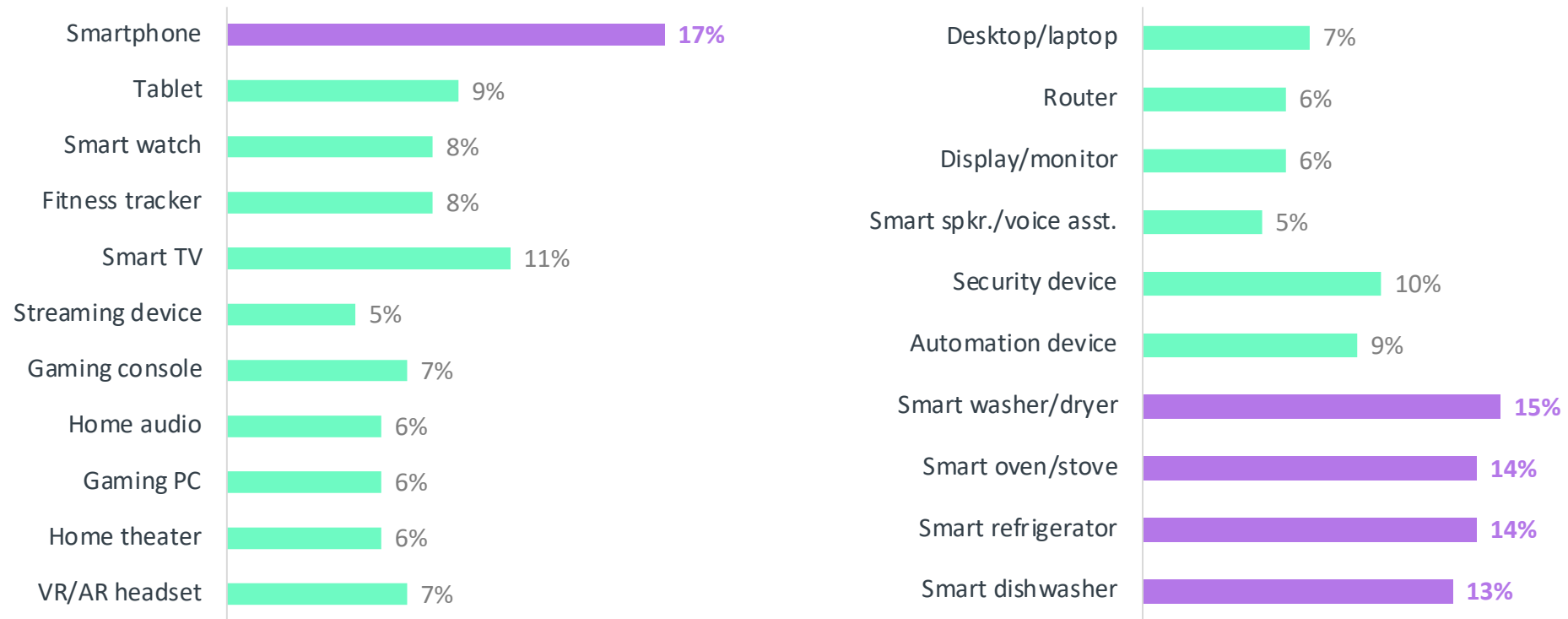
Q: What are your biggest concerns with owning/using each of the following smart device(s)/technology?

Part 4 – Human hurdles

Fig 4.4

Perceived threat of breakage/repair as a barrier to adoption

For people who don't own these devices



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Do not currently own device (n=12,335) | Device evaluations—smartphone (n=75); tablet (n=333); smart watch (n=638); fitness tracker (n=676); smart TV (n=232); streaming device (n=360); gaming console (n=526); home audio (n=598); gaming PC (n=745); home theater (n=812); VR/AR headset (n=833); router (n=267); desktop/laptop (n=212); display/monitor (n=591); smart speaker/voice assistant (n=514); security device (n=658); automation device (n=722); smart washer/dryer (n=829); smart oven/stove (n=902); smart dishwasher (n=908); smart refrigerator (n=904)

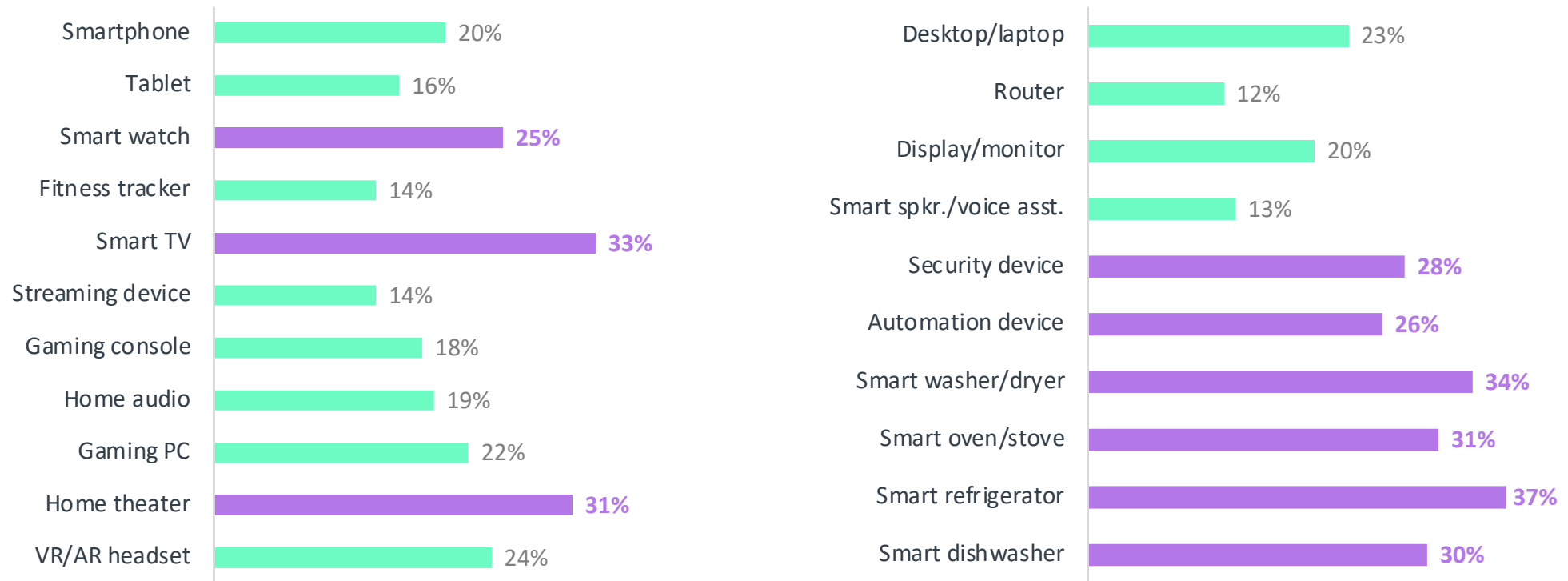
Q: What are your biggest concerns with owning/using each of the following smart device(s)/technology?

Part 4 – Human hurdles

Fig 4.5

Cost as a barrier to tech adoption

For people who don't own these devices



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Do not currently own device (n=12,335) | Device evaluations—smartphone (n=75); tablet (n=333); smart watch (n=638); fitness tracker (n=676); smart TV (n=232); streaming device (n=360); gaming console (n=526); home audio (n=598); gaming PC (n=745); home theater (n=812); VR/AR headset (n=833); router (n=267); desktop/laptop (n=212); display/monitor (n=591); smart speaker/voice assistant (n=514); security device (n=658); automation device (n=722); smart washer/dryer (n=829); smart oven/stove (n=902); smart dishwasher (n=908); smart refrigerator (n=904)

Q: What are your biggest concerns with owning/using each of the following smart device(s)/technology?

Part 5

What the people want

Where consumers think tech could work harder—and smarter—to help improve their lives

asurion



Where consumers think their tech could be working harder—and smarter

In part 4, we saw that the biggest potential barrier to using new tech across every category is “I don’t need it.” This does not mean, of course, that there is necessarily a lack of demand for any particular device. Nor does it mean that consumers have very few tech needs and wants. Far from it. So, what do people need help with in their lives?

We asked our respondents a few questions related to this topic and got some fairly telling responses. First, we asked in what areas of their lives they need more tech solutions, from the dozen or so options we offered. Next, what enhancements could be made to their tech experience. And finally, which tech-help channels they have used in the past 12 months.

Family first

Let’s look first at the areas in which people would like more tech solutions (Fig 5.1). The top answers overall were centered around the family and the household: “keeping the home and loved ones safe” (chosen by 48% of respondents) and “keeping the home and loved ones comfortable” (41%).

As you can see, the remaining answers focused on hobbies, finances, health, career, communication, education, and faith. It seems the majority of people are prioritizing care of the family unit over their individual wants.

Other interesting insights emerged when we looked at the differences in responses between various demographics.

