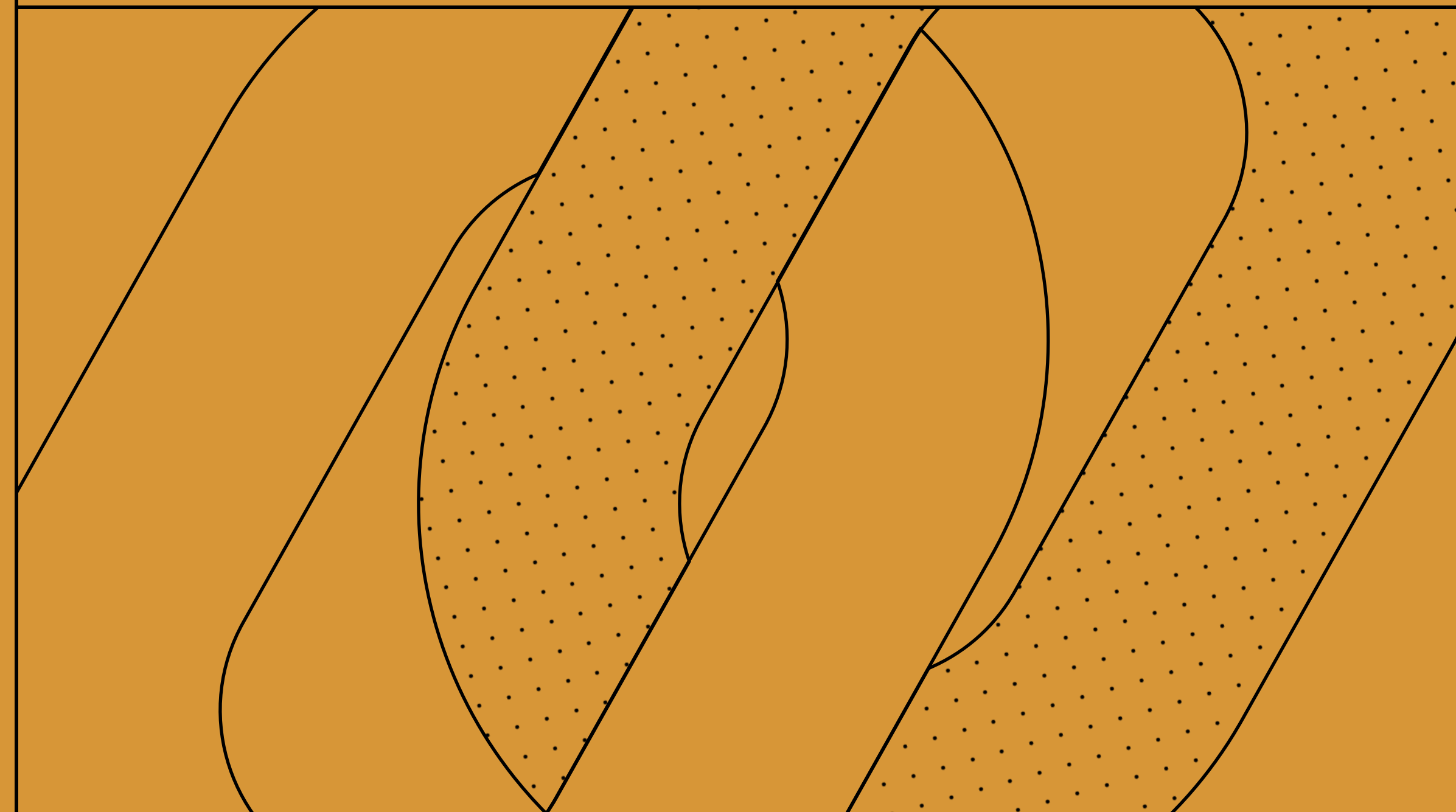


Australia & New Zealand Edition

Brand Trust in the Age of Information Overload

How brands can build trust and connect
with Australia and New Zealand's conscious
consumers

A Mailchimp Report



This report is based on
a commissioned survey
conducted by

SAPIO
RESEARCH 



INTUIT
mailchimp

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Brand love isn't bought – it's earned

Never has it been more challenging for businesses in Australia and New Zealand to cut through and grab the attention of consumers. Brand reputation matters, especially with myriad macroeconomic, social and environmental factors at play. Your customers may have already decided about whether to engage with you before you've even launched your latest campaign.

In this current climate, you must prioritise building a long-term strategy and a lasting relationship with your customers. In this report, we gather the latest consumer intel and break down what constitutes real consumer connection – in 2024 and beyond.



The way customers and brands connect is changing

According to a survey of consumers conducted by Sapio on behalf of Intuit Mailchimp, the consumer landscape in Australia and New Zealand is changing in a number of key ways:

→ Consumers want data-driven personalisation – but also assurances

Most Australians and New Zealanders are happy to receive targeted brand recommendations based on their personal data after searching or shopping for a product. But 82% of Australians and 78% of New Zealanders want assurances about how their personal data will be used.

→ Customers are looking for cheaper alternatives to beloved brands

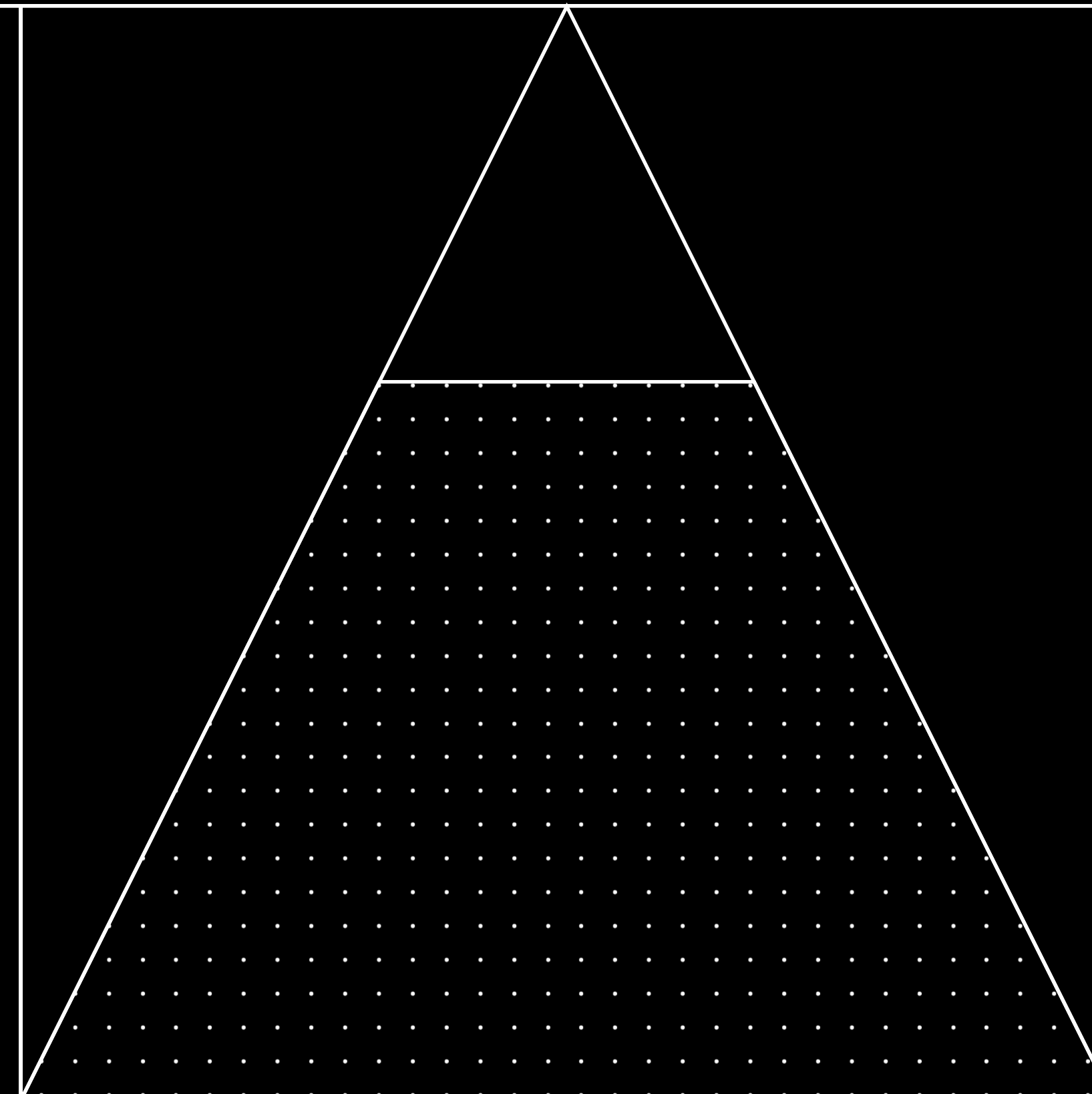
Consumers are growing increasingly cost-conscious and rethinking which brands to stay loyal to. 65% of Australian shoppers and 60% of buyers in New Zealand are looking for cheaper alternatives to brands they've purchased from in the past.

→ The next generation of consumers want products and services to come to them

Over half of 18-to-34 year-olds in Australia (61% for 18-to-24 year-olds and 64% for 25-to-34 year-olds) believe that the future of personalisation means they won't be searching for products and services, but the right products and services will be coming to them. This is reflective in New Zealand too, with 53% of 18-to-24s and 59% of 25-to-34s believing the same.

→ Connection and trust are just as important as free delivery

54% of customers in New Zealand and 46% in Australia are more likely to buy from brands they connect with and trust. In addition, free delivery was an important purchasing motivator for shoppers in both New Zealand (51%) and Australia (47%).



