

**bizrate** insights

/ State of Customer Loyalty

# Winning Loyalty in a Price-Sensitive Market

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# Table of Contents

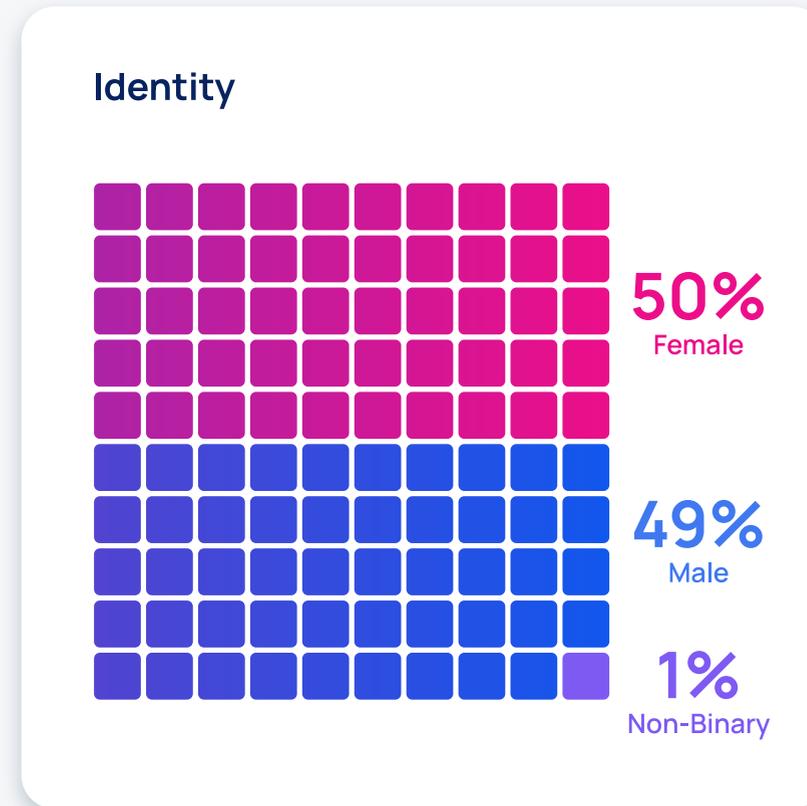
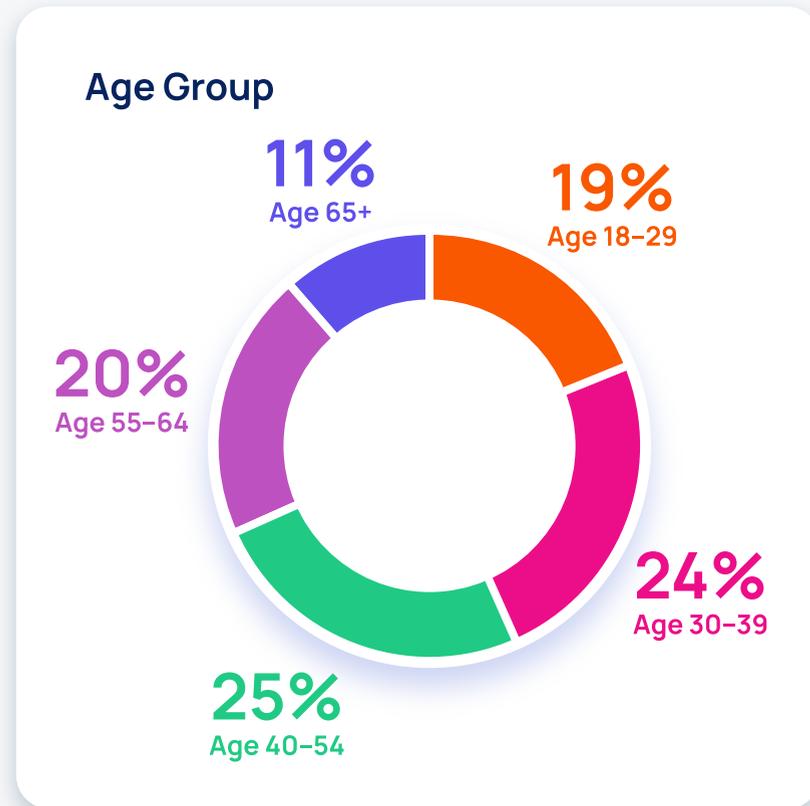
<b>Introduction</b> .....	3
<b>Methodology</b> .....	4
01 / The Impact of Price Hikes .....	5
02 / The Shaky State of Shopper Loyalty .....	10
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	21