The way we need tech now

If we look at the different generations, there is very little difference in their views about the importance of tech in keeping their loved ones safe. However, we can immediately see that members of Gen Z are far more focused on tech to help in many areas of their lives, especially in maintaining and improving their mental health—43% of Gen Z vs. 28% of Millennials, 26% Gen Xers, and only 20% of Boomers.

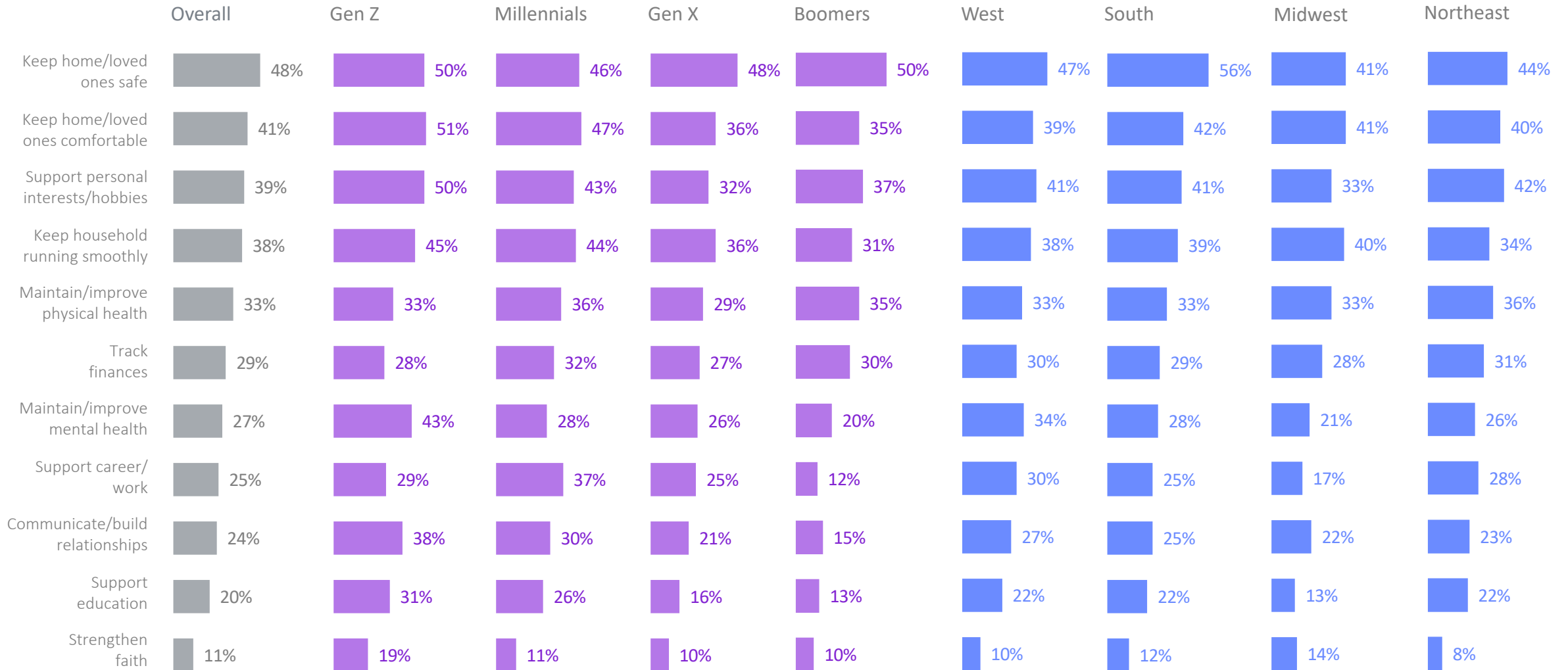
Gen Z also reports a significantly greater need for tech to support their personal interests and hobbies (50% vs. 39% of everyone else), keep household operations running smoothly (45% vs. 38%); communicate with others and build relationships (38% vs. 24%); and support education (31% vs. 20%).

Further variations are evident in the regional data. People in the South rely heavily on tech when it comes to keeping their household and loved ones safe (56% vs 48% for all consumers).

Meanwhile, those living in the West are more focused on maintaining and improving their mental health (34% vs. 27% for everyone else).

Part 5 – What people want

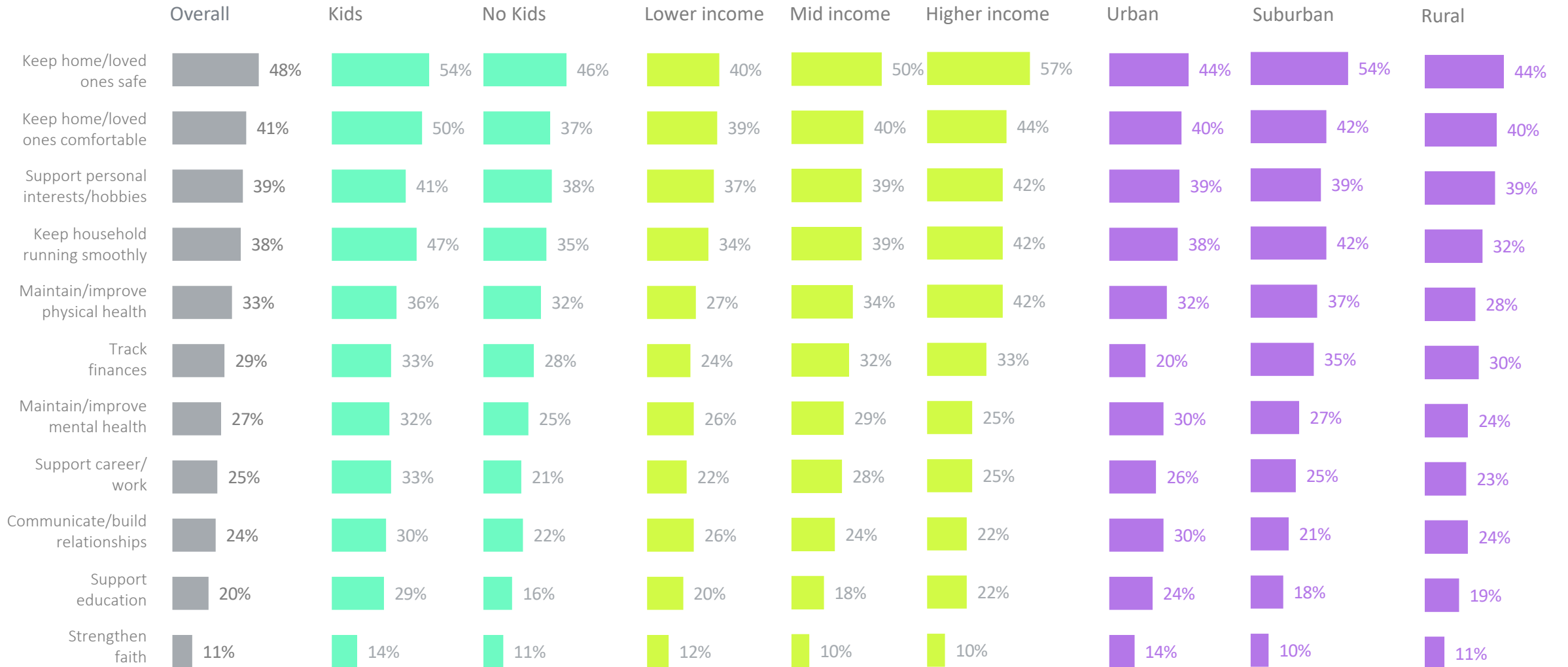
Fig 5.1
Life areas needing tech support - By demographic group



Part 5 – What people want

Fig 5.1 (cont'd)

Life areas needing tech support - By demographic group



Where consumers think their tech could be working harder—and smarter

Once again, we see a strong showing from people with kids (see Part 3 for a deep dive), who outscore people without kids in multiple lifestyle areas, including keeping loved ones safe (54% vs. 46% without kids), maintaining and improving mental health (32% vs. 25%), keeping the household running smoothly (47% vs. 35%), supporting their career (33% vs. 21%), and supporting education (29% vs. 16%).

Higher income people rely more on tech than their lower income counterparts in most lifestyle categories, including tracking finances (33% vs. 24% for lower income). They also have a strong tech-led focus on physical health (42% vs. 27%) but mental health is more evenly spread (25% vs. 26%).

Finally, it appears that people in the suburbs have a stronger hold on categories relating to the household and family unit (keeping loved ones safe, keeping the house running smoothly, tracking finances, etc.) than both those who live in cities or rural areas. People in cities do, however, look to tech solutions more for communicating with others and for supporting education.

Diving further into the data, we looked at all our segments through each of these lifestyle areas, one at a time, revealing the top 5 tech-focused demographics within each life category (Fig 5.2a and Fig 5.2b). These lists offer an alternative guide to targeting specific demographics within different tech lifestyle categories, according to the needs of these groups.