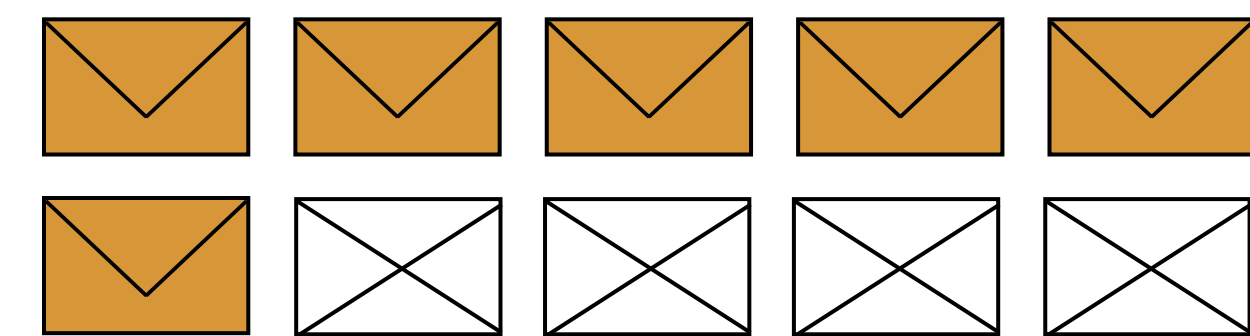
The marketing landscape in 2024

Hard to reach and even harder to please: how to find the sweet spot with today's mindful consumers.

When done well, brand emails work. In fact, 51% of Australians and 47% of New Zealanders say they enjoy receiving emails from some brands. But too often, brands are getting the recipe wrong. So how can you give shoppers what they really want?

Consumers want to hear from brands, but on their own terms. When it comes to engaging with customers via email, personalised content is the most popular with 60% of Australians and 54% of New Zealanders. This was followed by limited and exclusive stock items (43% Australia / 41% New Zealand). Meanwhile, 51% of New Zealand respondents and 49% of Australian respondents say repetitive or unimaginative emails drive them to unsubscribe, followed by unsubstantiated claims about brand purpose (43% Australia / 46% New Zealand) and emails that are not viewable on devices (43% Australia / 45% New Zealand).

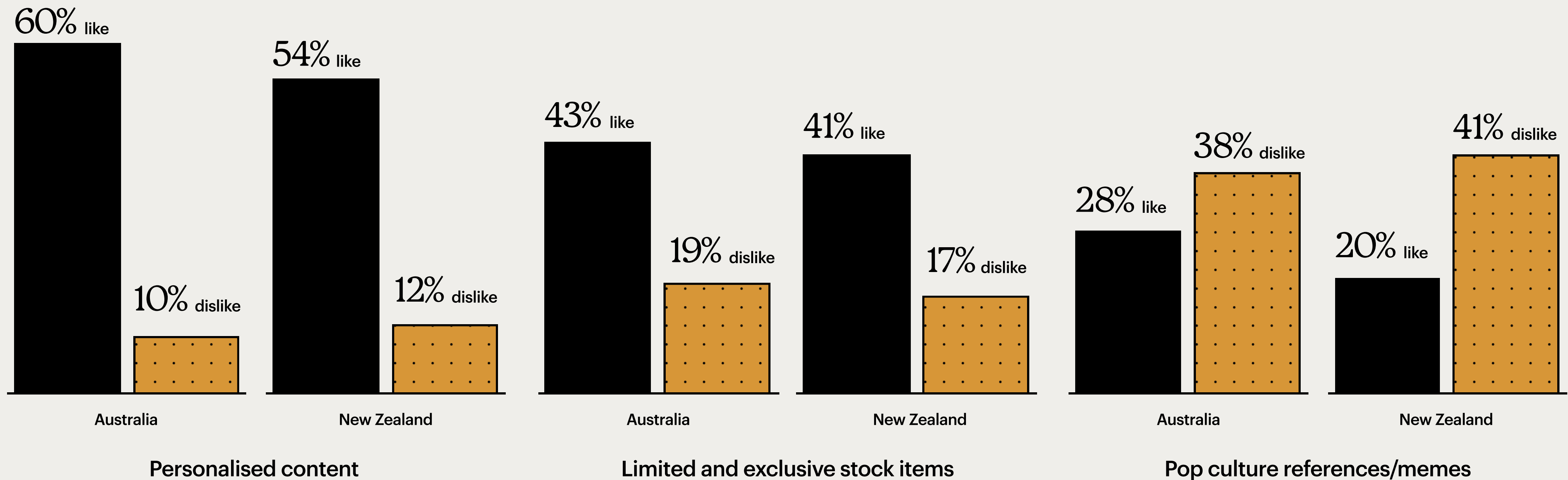
Personal preference is often determined by lived experience. 54% of consumers in Australia and 50% in New Zealand appreciate thoughtful marketing, such as the chance to opt out of communications around Mother's Day or Father's Day.



6 the number of emails both Australian and New Zealand consumers will tolerate per brand per week before they unsubscribe

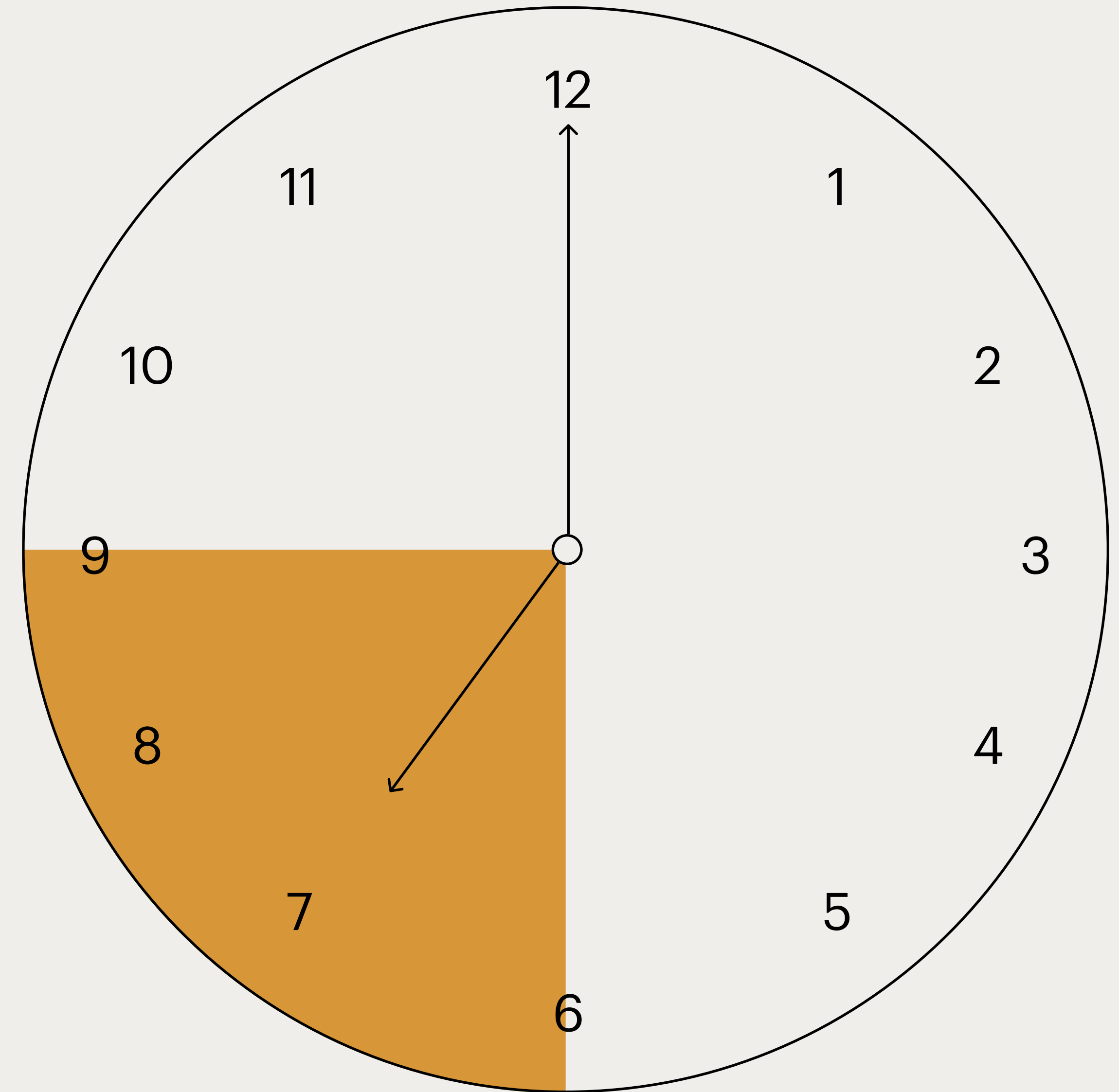
This adds to a landscape where shoppers in Australia and New Zealand are increasingly selective in their communications preferences. But don't panic – there's still plenty of opportunity to capture their attention over email.

The Biggest Likes vs. Dislikes for Australian and New Zealand Consumers



Outside of email content, timing is key.

44% of respondents in Australia and 43% in New Zealand say that the 6-9pm window is the strongest online shopping period. Interestingly, nearly a quarter of full-time workers (23% Australia / 24% New Zealand) admitted to making purchases during office hours between 3-6pm.



OUR TAKE

In the pursuit of brand trust, remember to stay authentic.

In the battle for consumer attention, brands are contending with added noise on social media platforms. Aussie and Kiwi consumers spending more time on social media are open to an increase in brand communications; however, sending more comms isn't necessarily the answer.

In addition to offering competitive products and price points, your brand values shouldn't go unheard. There's nothing stopping you from communicating your views on people and planet/corporate social responsibility, but pick your battles wisely. A considerable number of consumers are inclined to unfollow or unsubscribe if they disagree with your point of view. Your perspectives won't be for everyone, but what matters is that your message resonates with your target audience. Just be sure to give customers the power to opt out and be prepared to potentially lose some followers along the way.



