

What Is That Thing?

Knowledge and Usage of Quick Response Codes

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How to Use a QR Code

Scan the code using a smartphone “app”



The code brings up content on the smartphone in the form of a web link or other service



Types of Uses



Where Are QR Codes Heading?

- Estimates indicate that **46%** of American adults are now smartphone users.¹
- As smartphone usage expands and QR codes become more prevalent, several questions arise:
 - Who is using them?
 - How are they using them?
 - Where is QR code usage going?



¹ Pew Internet & American Life Project, February 2012.



Methodology

- **Populations**

- **Influencers**

- Adults 25 years of age and older with influence on youth ages 12 to 21 (e.g., parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches)
 - Sample size: $n = 3,455$

- **Adults**

- Ages 17 to 35
 - Sample size: $n = 2,507$

- **Survey Methods**

- Probability-based online panels
 - Continuously fielded between July 2011 and March 2012
 - Results reported are from January–March 2012 unless stated otherwise.
 - Weighted quarterly to be representative in terms of gender, age, race, ethnicity, education, census region, metropolitan area, and Internet access



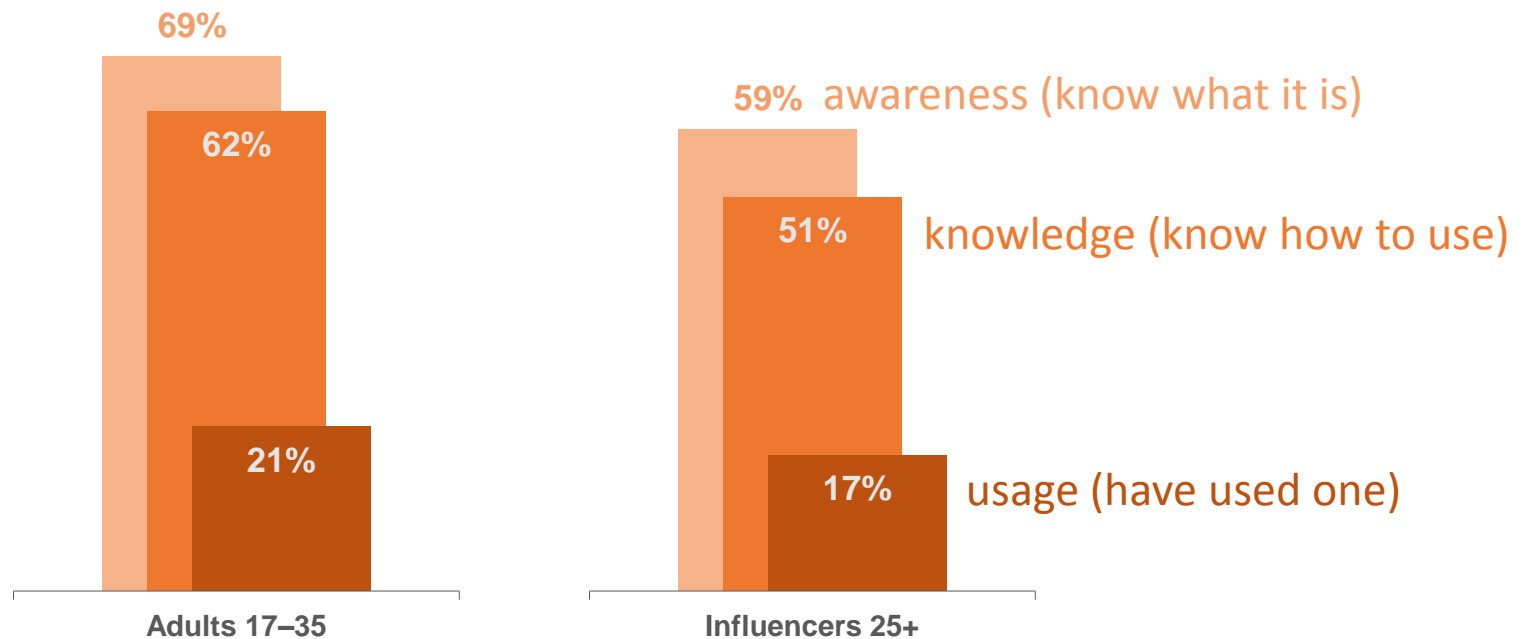
Methodology

- **Survey Items**
 - **Awareness**
 - Do you know what this is?
 - **Knowledge**
 - Do you know how it is used?
 - Please describe how it is used.
 - **Experience**
 - Have you ever used one in the past?
 - Where was it located (e.g., magazine, billboard, television, on a product)?
 - For what product, service, or organization was the link used and what information did it link you to?
- **Content Coding Methodology**
 - Open-ended items were coded using two independent raters. Complete agreement was required for all coded items.
 - For more accurate coding of knowledge, responses for all three open-ended questions were examined together.