And while the lists do vary, it's interesting that people with kids appear in every single one of them. This group really is committed to buying more tech on almost every level. The overall winner, however, would have to be Gen Z, which tops six of the 11 lifestyle categories.

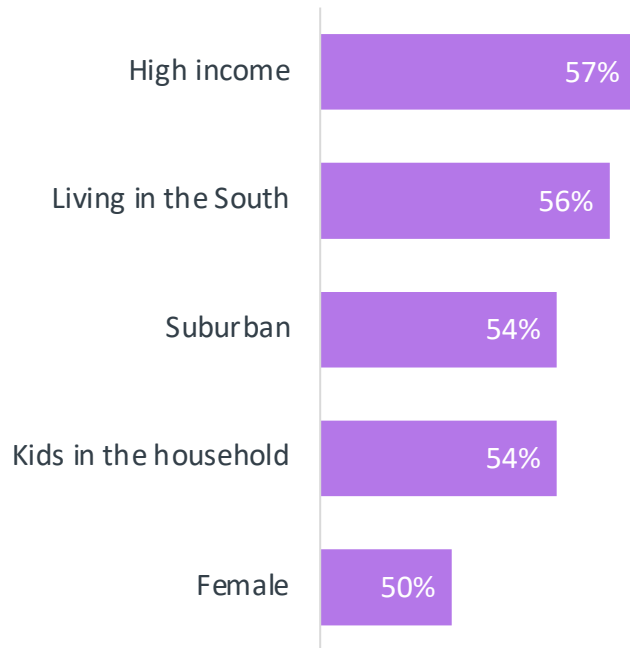
Part 5 – What people want

Fig 5.2a

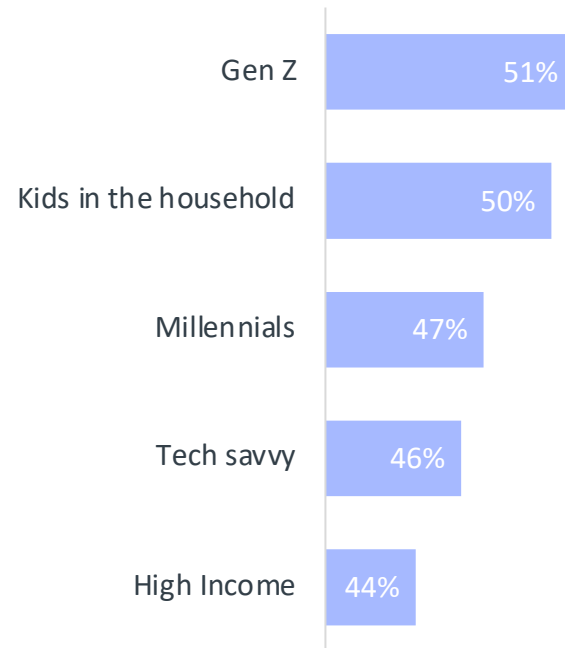
Top 5 types of people asking for more tech solutions within each life area

All respondents

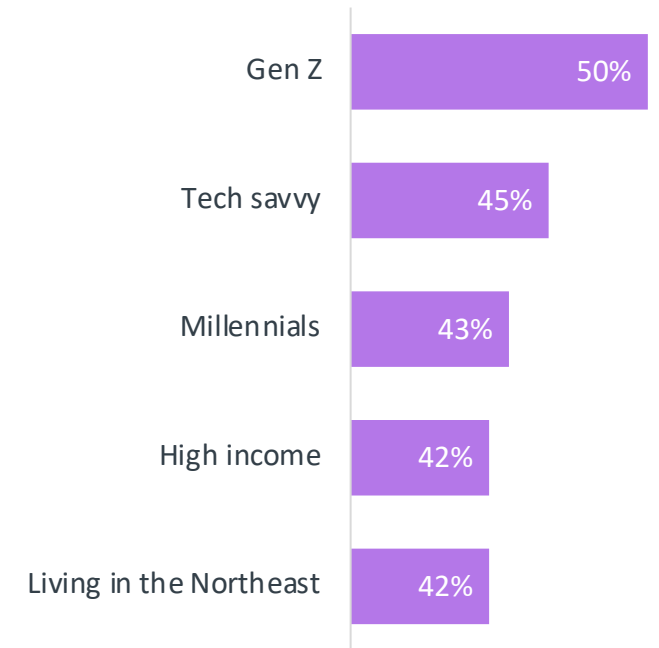
Keep home and loved ones safe



Keep home and loved ones comfortable



Support personal interests and hobbies



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024
Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

Q9. When you think about all the technology you could add, which area of your life do you need technology/electronics to help you or those who live in your home make progress?

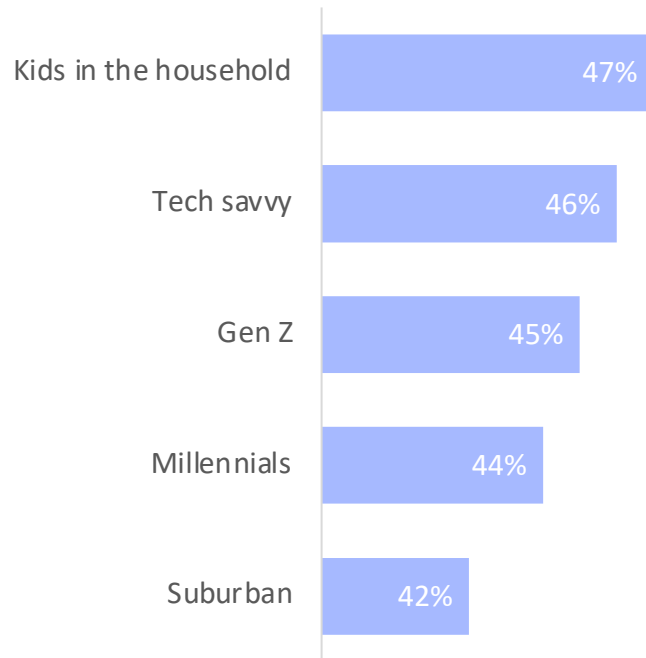
Part 5 – What people want

Fig 5.2a (cont'd)

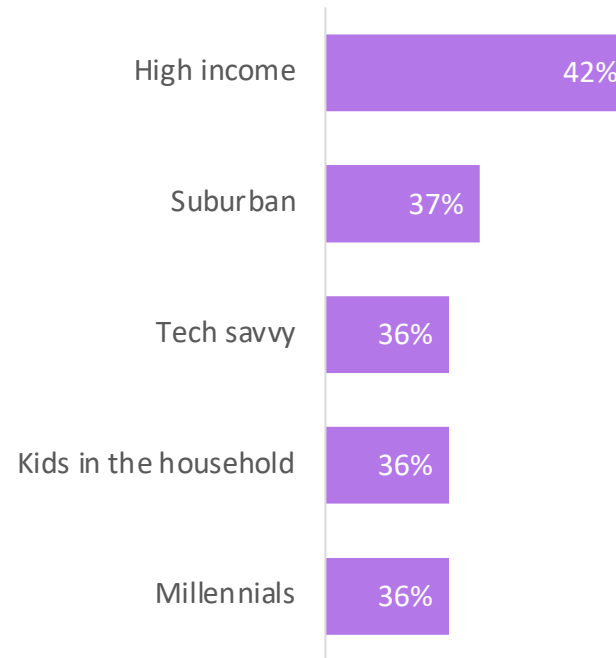
Top 5 types of people asking for more tech solutions within each life area

All respondents

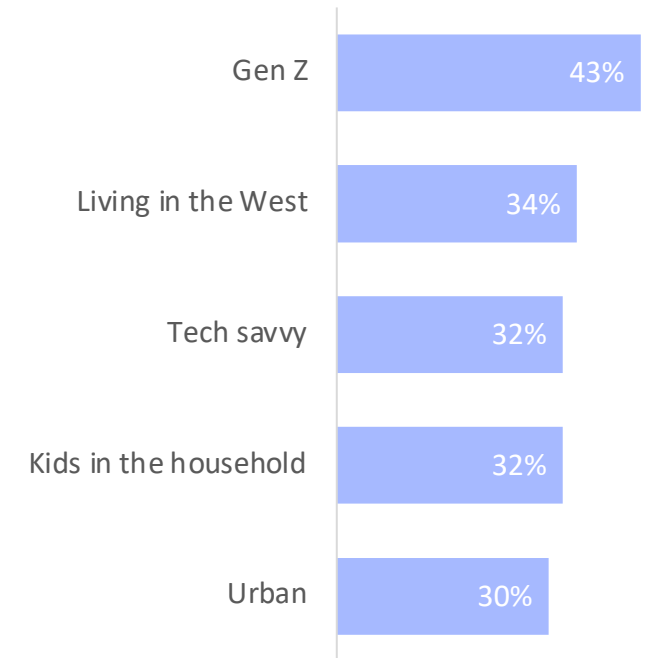
Keep household running smoothly



Maintain/improve physical health



Maintain/improve mental health



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024Q2
Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