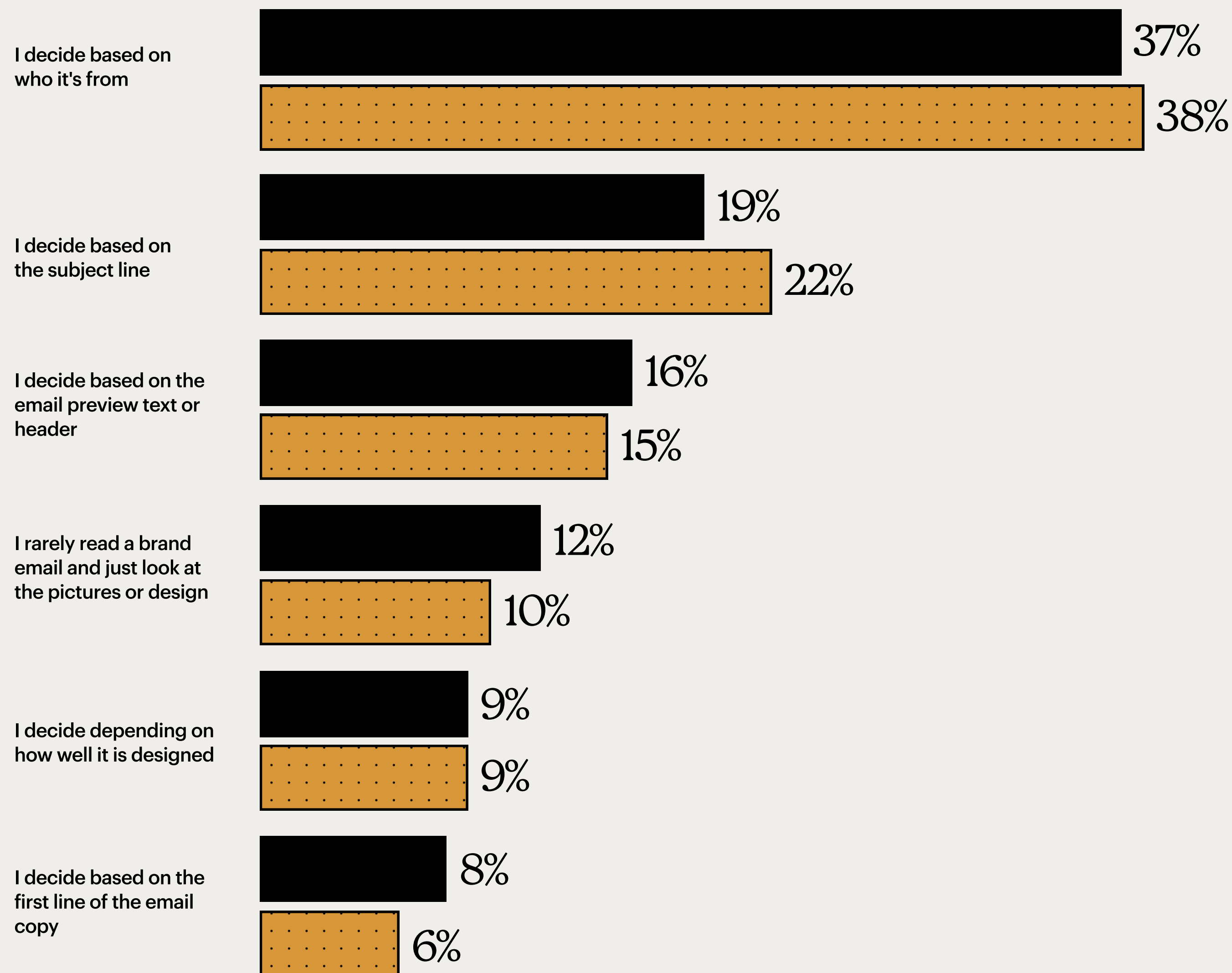
Consumer trust is about playing the long game.

Today's consumers know exactly what they want and who they want it from. But brand loyalty isn't built in a day. So, how do you convince your customers to sign up and stay subscribed?

Most people decide to read or click links in an email based on who it's from (37% Australia / 38% New Zealand) versus subject line (19% Australia / 22% New Zealand), or preview text (16% Australia / 15% New Zealand).

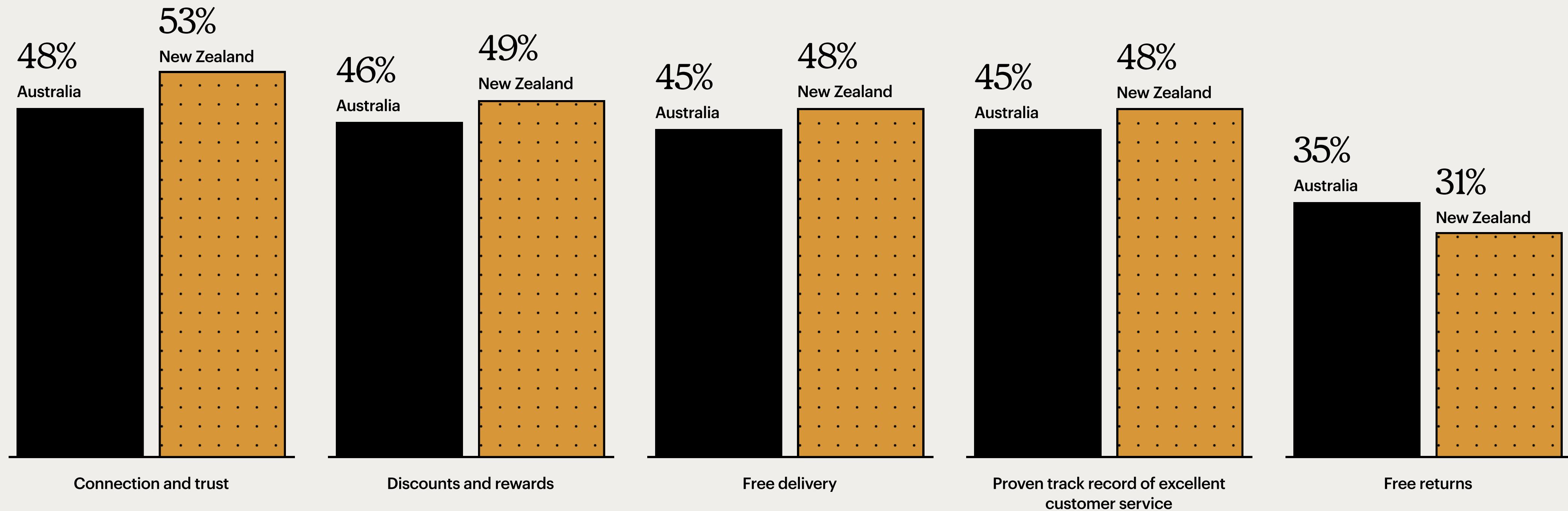
Australia
 New Zealand

What makes Australian and New Zealand shoppers engage with a brand email?



For Australian and New Zealand shoppers, engagement has a lot to do with trust and convenience. Once a byword for ‘close-by’, convenience today means quick shipping, one-click payments and meeting expectations in terms of quality and support. It’s also about meeting the right consumer in the right place, at the right time, with the right product at the right price.

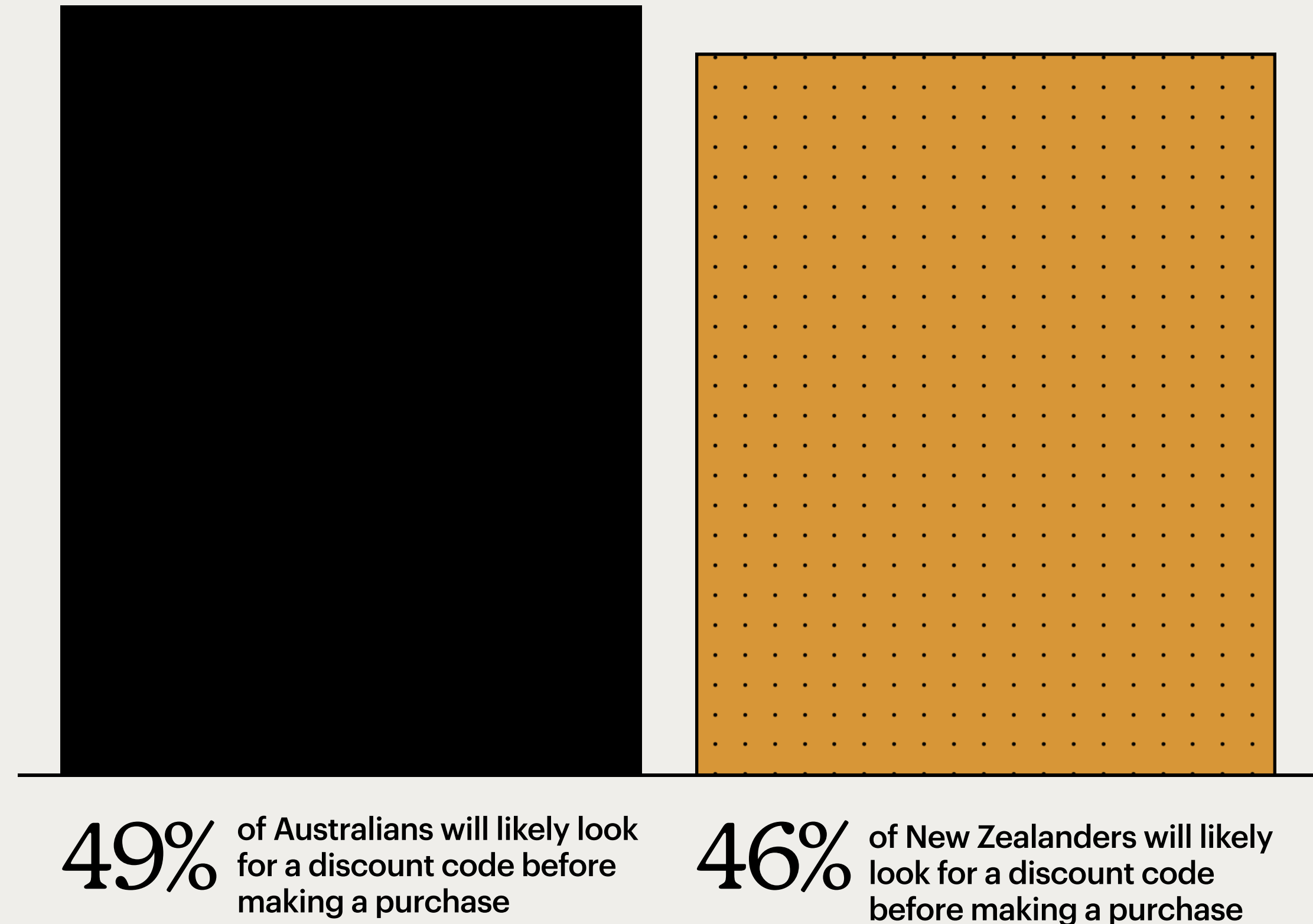
The Top Factors for Consumer Engagement in Australia and New Zealand