Overall Topline Results

- Majorities of respondents in both studies report knowing what a QR code is and how to use one, though only about one-fifth have actually used one.



Q68a. "Do you know what this is?"

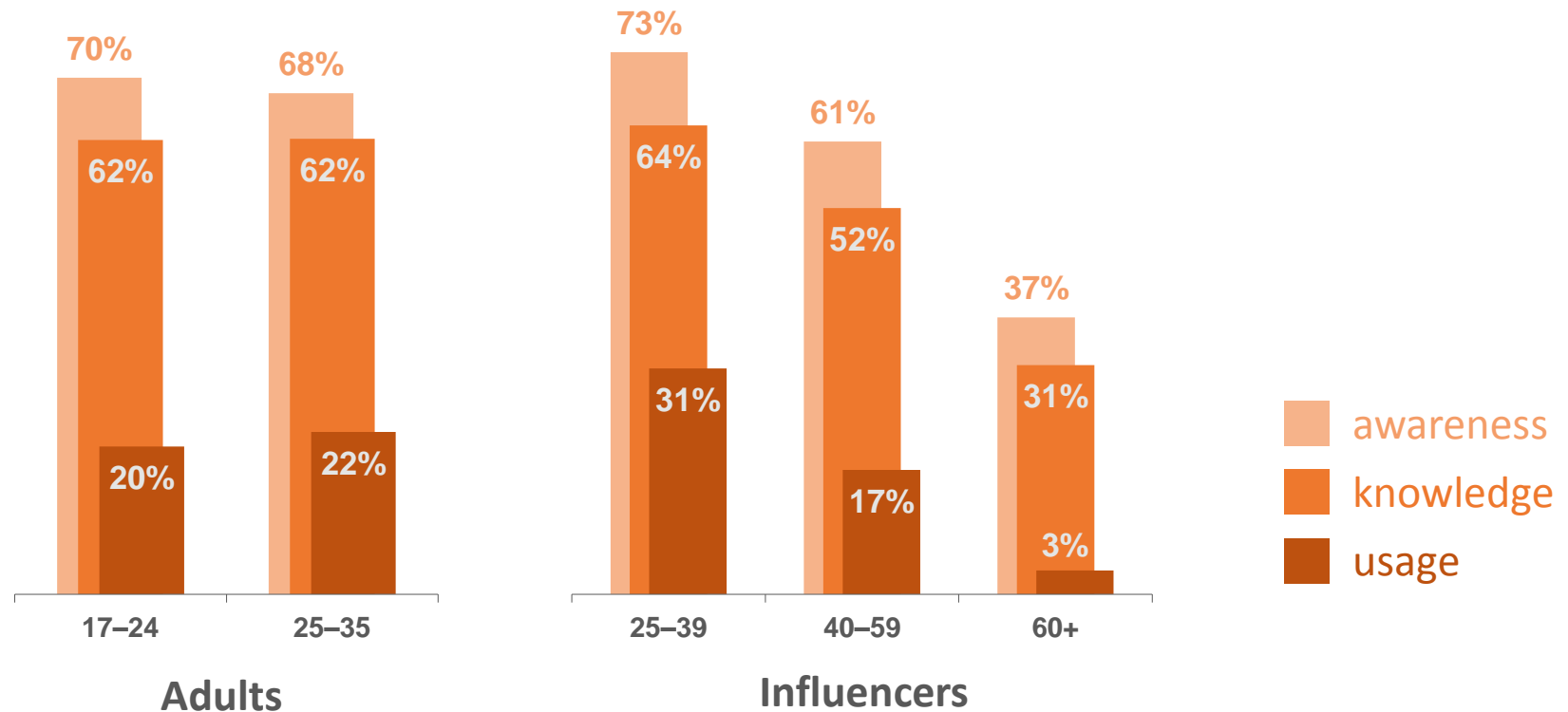
Q68b. "Do you know how it is used?"

Q68d. "Have you ever used one in the past?"



Results by Age

- There are stark differences in QR code awareness and usage by age.



Q68a. "Do you know what this is?"