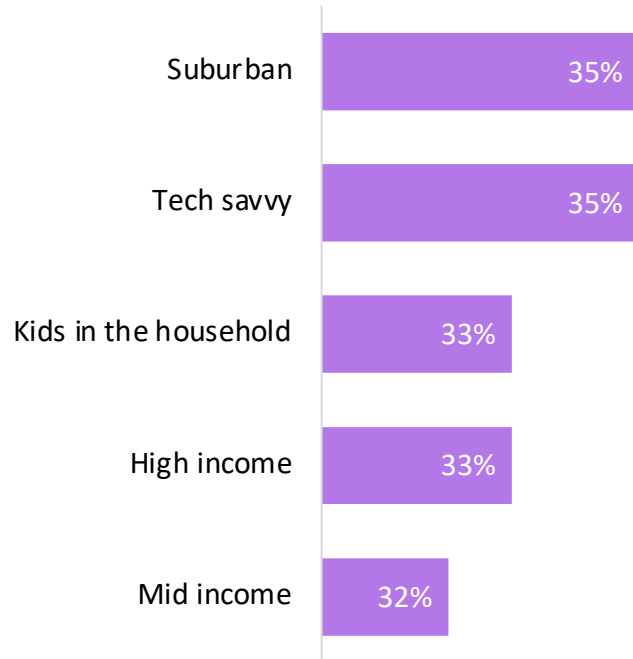
Q9. When you think about all the technology you could add, which area of your life do you need technology/electronics to help you or those who live in your home make progress?

Part 5 – What people want

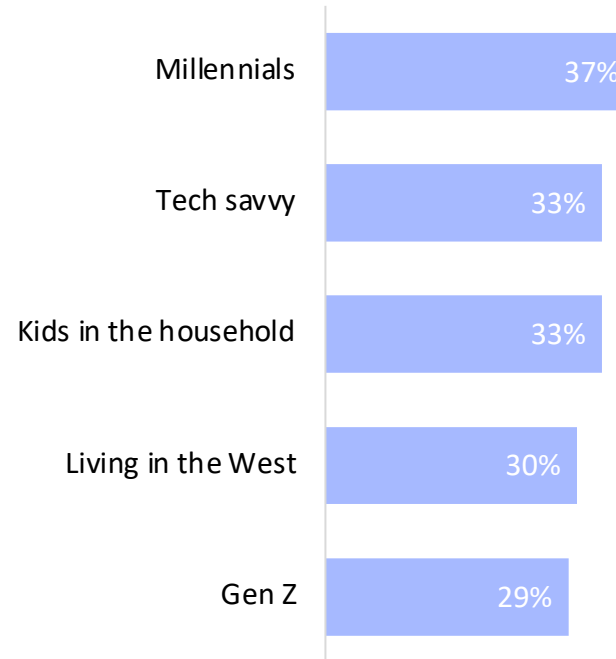
Fig 5.2b

Top 5 types of people asking for more tech solutions within each life area
All respondents

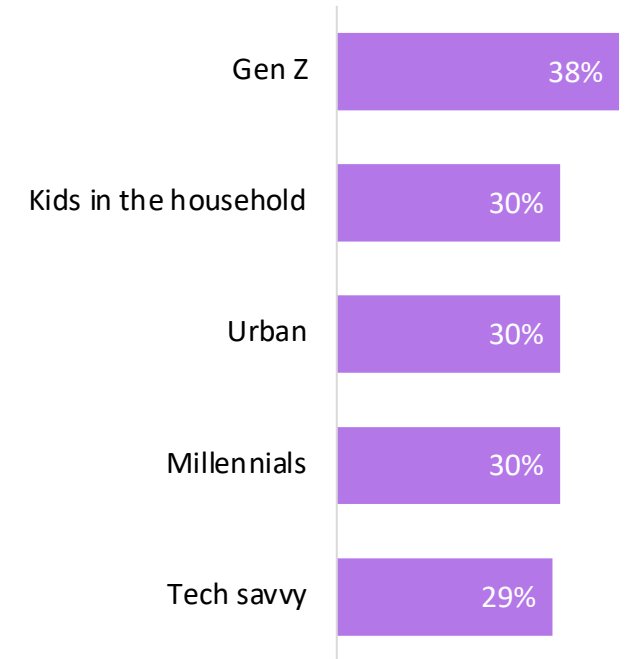
Track finances



Support career and work



Communicate and build relationships



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024
Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

Q9. When you think about all the technology you could add, which area of your life do you need technology/electronics to help you or those who live in your home make progress?

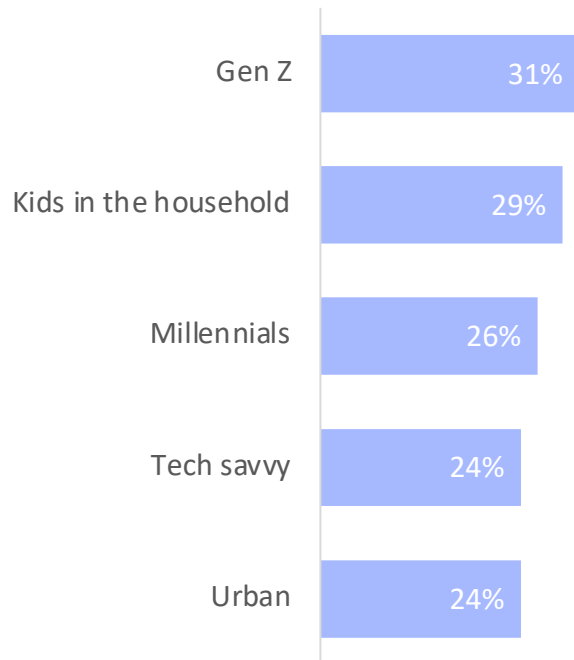
Part 5 – What people want

Fig 5.2b (cont'd)

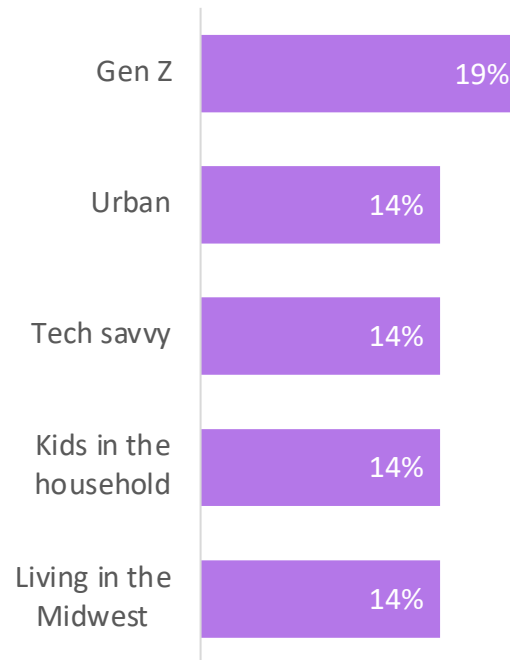
Top 5 types of people asking for more tech solutions within each life area

All respondents

Support education



Strengthen faith



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024
Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

Q9. When you think about all the technology you could add, which area of your life do you need technology/electronics to help you or those who live in your home make progress?

Where consumers think their tech could be working harder—and smarter

Making tech work better for people

Fig 5.3 examines the different ways in which people think tech could work better for them and how their overall tech experience might be improved. Responses revolve around familiar themes of simplifying technology, making it more affordable, valuable, and useful, providing clearer instructions, increasing reliability and durability, and ramping up security and privacy measures.

We also asked respondents in what ways they had asked for help with their tech in the past year (Fig 5.4). Google™ takes the top two positions with both its search engine (used for tech help by 60%) and its YouTube® video empire (55%), followed by “other” websites and apps (42%), and various versions of asking actual people, both in a professional capacity and via personal relationships. (Interestingly, around 1 in 6 respondents reported that they have never required tech help.)

Even this relatively straightforward question offers several interesting variations between the demographics. Significantly more men than women have searched for a YouTube® video to solve a tech problem (60% vs. 52%). As have far more Gen Zers than Boomers (62% vs. 45%), more people with kids than without (66% vs. 51%), and far more tech-savvy than not tech-savvy people (66% vs. 49%).