Connection via customer service is something that becomes more important with age. For 70% of over-65s in New Zealand, and 55% in Australia, a proven track record of great customer service makes them more likely to buy from a brand – compared to just 31% and 36% of 18-to-24 year-olds in both countries respectively.

Plus, the more consumers shop with a brand, the more likely they are to continue engaging with them. Discounts and rewards remain a strong purchasing motivator for consumers, with 49% in Australia and 46% in New Zealand looking for one before making a purchase.

But discounts aren't the only type of reward Aussies and New Zealanders are after. 54% of shoppers in New Zealand and 51% in Australia say they want more chances to win prizes or store credit in exchange for taking part in surveys and reviews. This is not only an opportunity for you to reward loyal customers, but also a way to persuade new prospects – and to curb the rise of distrust in brands.

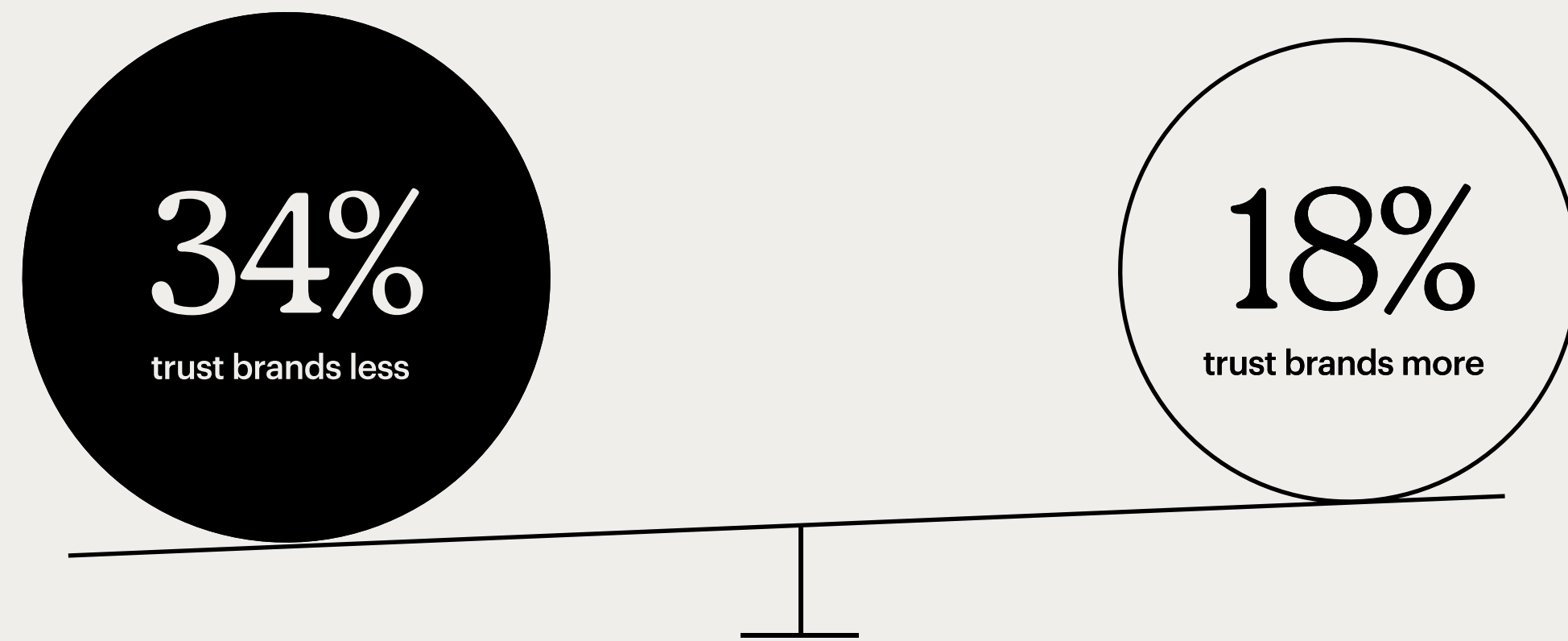


49% of Australians will likely look for a discount code before making a purchase

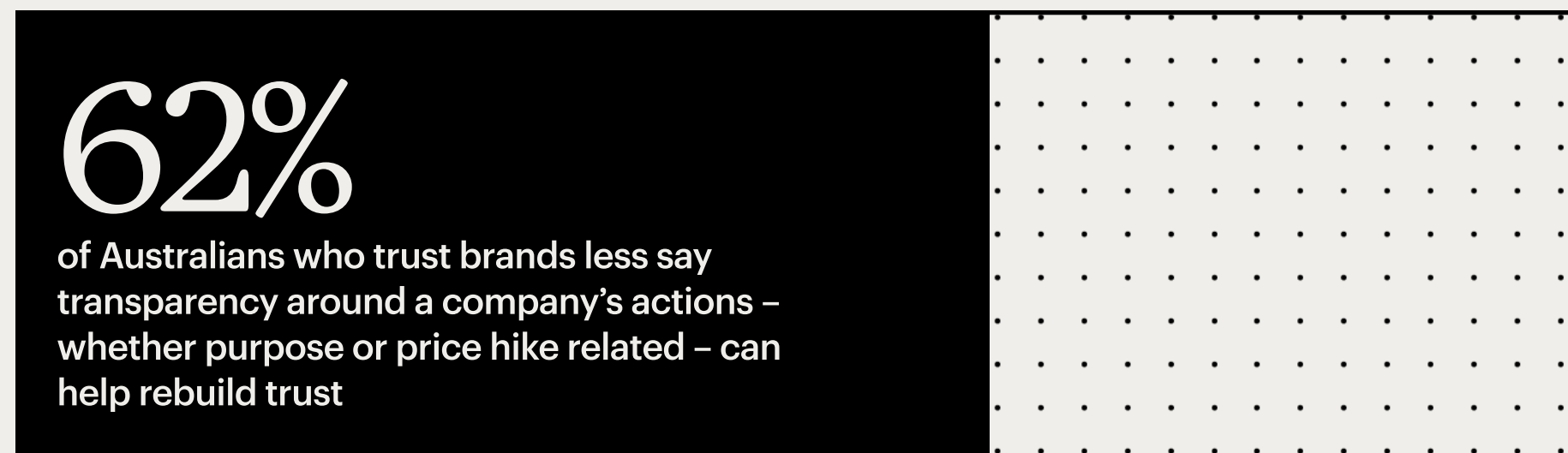
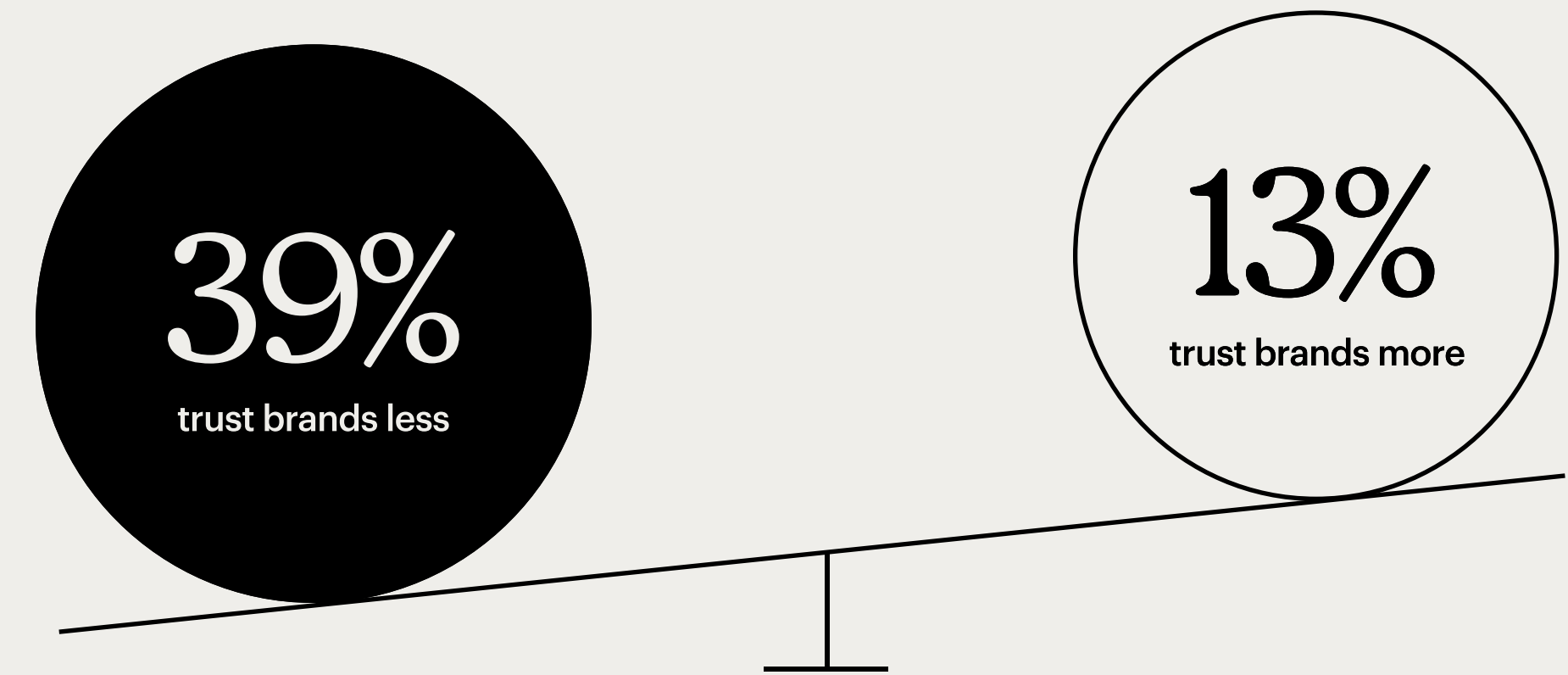
46% of New Zealanders will likely look for a discount code before making a purchase