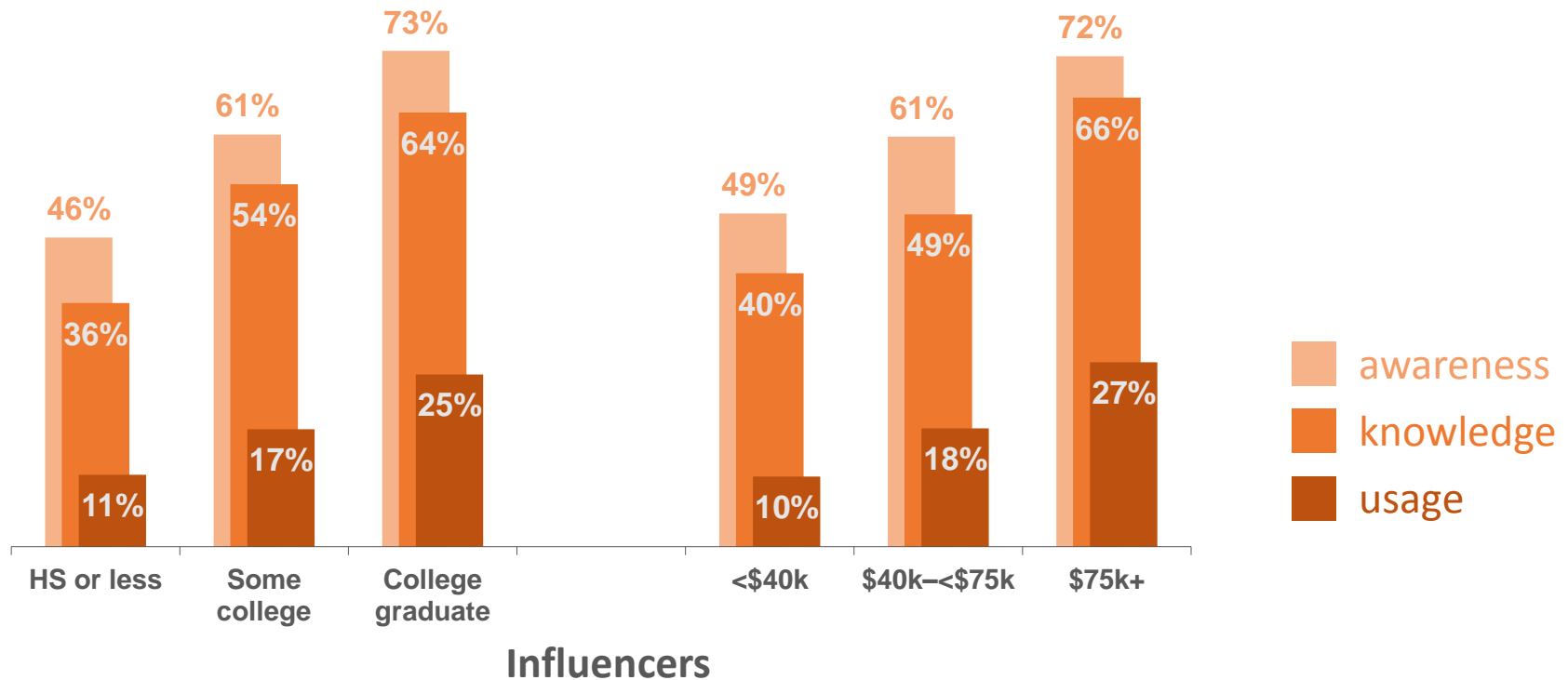
Q68b. "Do you know how it is used?"

Q68d. "Have you ever used one in the past?"



Results by Education & Household Income

- Among Influencers, usage is highest among college graduates and those with higher incomes.



Q68a. "Do you know what this is?"