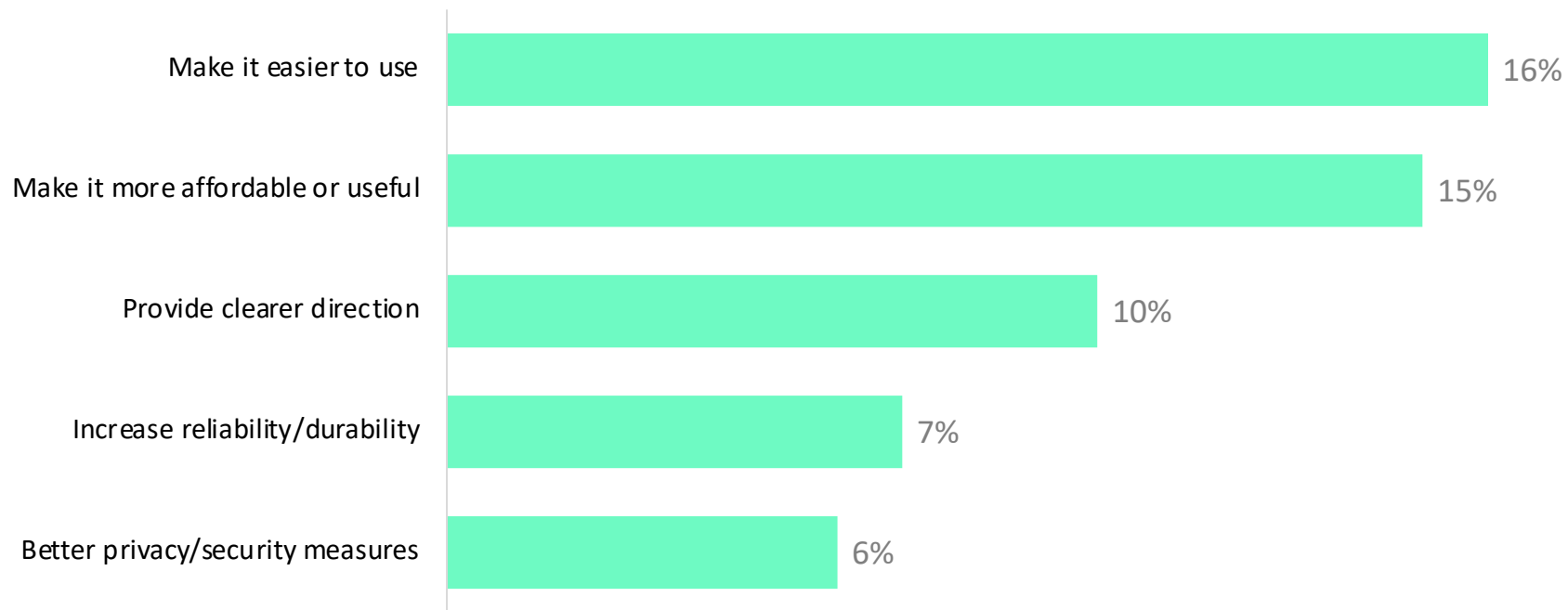
In the suburbs, people tend to use the Google search option (66%) compared to their urban (59%) and rural (51%) counterparts. Higher income people, meanwhile, tend to use websites and apps other than YouTube for tech help, posting far higher rates (51%) than either mid-income (43%) or lower-income (33%) consumers. And it won't surprise anyone to learn that the tech-savvy set uses every tech-help option more than the not tech savvy group. Given that more than half of the latter are still the primary decision makers for their households, the tech industry might want to focus on providing better access to help for some of the less tech-savvy people.

Part 5 – What people want

Fig 5.3

How people would like the tech experience to be enhanced

All respondents



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

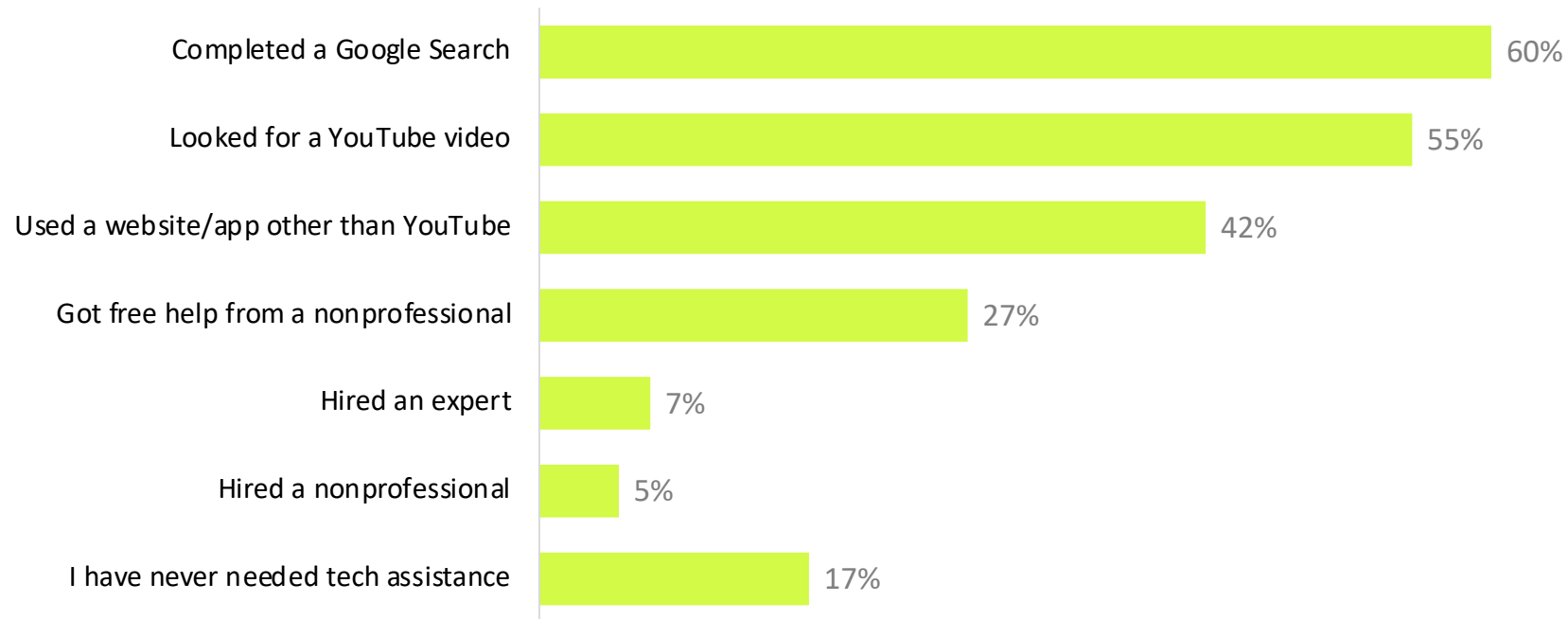
Q: What, if any, improvements could be made to make your technology experience better?

Part 5 – What people want

Fig 5.4

Most-used tech-help channels in the past 12 months

All respondents



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

P3. Which, if any, of the following have you done in the past 12 months?

Part 6

Shiny toys and happy people

How tech makes us feel and why these emotions are important



How tech makes us feel and why these emotions are important

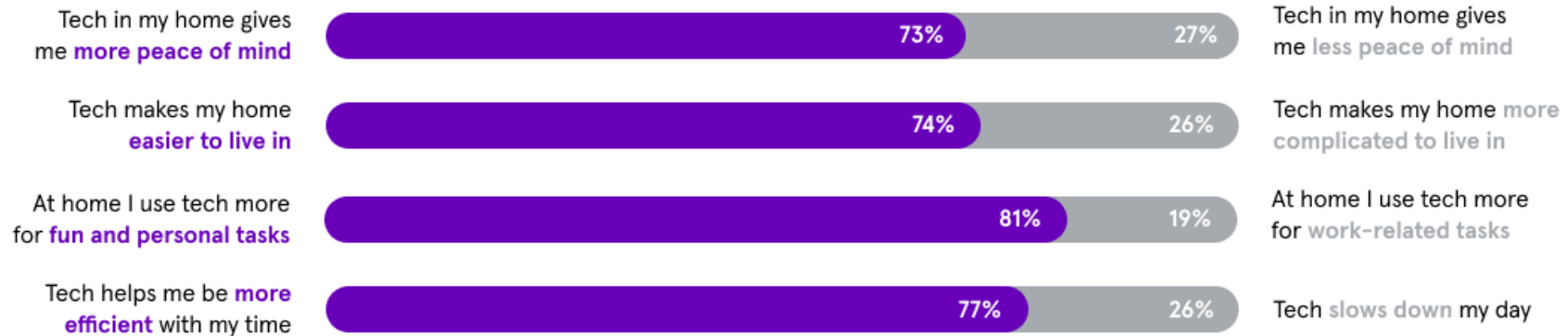
Everybody has their own idea of how thrilling it is to chase, tame, and set up new technology. And you certainly don't have to be a "tech person" to appreciate the beauty and intricacy of electronics. While it's not easy to pin down and define the precise magic at play, we've seen plenty of evidence in this report that, when it comes to buying tech, "wants" trump "needs," while "emotion" tends to drown out "information."

For example, while we were exploring peoples' motivations to buy tech, it became clear that the most popular reason for making a purchase was "entertainment and fun," and not only in the entertainment category—it topped the home office category too. We also came across a couple of demographic segments—the tech-savvy set and the households-with-kids crowd—both of whom are consistently buying more and more devices.

Meanwhile, we see that already half of all consumers own a smart speaker or voice assistant device, and by the end of the year, more than four in 10 will own a smart appliance.