Amid the rise of global misinformation, 34% of Australian consumers and 39% of Kiwi consumers trust brands less, compared to 18% and 13% of those who trust brands more. This means it is increasingly important to nurture those long-lasting connections.

Australia



New Zealand



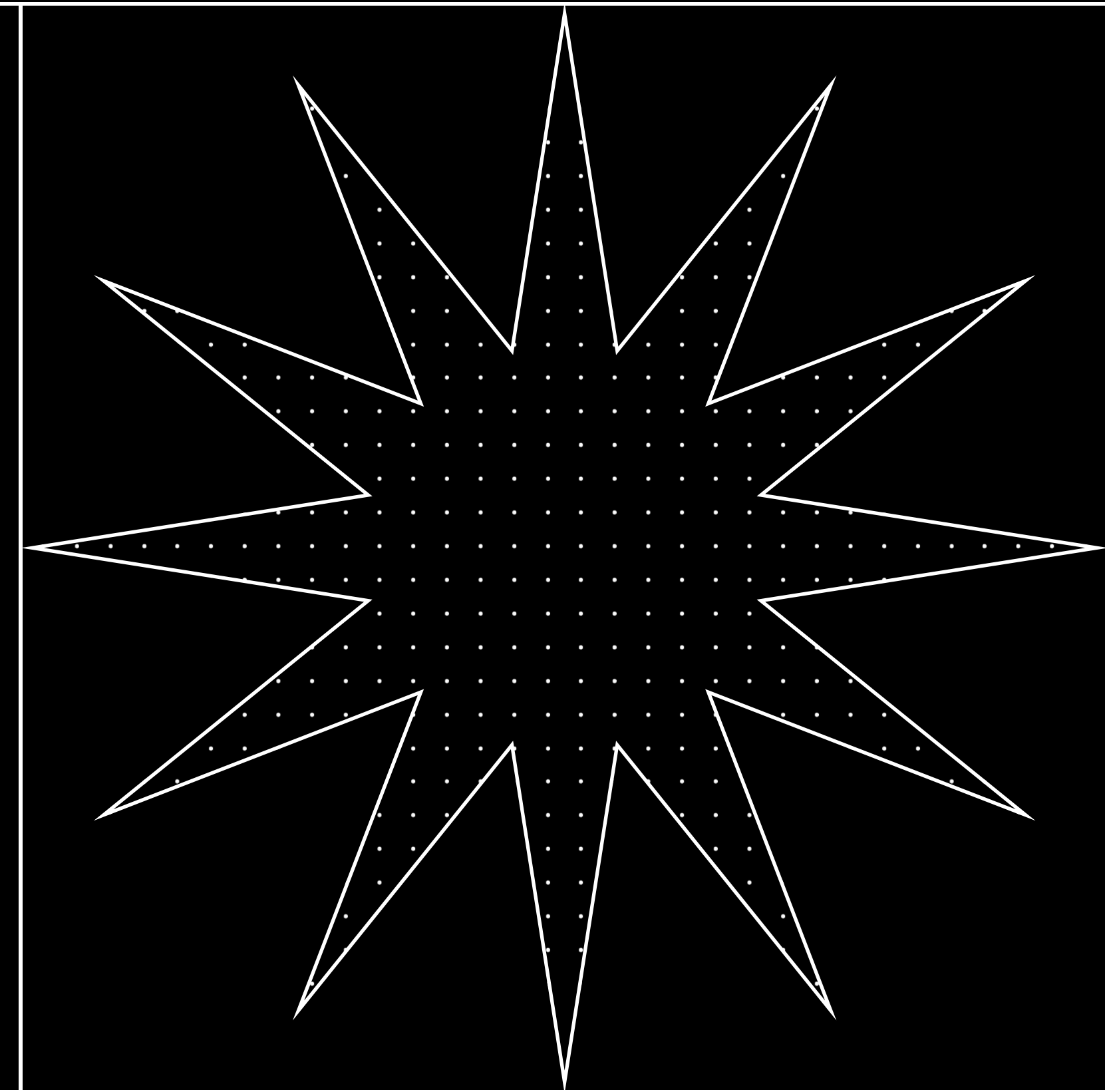
OUR TAKE

Prioritise customer experience first; the rest will follow.

It's not just about offering value beyond your product from day one. Companies must also deliver on their brand promise by matching consumer expectations – whether through the quality of a product, the price point or the shipping times. To do this, invest in business-critical areas such as customer service before considering elevating your brand messaging to touch on social/political issues.

Incentives encouraging consumers to take part in surveys, reviews, or endorsements on social media can be offered in exchange for loyalty perks. But remember: when marketing to young shoppers, the look and feel of your brand identity matters.





The importance of trust and how to build it

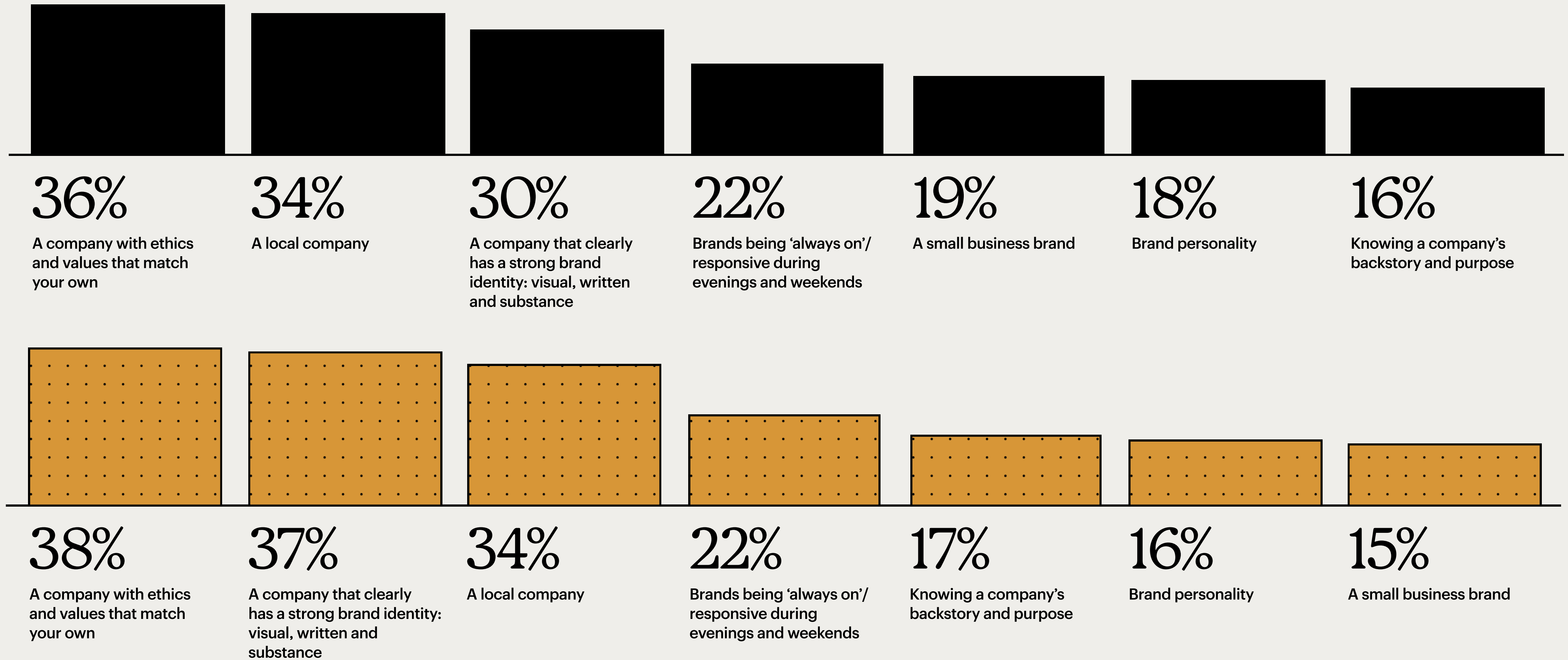
Shoppers are happy to hand over their data and money to brands they trust. So how can you build trust? And more importantly, how do you maintain it?