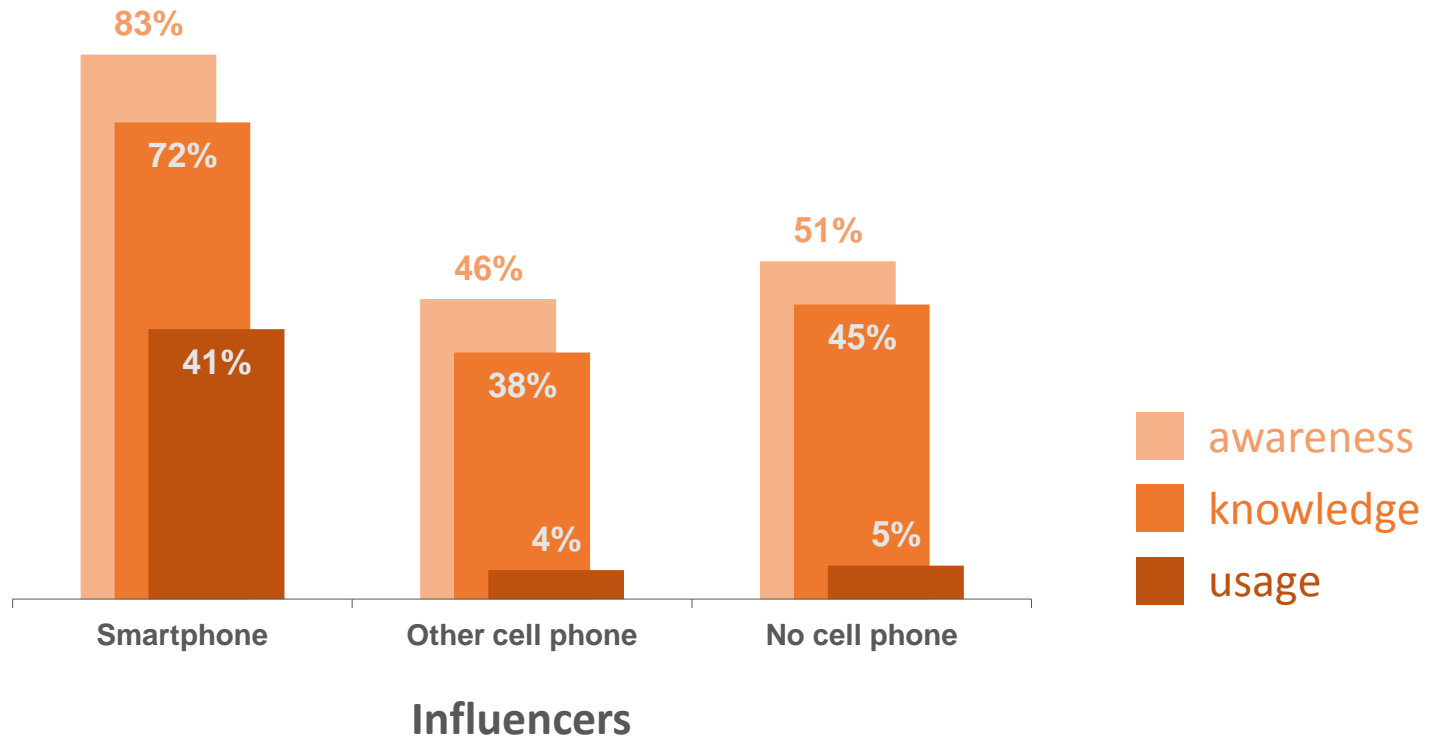
Q68b. "Do you know how it is used?"

Q68d. "Have you ever used one in the past?"



Results by Mobile Phone Ownership

- QR code usage is largely constrained by phone ownership.