In addition, as part of our tech lifestyle survey, we asked respondents to evaluate statements about using tech at home (Fig 6.1). The vast majority agreed that tech ownership has a positive impact on their lives. But let's go further and break down exactly how tech makes us feel, the various emotions it evokes, and why this is so important.

Fig 6.1
Most people agree tech ownership positively impacts their lives
Across all consumers



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024

Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)

Q: For each pair, please indicate which statement you agree with more strongly. Answers on both sides comprise agree and strongly agree responses.

How tech makes us feel and why these emotions are important

Fig 6.2 documents the magnitude and mix of positive emotions evoked by each of the 21 devices in our study—according to the experiences of our respondents. Note that although 13 positive emotions are listed for each device, we have marked up the top 5 for each with green shading, which should make it a little easier to navigate.

For the personal connectivity category, we see that the dominant emotions are feeling satisfied, productive, happy, in control, and confident—the types of reliable, drama-free responses that people would expect to associate with productivity tools like smartphones, tablets, watches, and fitness trackers.

Feeling trendy

For the entertainment systems category, while satisfaction, happiness and control largely remain, we see that productivity and confidence are replaced by excitement and relaxation—as you might expect in a category featuring gaming and TV-watching activities. Note that for the VR/AR headset, we see the first appearance of feeling trendy in the top 5.

On the second half of the table, we see a highly productive and satisfying mix of emotions for the home office category, presumably underlining a reliable, hassle-free experience for our business environments.

Trendy returns in the smart speaker and voice assistant category before security device posts high numbers for making people feel both safe (59%) and in control (44%).

The smart appliances category sees a weaker emotional response that is consistent with new products, the uncertainty associated with them, and the difficulty of making large kitchen appliances seem cool. Nevertheless, the smart refrigerator does get some positive reaction for making users feel “trendy.”

The device that makes us happiest

While it’s good to chart the emotional patterns and trends in this way, it’s far more interesting if we compare the different devices through the lens of a single emotion, one at a time. For each positive emotion, we compiled a list of high-performing products, such as the top 5 devices for evoking happiness or the top 5 devices for empowering people.

You can find all of these Top 5 lists in Fig 6.3, revealing that:

- The most productive device is a desktop computer or laptop.
- The device that makes people the happiest is the gaming console.
- The most confidence-creating gadget is a smart security device.
- The most empowering device is the fitness tracker.
- The most relaxing device is the smart TV.

We fielded this question with options for both positive and negative emotions, however, because the negative ones yielded only very small numbers, we elected not to use them here. (Fig 6.4).

Part 6 – Shiny toys and happy people

Fig 6.2
Positive emotions evoked by tech
 21 devices in 5 categories

	Personal connectivity				Entertainment systems						
	Smartphone n=292	Tablet n=289	Smart watch n=272	Fitness tracker n=356	Smart TV n=137	Streaming device n=138	Gaming console n=135	Home audio n=134	Gaming PC n=131	Home theater n=135	VR/AR headset n=130
Satisfied	50%	42%	39%	31%	46%	47%	42%	46%	34%	43%	24%
Productive	35%	31%	29%	38%	12%	9%	11%	7%	19%	4%	12%
Happy	35%	29%	32%	23%	39%	38%	47%	35%	43%	44%	35%
In control	31%	26%	33%	30%	28%	28%	16%	19%	20%	20%	16%
Confident	27%	20%	25%	26%	17%	14%	16%	16%	13%	15%	15%
Empowered	23%	15%	23%	27%	13%	9%	7%	5%	12%	9%	15%
Safe	21%	10%	19%	12%	15%	9%	10%	3%	5%	4%	13%
Excited	20%	14%	23%	17%	18%	13%	26%	24%	37%	33%	35%
Relaxed	19%	22%	17%	12%	34%	28%	34%	23%	27%	24%	19%
Trendy	15%	11%	24%	15%	13%	12%	15%	14%	15%	13%	29%
Optimistic	15%	15%	13%	20%	13%	12%	9%	8%	13%	11%	10%
Proud	13%	6%	16%	18%	14%	8%	8%	17%	15%	16%	12%
Hopeful	11%	8%	11%	18%	8%	7%	4%	4%	11%	11%	7%

NOTE: Top 5 emotions for each device shaded green

Part 6 – Shiny toys and happy people

Fig 6.2 (cont'd)

Positive emotions evoked by tech
21 devices in 5 categories

	Home office tech			Smart home devices			Smart appliances			
	Desktop/ laptop n=309	Display/ monitor n=307	Router n=309	Smart speaker/ voice assistant n=219	Security device n=215	Automation device n=214	Smart oven/ stove n=70	Smart refrigerator n=72	Smart washer/dryer n=79	Smart dishwasher n=70
Satisfied	40%	42%	34%	33%	36%	35%	17%	28%	34%	34%
Productive	52%	36%	24%	27%	15%	16%	24%	15%	37%	27%
Happy	28%	28%	16%	32%	21%	27%	23%	14%	19%	26%
In control	26%	19%	21%	27%	44%	34%	11%	18%	20%	17%
Confident	24%	21%	15%	17%	32%	19%	16%	14%	18%	23%
Empowered	22%	17%	10%	19%	23%	16%	11%	14%	6%	10%
Safe	11%	7%	12%	11%	59%	22%	10%	13%	6%	11%
Excited	14%	17%	9%	22%	9%	17%	11%	22%	10%	21%
Relaxed	15%	17%	14%	16%	22%	18%	10%	10%	16%	21%
Trendy	10%	10%	7%	24%	10%	18%	11%	25%	11%	13%
Optimistic	12%	10%	10%	16%	11%	12%	14%	10%	6%	9%
Proud	10%	13%	6%	10%	10%	14%	17%	8%	6%	14%
Hopeful	11%	9%	6%	13%	13%	9%	9%	7%	3%	9%

How tech makes us feel and why these emotions are important

The device that makes us happiest

While it's good to chart the emotional patterns and trends in this way, it's far more interesting if we compare the different devices through the lens of a single emotion, one at a time. For each positive emotion, we compiled a list of high-performing products, such as the top 5 devices for evoking happiness or the top 5 devices for empowering people.

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- The most relaxing device is the smart TV.

We fielded this question with options for both positive and negative emotions, however, because the negative ones yielded only very small numbers, we elected not to use them here. (Fig 6.4).

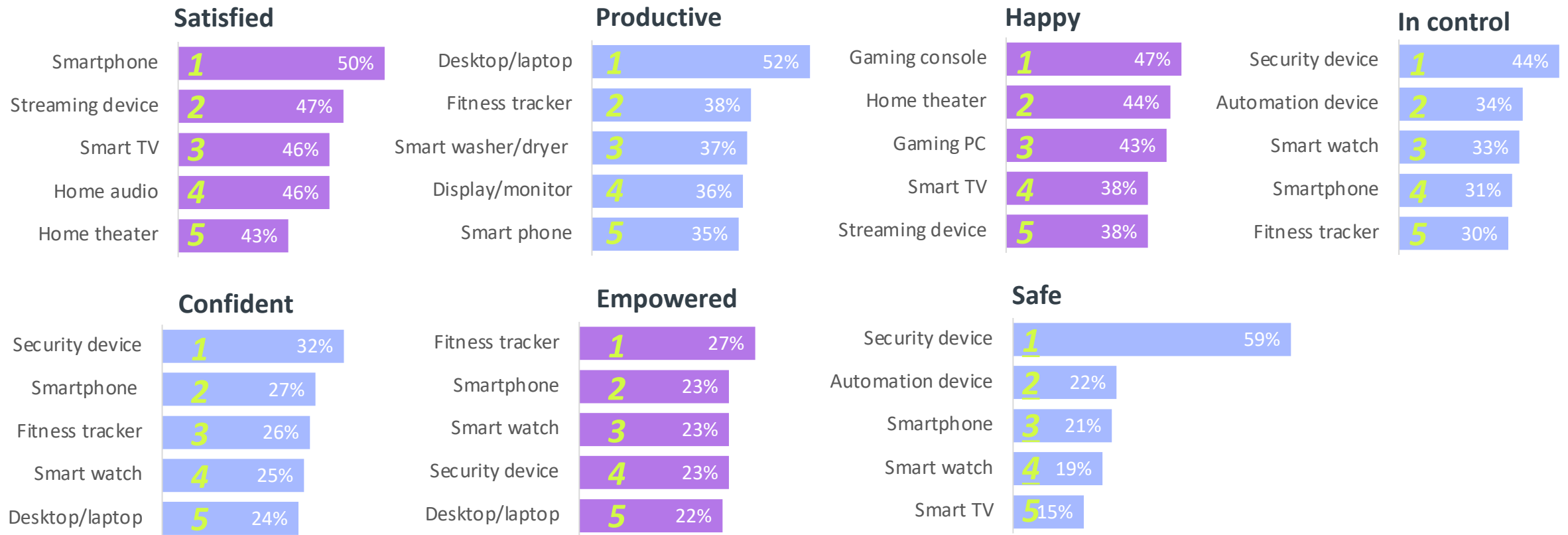
Least effective devices, emotionally

That said, along with the top 5 lists it is also possible to pull up the least-effective devices for evoking particular emotions. While these lists are not a substitute for the original negative emotions, and have not made it into a chart of their own, a few stand out:

- The least-effective device for spreading happiness is the smart refrigerator.
- The least-empowering device is the home audio system.
- The worst product for instilling pride is the smart washer and dryer.
- The device with the least ability to make users feel cool and trendy is, of course, the router.