Today, shoppers in Australia (46%) and New Zealand (54%) say they need to trust and connect with a brand before buying from them. But more than a third (34% Australia / 39% New Zealand) of buyers trust brands less amidst the rise of misinformation. So, how can you foster trust in consumers?

A strong brand identity demands authenticity. As marketers, you must ensure your brand aligns with the personality and values you project to the world – not just those that will tick a box.



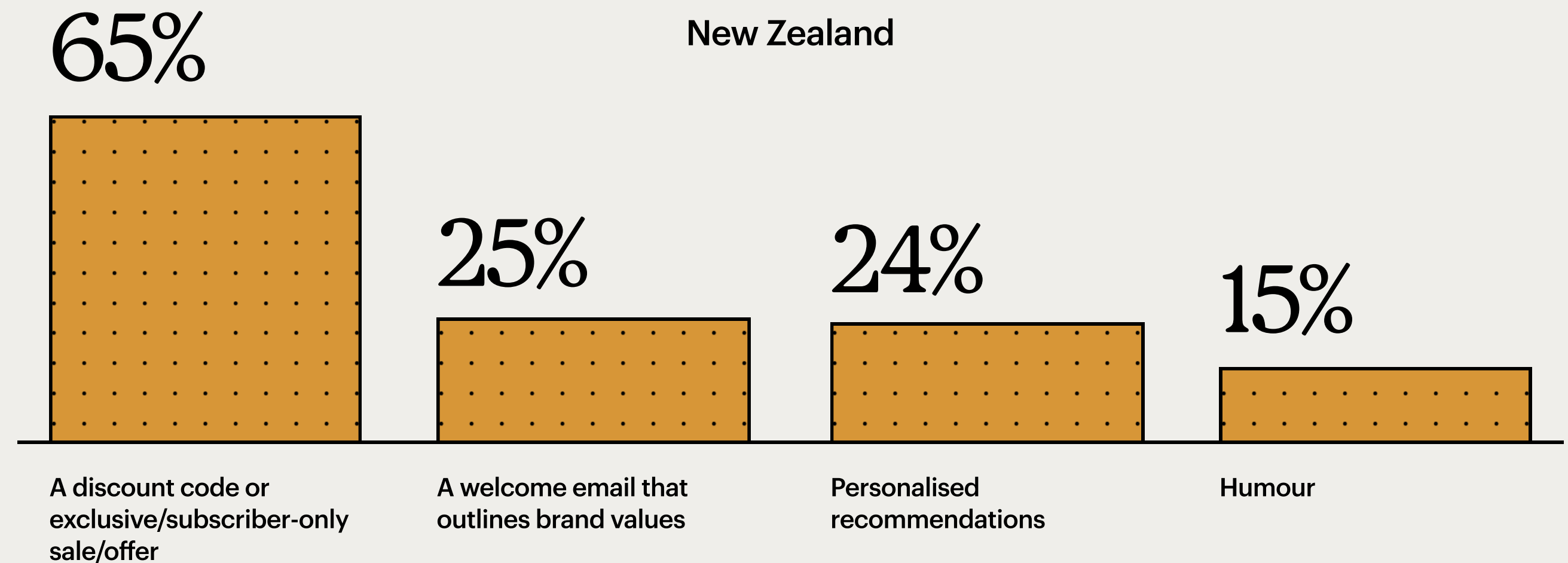
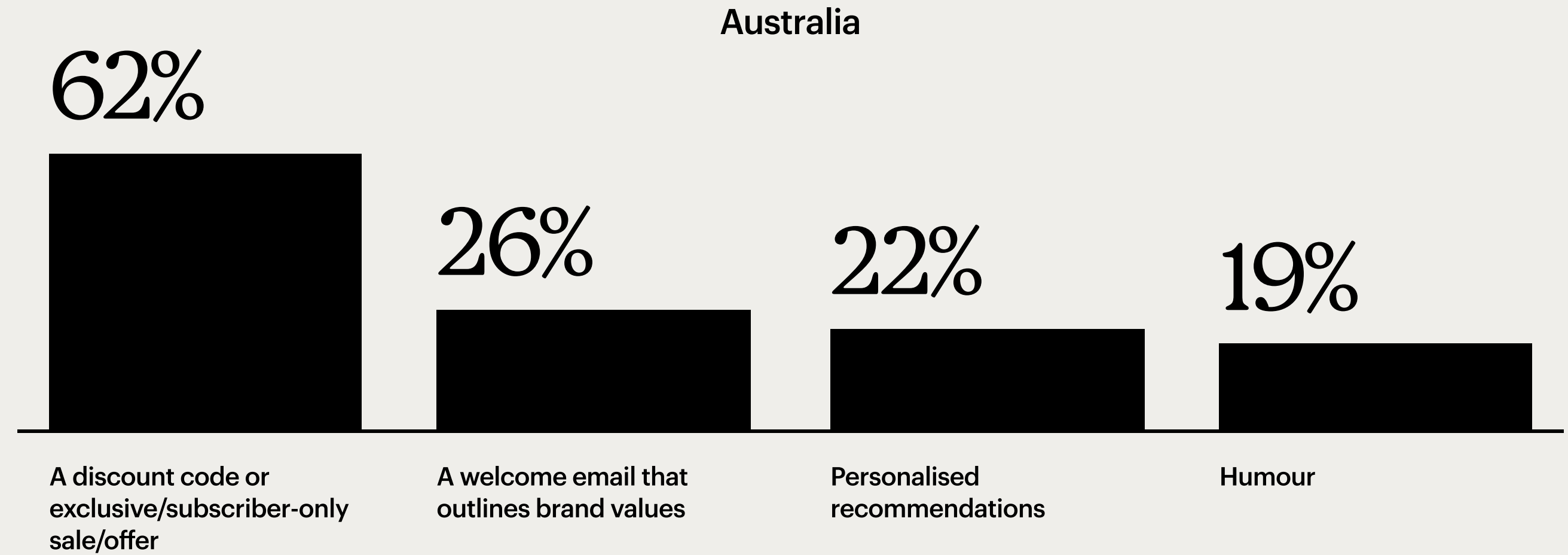
What brand qualities are most important to customers in Australia and New Zealand?



The Best Ice Breakers for Australian and New Zealand Shoppers

Consumers want to know that you care, especially at the start of a relationship.

26% of consumers in Australia and 25% in New Zealand like to receive a welcome email when they initially sign up outlining a brand's values and ethics. However, only 17% of New Zealanders and 16% of Australians want to hear a brand's backstory or purpose.

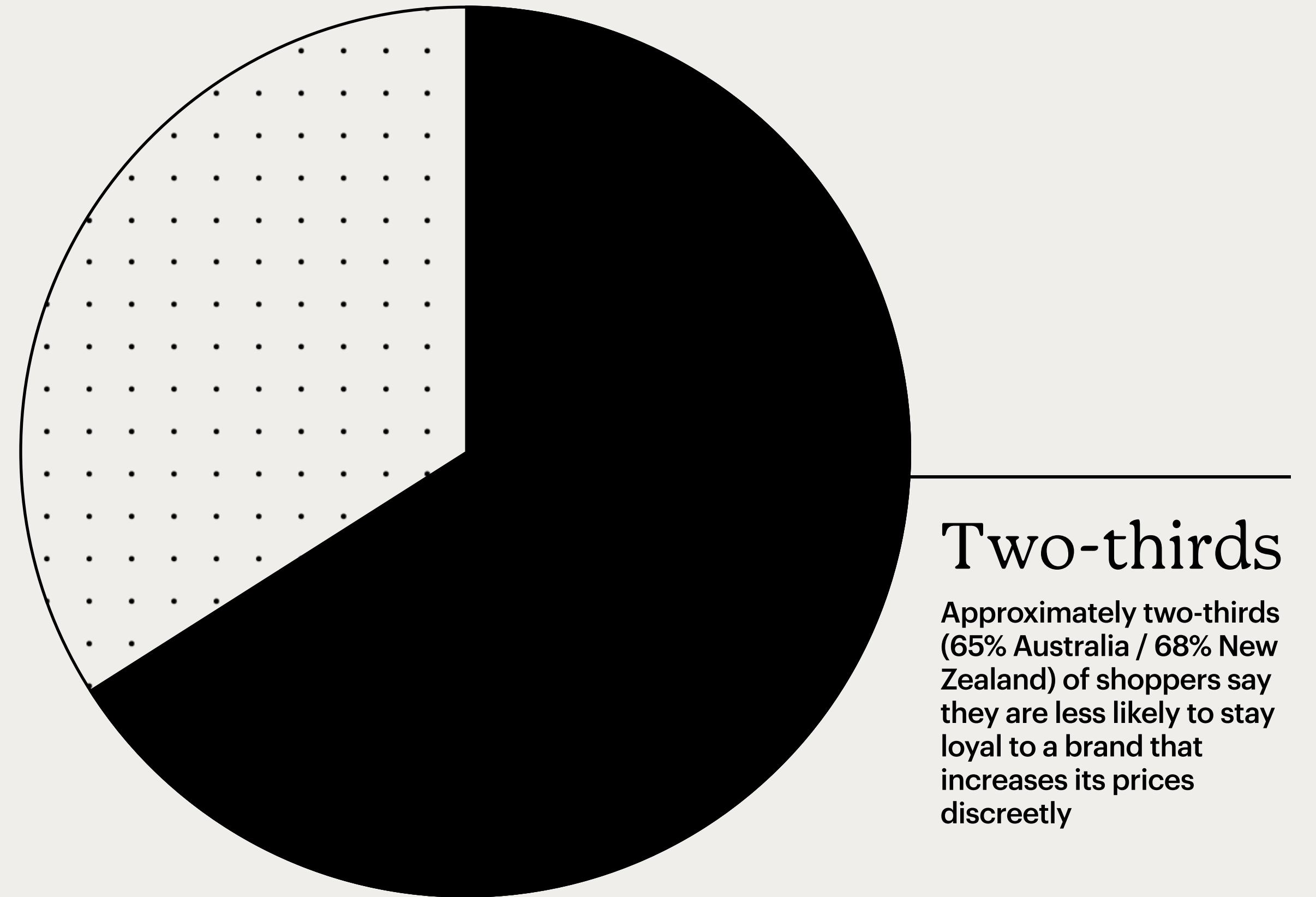


How do you make trust last?