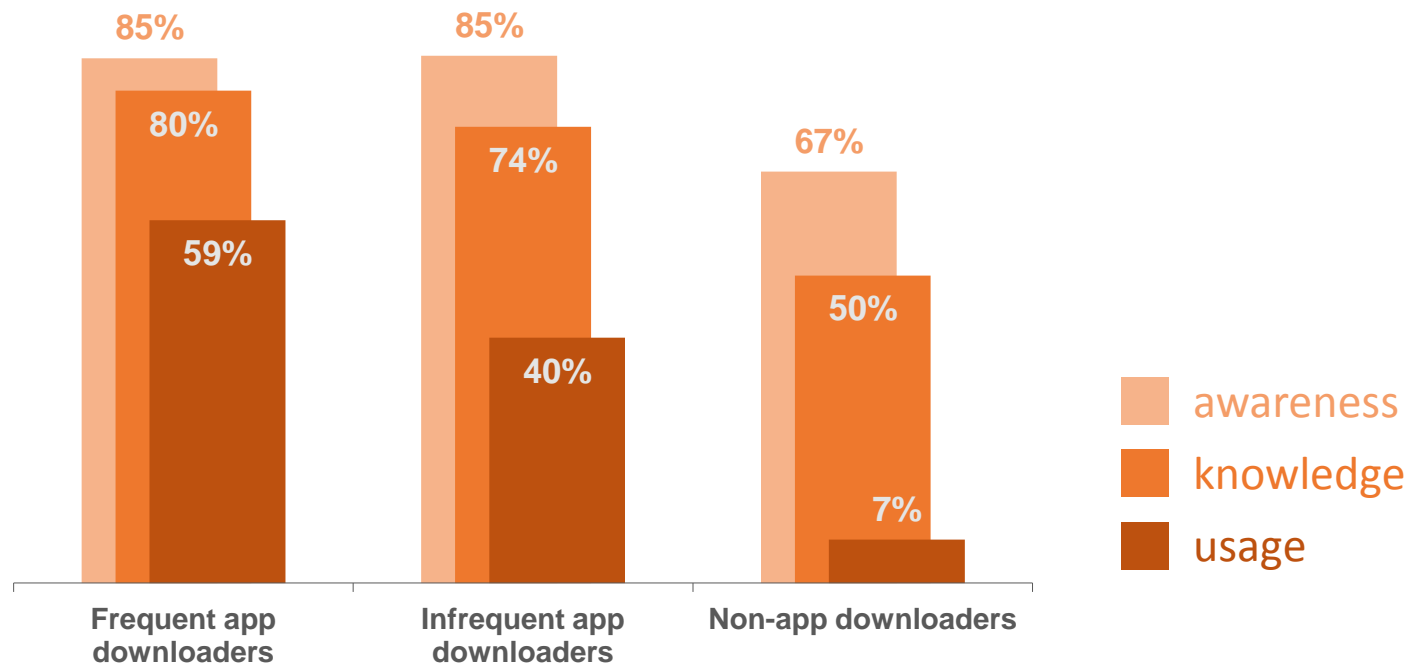


Q68a. "Do you know what this is?" Q68b. "Do you know how it is used?" Q68d. "Have you ever used one in the past?"
Phone1. "Do you have a cell phone, smartphone (e.g., an iPhone, BlackBerry, or Droid), or other mobile device that is also a phone?"
Phone2. "Is your mobile phone a smartphone (e.g., an iPhone, BlackBerry, Droid, Windows Phone, or other phone with the ability to run third-party software applications or 'apps')?"



Smartphone Users: Results by App Usage

- Among smartphone users, QR code usage is strongly connected with app downloading behaviors.



Influencers: Smartphone Users

Note: "Frequent App Downloaders" are defined as those who download apps weekly or more often.

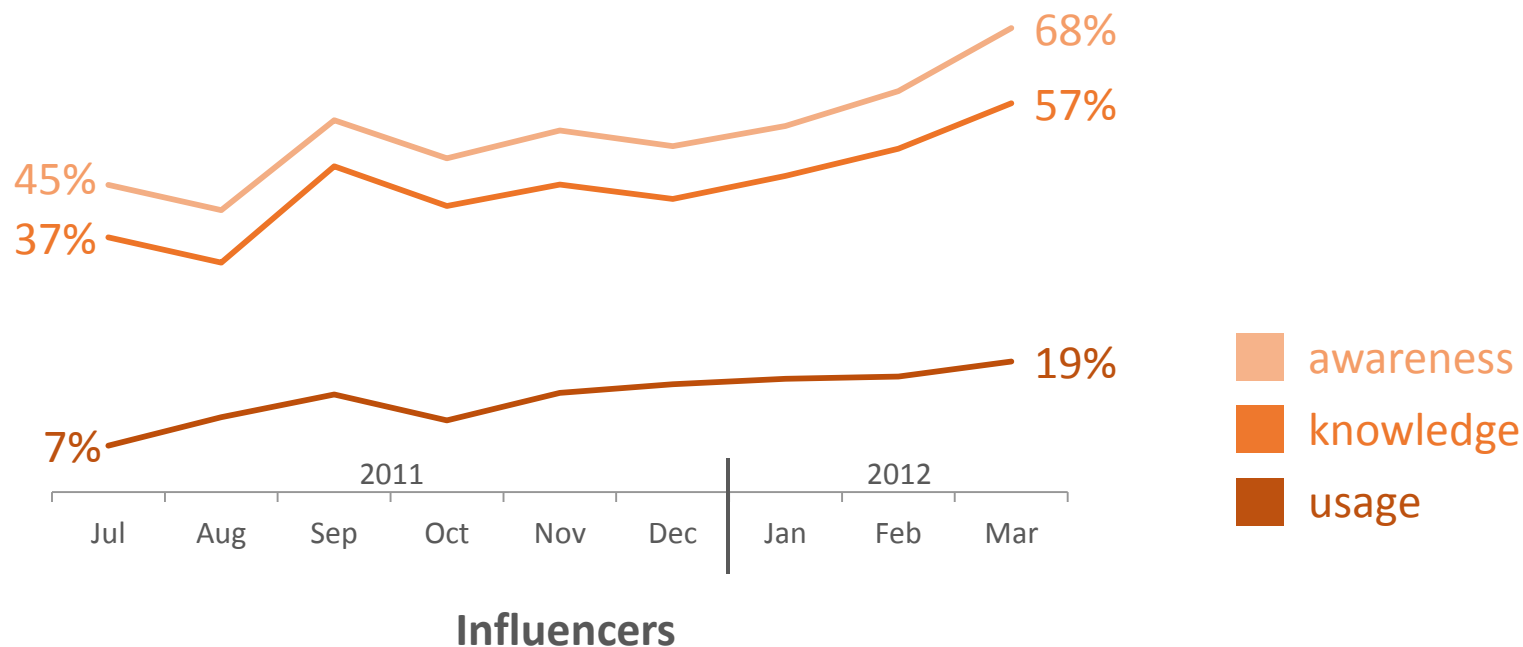
Q68a. "Do you know what this is?" Q68b. "Do you know how it is used?" Q68d. "Have you ever used one in the past?"