# Introduction

Loyalty isn't what it used to be. In today's economy of climbing prices, shopper loyalty feels less like a sturdy anchor and more like a soap bubble: thin, fragile, and quick to pop. Price has always played a role in loyalty, but now it's the main factor, with consumers more price-sensitive than ever and ready to put brand allegiance in the backseat.

Brand loyalty may look different than it used to, but understanding these shifts gives brands and retailers a clearer picture of what's really driving consumer decisions today. In this report, we dive into how consumer behavior is changing, what matters most right now, and how businesses can adapt to keep customers coming back, even in uncertain times.



# Methodology

Bizrate Insights surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,044 U.S. online shoppers aged 18+ in August 2025 to explore consumer loyalty.

# 1,044

U.S. Shoppers Surveyed



# 01 /

## The Impact of Price Hikes

## Shoppers Are Not Shopping Like Before

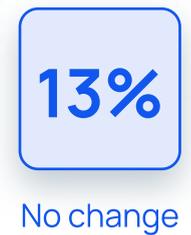
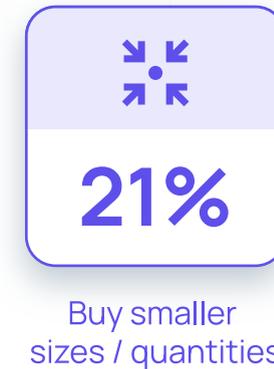
Today's price increases have definitively shaken up the way people shop. Only 13% of consumers say their buying habits haven't changed, leaving everyone else (87%) having had to adjust in some way.

Half of shoppers say they're holding off until a sale or promotion hits before making a purchase. Others are tightening up by cutting back on non-essentials (43%), switching to lower-priced brands (40%), or simply shopping less often (36%). Some are making swaps; 34% are replacing products with cheaper alternatives, while 27% have stopped buying certain items altogether. About a quarter (24%) are switching where they shop, heading to different retailers in search of better prices.

**87%**

of consumers say their **purchasing behavior has been impacted** by recent price increases

## How have recent price increases **affected** your purchasing behavior?





About **4 out of 5** people say that **price** has the biggest impact on their purchase decisions today