A major factor in preserving trust and connection is understanding your audience. When asked about brand behaviour during the cost-of-living crisis, 68% of Australian respondents and 61% in New Zealand say they have stayed loyal to brands who have lowered and/or locked their prices in the face of inflation. Meanwhile, 65% of Australians and 60% New Zealanders agreed they are looking for cheaper alternatives to beloved brands.

Despite brand loyalty, cost still holds sway when it comes to consumer sentiment. This is especially true when brands are transparent about price rises.

In both countries, 65% of consumers in Australia and 68% of those in New Zealand say they are less likely to stay loyal to a brand that increases its prices discreetly. Meanwhile over half (53% Australia / 51% in New Zealand) would stay loyal to a brand if price rises were communicated openly.



Two-thirds

Approximately two-thirds (65% Australia / 68% New Zealand) of shoppers say they are less likely to stay loyal to a brand that increases its prices discreetly

Premium brands can capture and retain shoppers despite the cost-of-living crisis. 46% of Australian and 40% of New Zealand consumers remain loyal to high-quality brands, even if they are more expensive. This figure rises to 54% for Aussie 25-to-34 year-olds and 67% for Kiwi 18-to-24 year-olds.

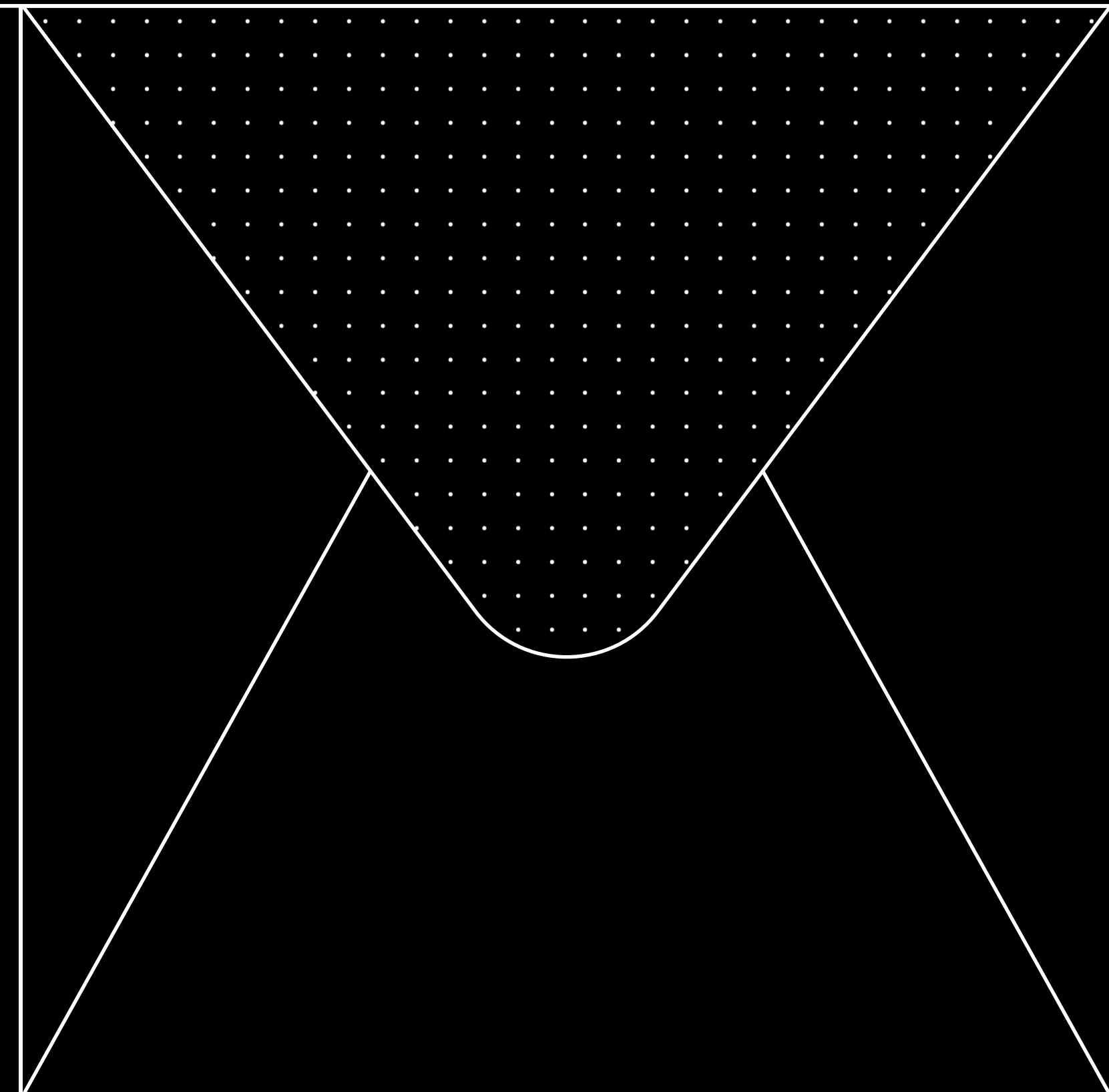
Factors such as responsible sourcing and sustainability are often seen as offering higher quality, and worth the additional expense. If prices are set to stay high, or even climb, you should have a good reason – one that customers are likely to support.

OUR TAKE

Rewarding customers for their loyalty is the key to good brand karma.

In today's economy, customer loyalty is hard fought-for, and the customer's lifetime value is a precious commodity. Therefore, think hard about your brand identity and purpose to ensure your strategy for earning consumer trust is built on solid ground. Consider the value you're providing customers. Even with the best brand values, getting them across in interesting and insightful ways to your customers is vital.

Understanding how consumer relationships are made can help you weather tough financial times. But during these periods, remember that shoppers are going through the same as you, so continue to honour these relationships with transparency. Doing so can cement strong, personal connections and ensure that hard-won customers aren't lost because of a lack of communication.

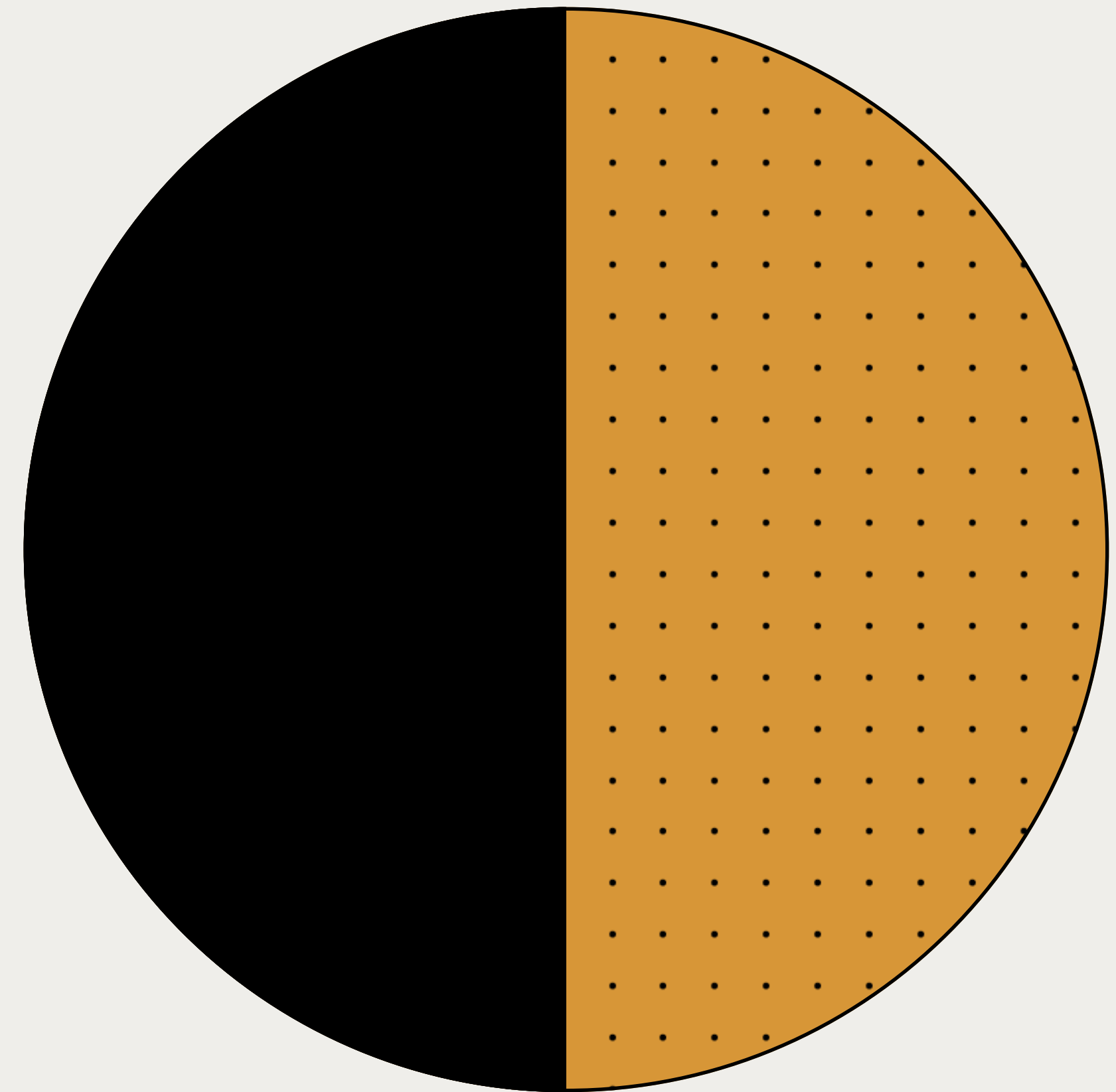


The future is personalised –
here's how to deliver it

Australians and New Zealanders believe the evolution of personalisation means products and services will soon come to *them*.