Phone3e. "Thinking now just about your mobile phone, how often do you use your mobile phone to do each of the following – several times a day, daily, weekly, less than weekly, or never?" (Download software applications or "apps")



Results Over Time

- Awareness, knowledge, and usage of QR codes steadily increased between July 2011 and March 2012.



Q68a. "Do you know what this is?"

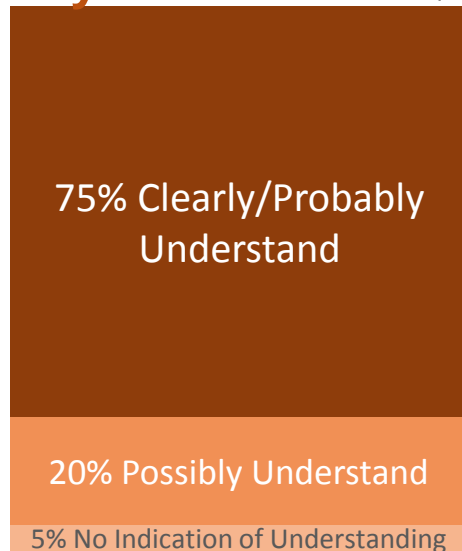
Q68b. "Do you know how it is used?"

Q68d. "Have you ever used one in the past?"



How People Think of QR Codes

- Most Influencers who report knowing how to use a QR code are able to indicate a clear understanding of what it is or how to use it.
- Respondents think of QR codes primarily in terms of visiting websites, accessing information, and using them for products.
- **Only 8%** refer to QR codes specifically by name.



Q68c. "Please describe how it is used."



Locations of QR Codes

- Respondents in both surveys who use QR codes primarily use them from magazines and on products.



Q68e. "Where was it located (e.g., magazine, billboard, television, on a product)?"



Use of QR Codes

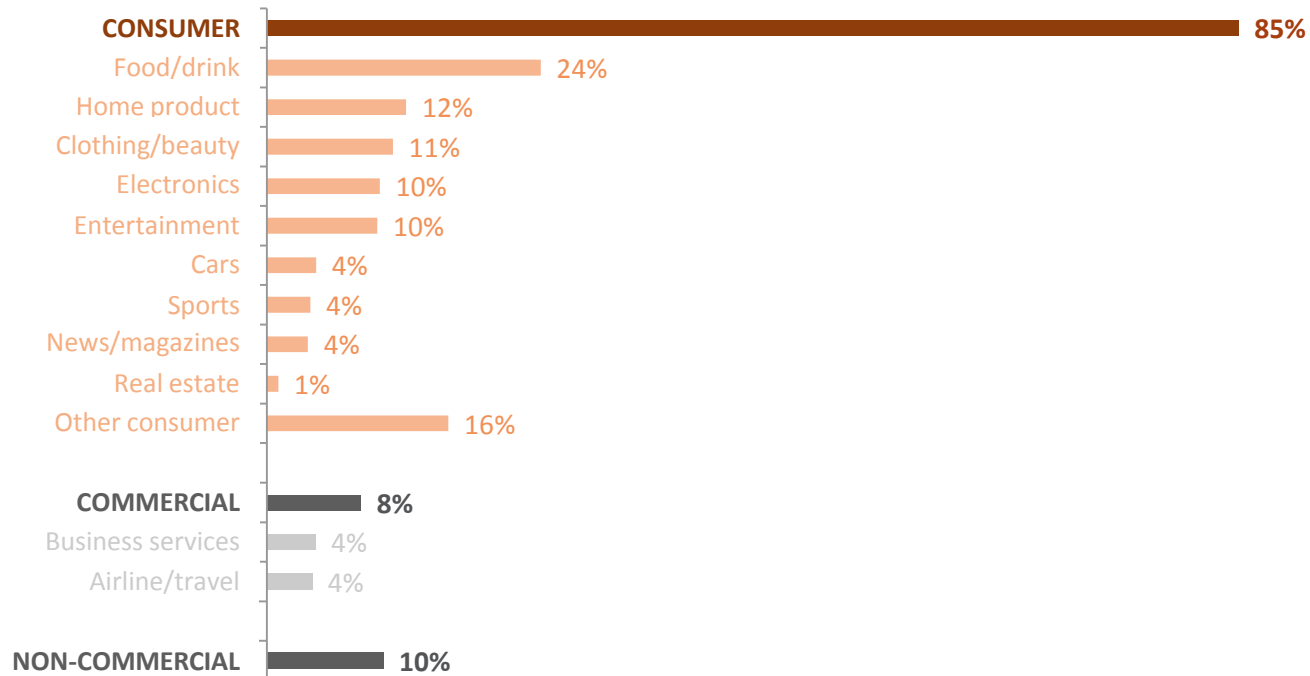
- Respondents use QR codes for a broad array of items and purposes.