Part 6 – Shiny toys and happy people

Fig 6.3
Top 5 devices for evoking different positive emotions
 13 emotions, 21 devices

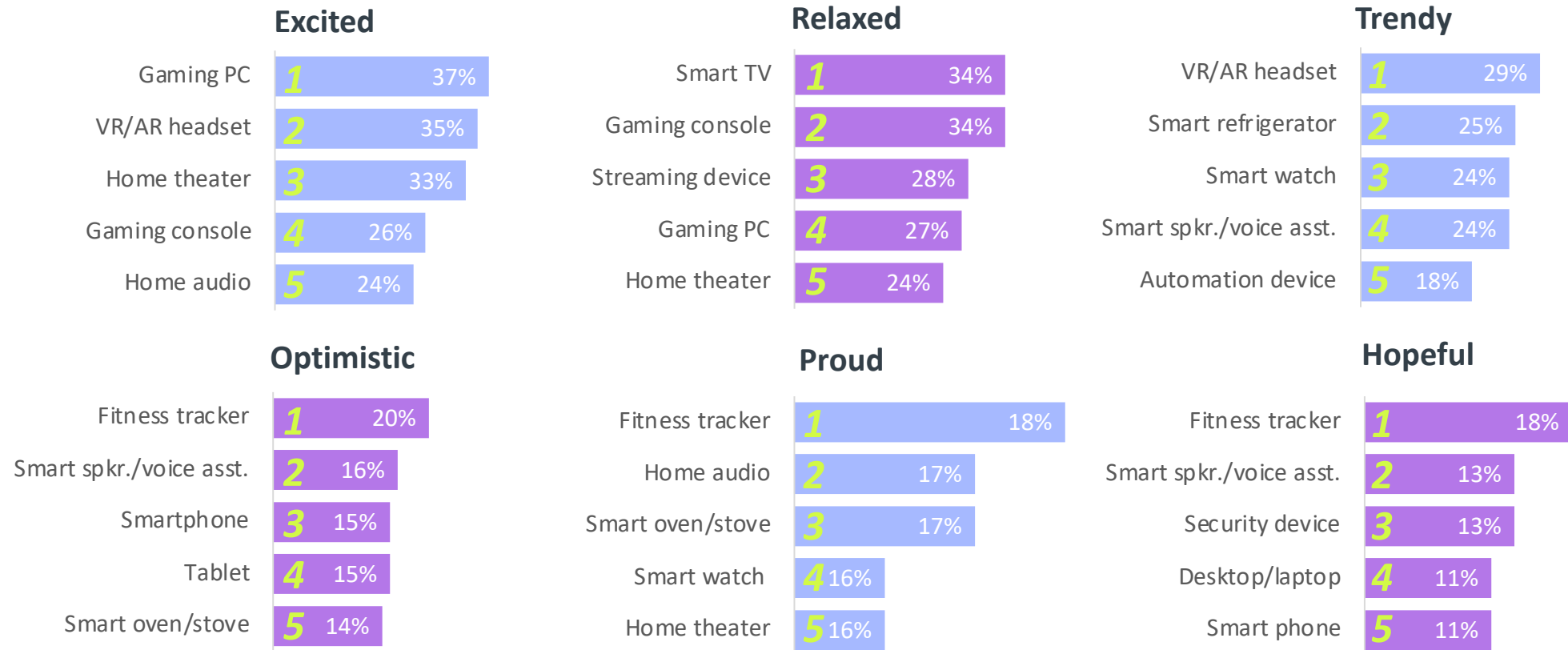


Part 6 – Shiny toys and happy people

Fig 6.3 (cont'd)

Top 5 devices for evoking different positive emotions

13 emotions, 21 devices








Part 6 – Shiny toys and happy people

Fig 6.4

Category-level perceptions are overwhelmingly positive

Smart appliances the only potential frustration

	 Personal connectivity	 Entertainment systems	 Home office tech	 Smart home devices	 Smart appliances
% Positive emotion descriptors	88% (driven by satisfaction, productivity, happiness)	86%	83%	89% (driven by feeling safe and in control)	82%
% Negative emotion descriptors	15%	14%	11%	16%	20% (driven by annoyance, frustration, skepticism)

Conclusion

What we learned and
what it means



What we learned and what it means

The conventional wisdom of tech tends to revolve around a couple of major themes: the lifestyle culture of products that almost everybody uses, namely the smartphone, and the promises of future tech, like AI.

The typical customer is often painted as an early adopter of all things tech, perhaps even a devoted fan of a particular brand or category. Manufacturers invariably feed these narratives with promises that owning their gadgets will lead to life-changing benefits.

Whether or not these claims hold true, we know that the majority of tech consumption takes place in the lives of real people, who lack the time and inclination to use their devices in the ways shown in product ads—making it less likely that they will reach the levels of self-empowerment they'd been promised.

Keeping it real

With this report, we wanted to unpack and make sense of the day-to-day relationships people have with tech in terms of their behaviors, experiences, and beliefs.

After surveying 1,004 people, we looked closely at patterns in current ownership, plans to buy, reasons for buying, who makes the decisions, actual use vs. expected use, emotional responses, barriers to adoption, unmet needs—and how these things vary between different types of people and for different types of tech.

One overarching and arguably surprising theme is that people report being happy in their relationships with tech. They are generally satisfied with their devices, they are using them more than they thought they would, and their emotional responses to different types of tech are overwhelmingly positive.

You might assume that the reality of owning a device could not possibly live up to the promise. Perhaps you don't need to be using every function to have a great experience? In our chaotic world of multiple screens, multitasking, and crammed calendars, maybe what we really need is a faster horse and a slower life?

Regardless of whether they are using a device to do two or 200 things, our survey shows that people tend to adapt quickly to newer tech. For instance, almost half of consumers already own a smart speaker or voice assistant, despite concerns over security and data privacy; 36% wear a smart watch, with 10% planning to buy their first one this year; 6 in 10 already own a smart home device, with another 1 in 5 plotting to buy one; and 1 in 4 say they will own a VR/AR headset in the next 12 months.

In our chaotic world of multiple screens, multitasking, and crammed calendars, maybe what we really need is a faster horse *and* a slower life?

What we learned and what it means

Only the smart appliances category is showing any sluggishness, with ownership around 10%–15%. People perceive these products to be too expensive in greater numbers than any other devices—even the *actually expensive* VR/AR headsets—while we also see significantly higher concerns that they will break and need repairing. Smart appliances also evoke far fewer positive emotions than other categories. They may gain traction as people eventually replace conventional appliances with smart versions. In the meantime, manufacturers would do well to address concerns around price and reliability.

The kids are alright

Among many other fascinating insights the data uncovers, we see that households with children consume significantly more tech than those without; they own more, they are planning to buy more, and they want future tech solutions to help them with more things, particularly in caring for their homes and loved ones.

We also find that two-thirds of people feel they are not tech savvy, and yet, despite not consuming as much tech as their savvier counterparts, more than half of them are the primary tech decision-makers for their households. The help channels are, of course, dominated by the tech-savvy minority, so there appears to be an urgent need to find new ways to reach out to the not-tech-savvy majority.

Another data-driven revelation concerns the reasons why people buy new tech. The leading motivation by far has little to do with functionality, features, or brand

attributes—it's good, old-fashioned *entertainment and fun*. And the number-two reason? *The urge to own cool, exciting, new tech*. These emotional drivers endorse [neuroscientific research](#) showing that when people evaluate brands for buying decisions, they primarily use emotions (personal feelings and experiences) rather than information (brand attributes, features, and facts). Of course, the latter is also an important component in making buying decisions, but it's rarely the most prevalent in tech.

People perceive smart appliances to be too expensive in greater numbers than any other devices, while we also see significantly higher concerns that they will break and need repairing.

Finger on the pulse

So what happens next? The tech media talks excitedly about the emergence of futuristic categories, like AI, self-driving cars, sand batteries, e-skin, brain-reading robots, smelly VR, 3D-printed food, and necrobiotics (yes, turning dead things into robots).

As engaging as these storylines are, it is unlikely that they will impact the daily lives of regular people anytime soon. We will, however, continue to explore the behaviors, experiences, and beliefs of real people interacting with technology—including the types that make them feel the happiest (gaming console) and the most empowered (fitness tracker).