Approximately three in five consumers (62% Australia / 60% New Zealand) are happy to share their personal data so long as they can see more value/personalisation. In fact, 35% of Aussies and 32% of Kiwis see the value in personalisation and believe it stops them from “missing out” on products, trends and deals.

This number was highest for 18-to-24 year-olds in Australia (55%) and New Zealand (47%), who are more optimistic than other age groups about how handing over their data will make their future lives easier. In fact, the future of personalisation looks even brighter, with nearly half (49% Australia / 47% New Zealand) of consumers believing that products will find them – taking the guesswork out of shopping online.



Nearly half (49% Australia / 47% New Zealand) of shoppers believe the future of personalisation means the right products and services will come to them

More than half are open to receiving targeted brand recommendations based on their behaviour, specifically after shopping in person (60% Australia / 58% New Zealand), on a website (58% Australia / 57% New Zealand) or on a search engine (58% Australia / 57% New Zealand).

But it's not just about product recommendations. 24% of Australian shoppers and 19% of those in New Zealand want to see more personalised brand marketing campaigns. Marketers must be prepared to not only build communications around products but also invest in aspirational brand content.

OUR TAKE

Customer data is precious; use it wisely.

You must tailor when and how you reach customers, whether it's through organic search, flagship stores or personalised content. Shoppers are rightly protective over how their transactional and personal data is handled. But once consumers have trust in a brand, they'll shop, hand over their details and be more open to targeted advertising.

Getting this right is worth your time. It can ensure you're hitting that sweet spot with your audience: delivering the value and personalisation they want in return for their data – and creating a long-lasting connection in the process.

Personalisation is paramount, but how can marketers do this efficiently?

AI-powered insights and automation are being increasingly used by brands to generate more personalised content. The consensus in Australia and New Zealand is generally positive; 40% of Aussies and 36% of Kiwis are comfortable with AI being used to support human-made content. Additionally, 32% of Australians and 30% of New Zealanders are comfortable with AI-made content with extensive human input and oversight.

But despite today's consumers exhibiting a progressive attitude towards AI, there is still a strong affinity for human-made communications. Over half (52%) of Australian consumers and 49% in New Zealand crave human-made brand communications. So how can businesses use AI and automation tools to effectively drive efficiencies—without compromising the human touch and creativity their customers want?

OUR TAKE

Seeking help from AI should be
second nature to marketers –
but not reductive.

AI can be a sidekick to help you craft and deliver your message but, without a human touch, it can lack substance and authenticity. Implementing AI in a way that drives new efficiencies but maintains brand standards is vital.

In short, develop an AI strategy where the tools work for you, not instead of you. This is especially true for time and process efficiencies, such as automating email sends, or segmenting recipients faster than you can manually. This will give your brand more time to do what it does best: make connections. For that, you need humans.

How automation helps Six Barrel Soda focus on creativity

| | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Industry | Food and Beverage Services |
| Location | Wellington, New Zealand |
| Year Founded | 2012 |



Six Barrel Soda, a Wellington, New Zealand-based company, is on a mission to “shake up the soda game.” The business communicates with two main audiences: one consumer, the second in hospitality wholesale. “Our real customers, at the core, are all the same,” co-founder Joseph Slater says. “They're all people who are interested in trying out new and different flavours.” Competing against the big soda brands in a crowded space means Six Barrel Soda have to find a way to get in front of as many people as possible. To do this, they need to expand their audience, build brand awareness and measure their marketing efforts accurately.

As social media algorithms evolve and post visibility becomes more difficult, email has become a valuable tool for the Six Barrel Soda team. Instead of making emails entirely transactional, the team creates educational content such as how-tos, recipes and more, helping to reach their opted-in audience directly, before driving them to the website. They further tailor campaigns using tags to differentiate between their New Zealand and Australian customers, helping to drive more engagement. But such a strategy can be time-consuming and, as Joe says, “we're in the business of making drinks, not necessarily building lists of customers.”



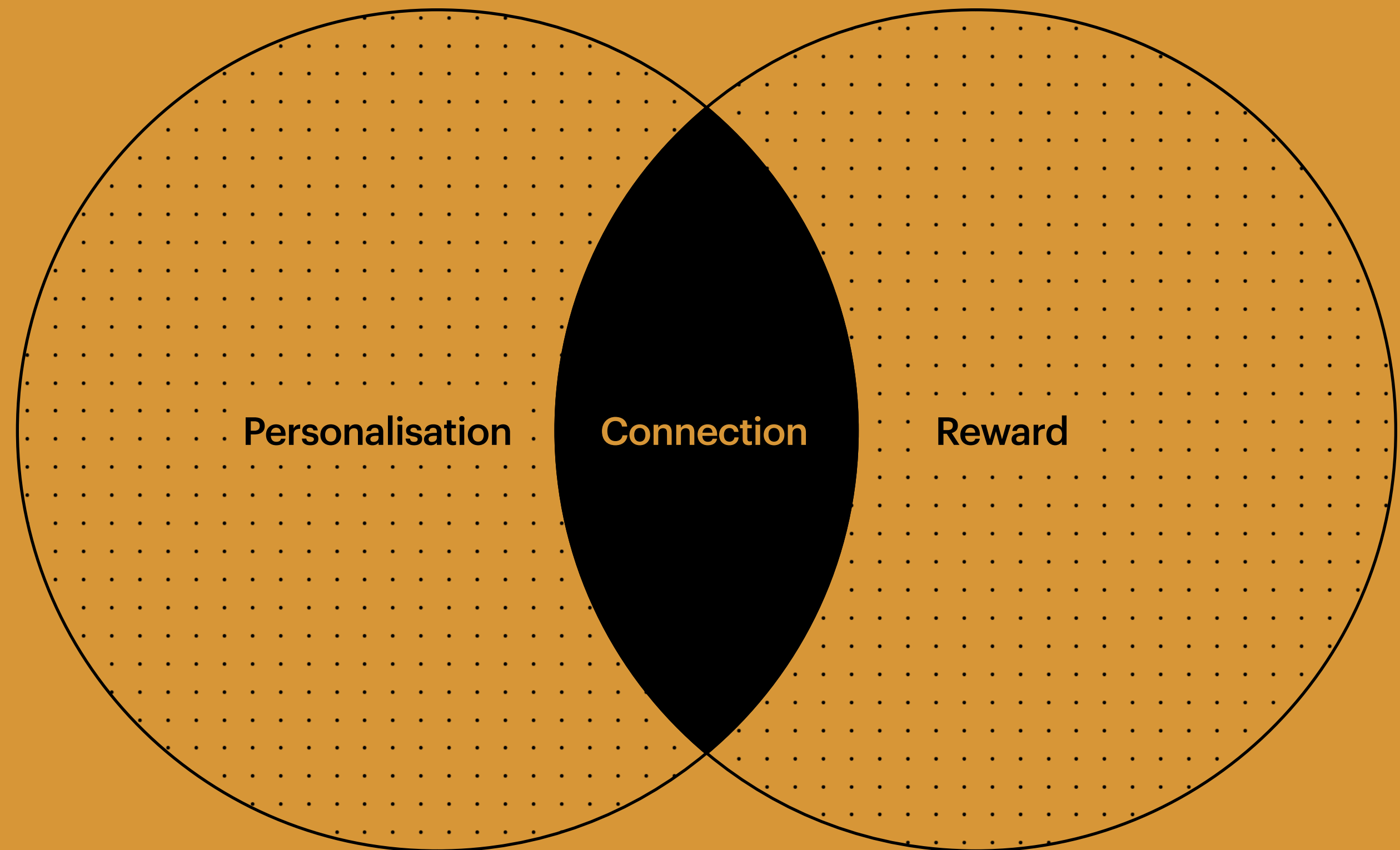
Fortunately, time-saving integrations and automations mean the Six Barrel Soda team don't have to manually add email addresses to a spreadsheet and then import them into Mailchimp. Instead, the audience can grow organically through the marketing opt-in and newsletter sign-up form. It's not just the marketing that has become more streamlined, but the measurements, too. By analysing the data, the team can determine what content is performing well simply by looking at click-through rates and email-generated revenue. As Joe says, "We can just focus on making the stuff and coming up with new ideas, rather than doing the admin side of the content delivery."



CONCLUSION

Build connections that last and make every message count

As customers evolve, marketers today have a chance to evolve with them, forging long-lasting relationships that reward those on both sides of the shop window. For this, you need a strategy that can land at the intersection of personalisation and reward.



Methodology

The survey was conducted among 10,000 consumers in the UK, Germany, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Australia and New Zealand. Of that 10,000, 1,000 were based in Australia and 500 were based in New Zealand. The figures in this specific report focus on the findings for Australia and New Zealand only.

The interviews were conducted online by Sapio Research, on behalf of Mailchimp in February 2024 using an email invitation and an online survey.

Results of any sample are subject to sampling variation. The magnitude of the variation is measurable and is affected by the number of interviews and the level of the percentages expressing the results. In this study, the chances are 95 in 100 that a survey result does not vary, plus or minus, by more than 1% percentage point from the result that would be obtained if interviews had been conducted with all persons in the universe represented by the sample.

Ready to change how you connect with your customers?

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