Q68f. “For what product, service, or organization was the link used and what information did it link you to?”

Sponsors of QR Codes

- Influencers mainly use QR codes that are associated with consumer products.



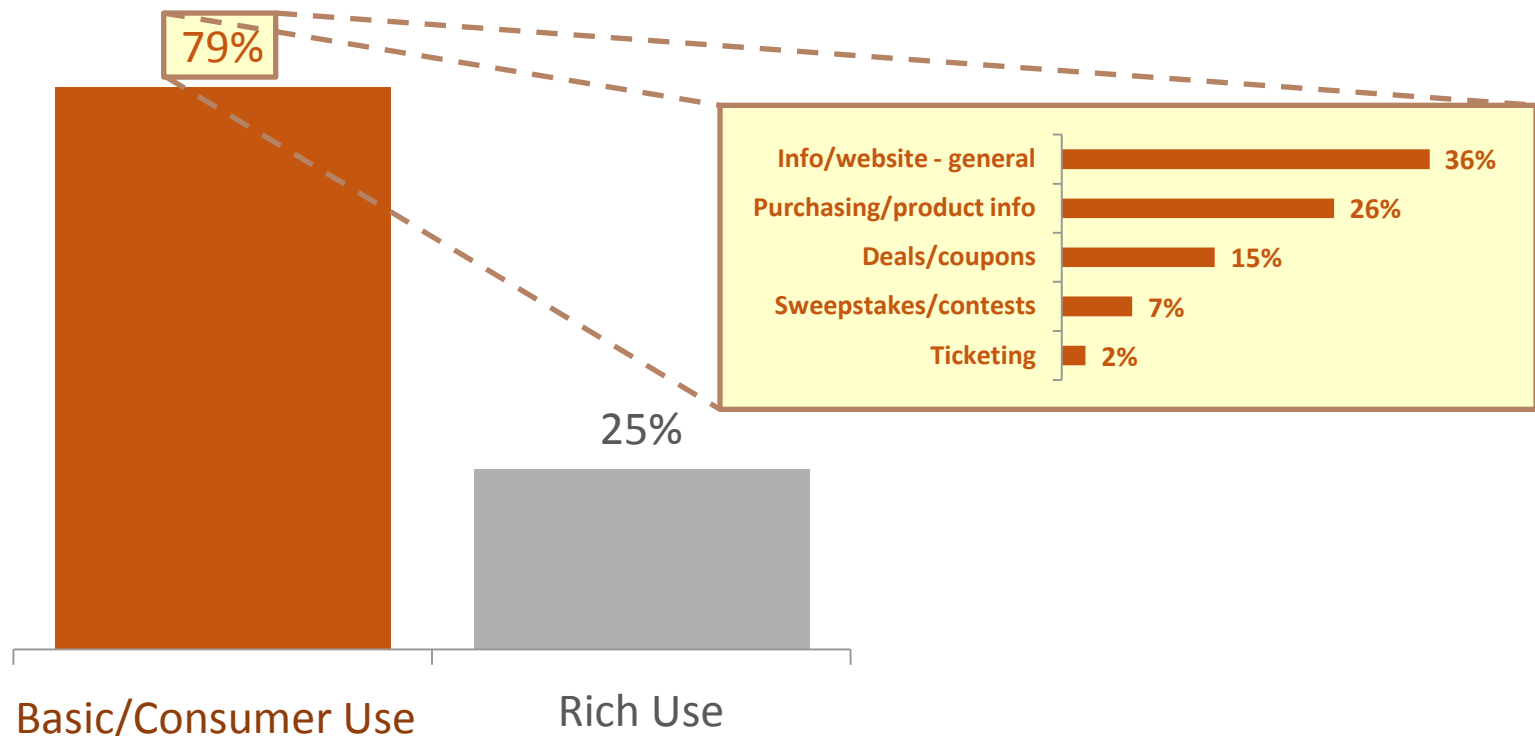
Q68f. "For what product, service, or organization was the link used and what information did it link you to?"

Note: Proportions are a subset of those who indicated the sponsor of a QR code they used. Proportions are from Jul11–Mar12.



Outcomes of Using QR Codes

- Influencers are primarily using QR codes for basic or consumer purposes rather than rich uses that take fuller advantage of the smartphone's capabilities.