Appendix



Appendix Device evaluation *Total respondents 1,004*

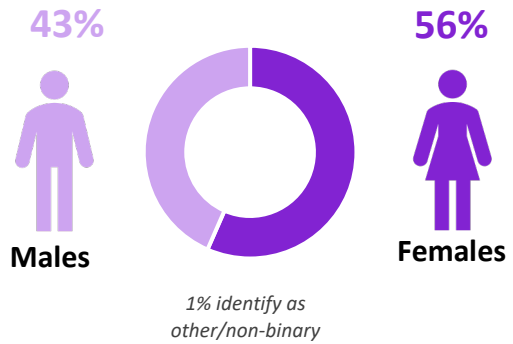
Note: Respondents were assigned to evaluate a device based on usage/ownership and the following priority:

1. Smart appliances
2. Smart home devices
3. Fitness trackers
4. Entertainment systems
5. Home office
6. Personal technology (other than fitness tracker)

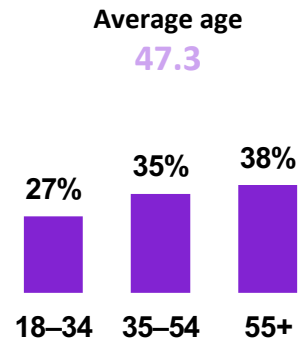
 Personal technology		 Entertainment systems		 Home office tech		 Smart home devices		 Smart appliances	
# of evaluations		# of evaluations		# of evaluations		# of evaluations		# of evaluations	
Fitness tracker	356	Streaming device	138	Router	309	Smart speaker/ voice assistant	219	Smart washer/ dryer	79
Smartphone	292	Smart TV	137	Desktop/laptop	309	Security device	215	Smart refrigerator	72
Tablet	289	Gaming console	135	Large computer monitor	307	Home automation device	214	Smart dishwasher	70
Smart watch	272	Home theater	135					Smart oven/stove	70
		Home audio	134						
		Gaming PC	131						
		VR/AR headset	130						

Demographics

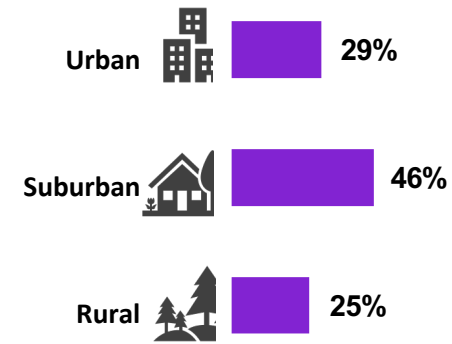
Gender



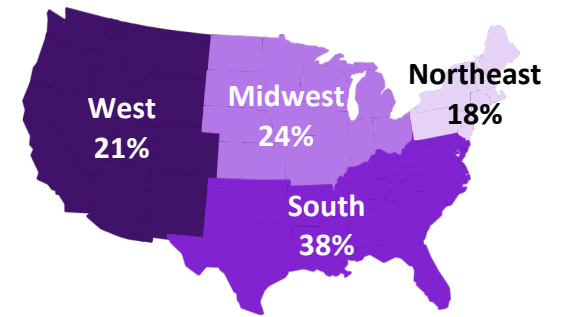
Age



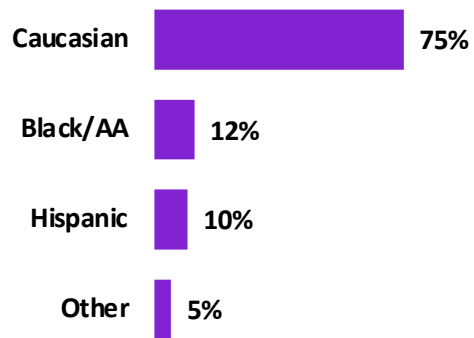
Self-defined urbanicity



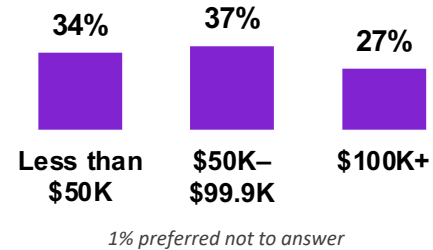
Region



Ethnicity*



Income

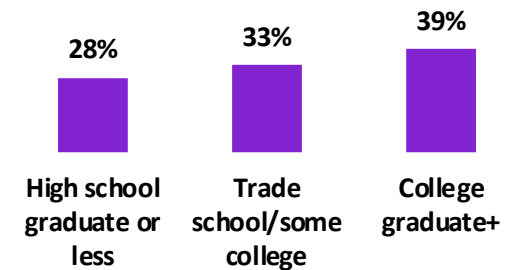


Employment

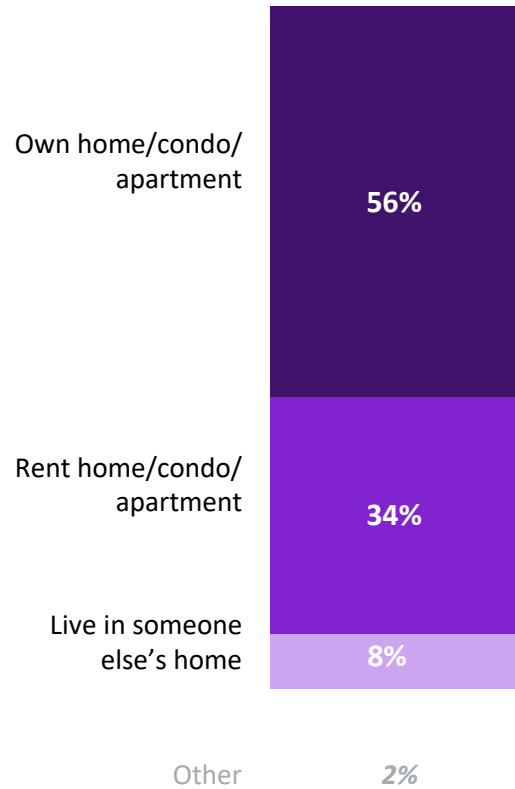
57% employed



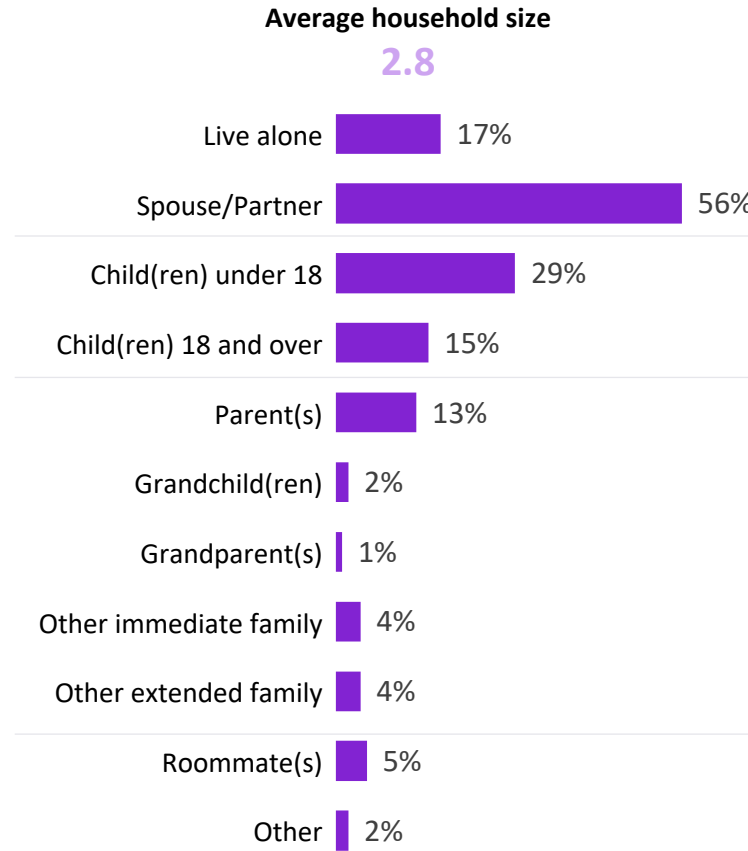
Education



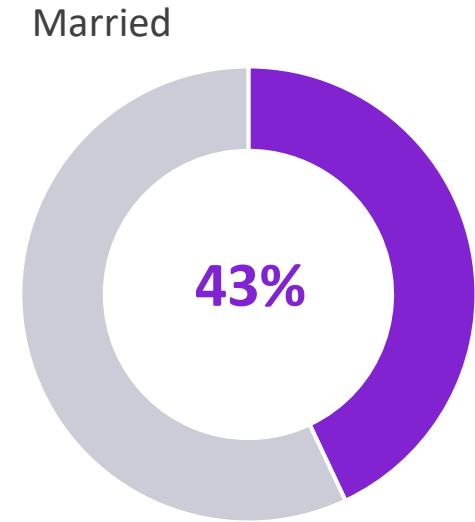
Home ownership



Household composition



Marital status



Asurion Tech Lifestyle Study 2024
 Base: Total Completes (n=1,004)
 D1 Home Ownership | D2 Number of People in HH | D3 HH Composition | D4 Marital Status