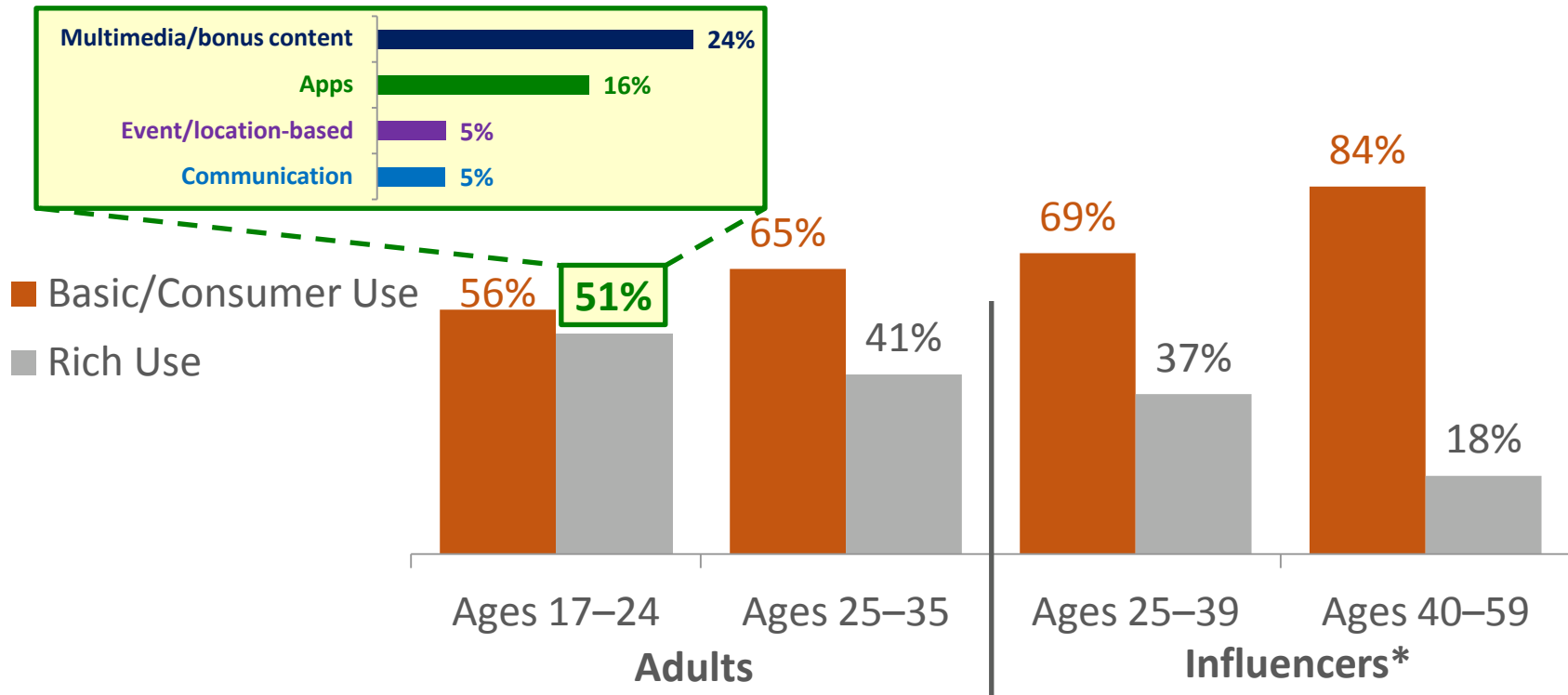
Q68f. "For what product, service, or organization was the link used and what information did it link you to?"

Note: Proportions are a subset of those who indicated the outcome of a QR code they used. Proportions are from Jul11–Mar12.



Outcomes of Using QR Codes

- Respondents in the older age groups are especially likely to use QR codes for basic or consumer purposes.
- While younger respondents also use QR codes for basic or consumer purposes, many are also using them for rich purposes.



Q68f. “For what product, service, or organization was the link used and what information did it link you to?”

*Ages 60+ not displayed due to small *n*

Note: Proportions are a subset of those who indicated the outcome of a QR code they used. Proportions are from Jul11–Mar12.



Summary of Key Findings

- **Trends**
 - QR code knowledge and usage have been growing as the population with smartphones has increased.
- **Who Is Using Them**
 - QR codes are used most heavily by the young, those with more education, and those with higher incomes.
- **How They Are Using Them**
 - QR codes are largely used for consumer and informational purposes, but younger people are also using them for richer purposes.



Looking Ahead

- **Tracking usage over time**
 - Improvements to open-ended questions
- **Understanding usage in more depth**
 - Frequency of use
 - Type of experience
 - Attitudes and behaviors of QR code users
- **Fad or not?**



Questions?



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