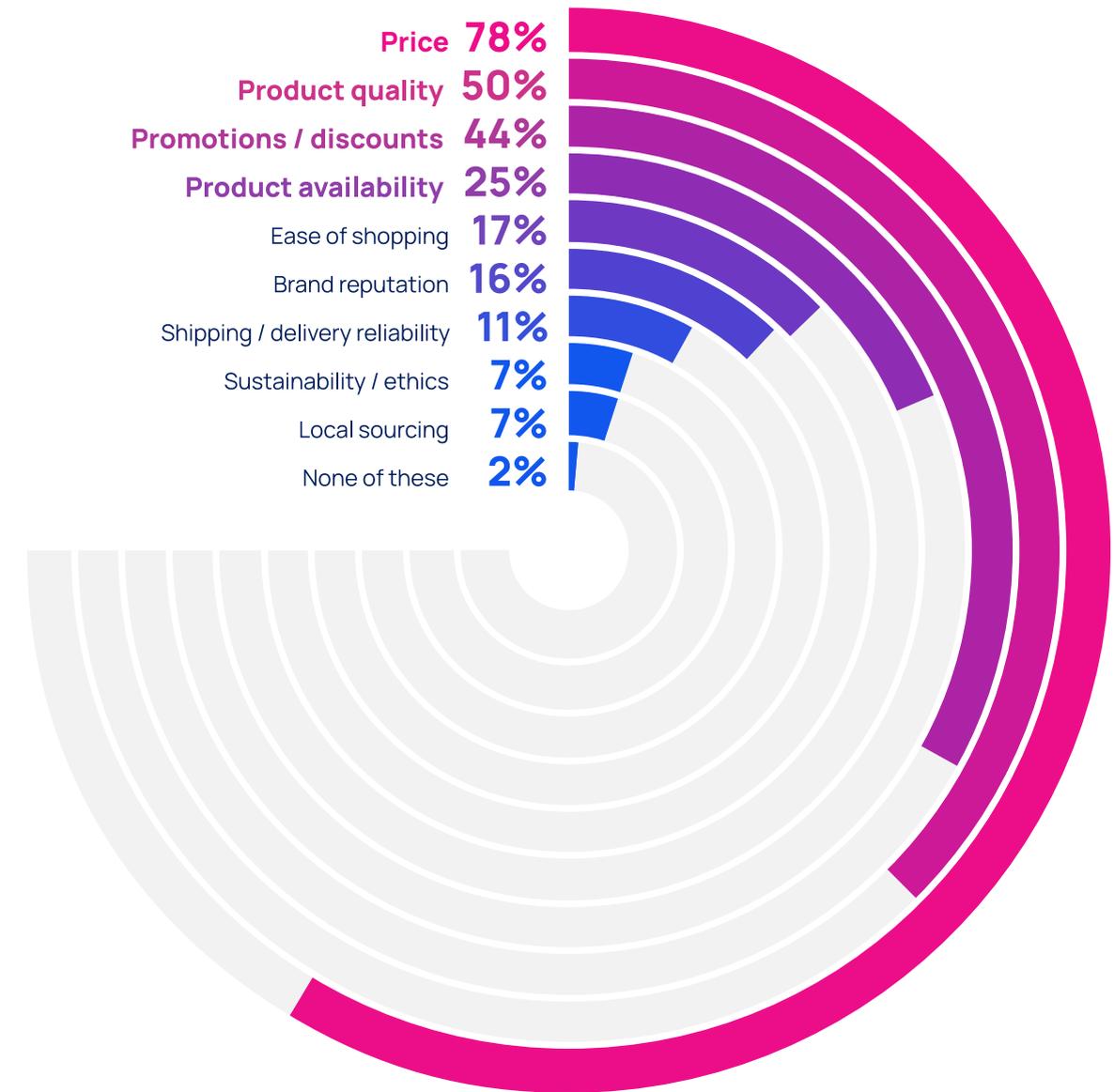
# What Really Drives Today's Purchases

When it comes to what makes shoppers hit "buy," price reigns supreme. A whopping 78% say price is the biggest factor in their purchase decisions.

Right behind price is product quality (50%), followed by promotions and discounts (44%). For 1 in 4 shoppers, product availability can make or break a purchase.

When we see factors like brand reputation fall to 16%, it's clear shoppers are heavily focused on price tags more than logos. They want affordability, but not at the expense of quality. Brands that can deliver both, while sprinkling in the right promotions and keeping shelves stocked, will be the ones that keep consumers coming back.

Which of these factors have the **greatest** impact on your purchase decisions today?





# 02 /

## The Shaky State of Shopper Loyalty

83%

of shoppers have  
**switched** brands or  
retailers recently



# Loyalty in the Age of Price Sensitivity

Shoppers call themselves loyal, but it's a loose kind of loyalty. Almost two-thirds (64%) say they're "somewhat loyal." *Translation: I'll stick around...unless the price goes up.*

The reality is that most already have one foot out the door. A huge 83% of shoppers admit they've switched brands or retailers recently for one reason or another, and 67% say price was the determining factor, whether they found a better deal, reacted to a price hike, or traded down.

Price has always mattered, but now it's the deal-breaker. Even "loyal" shoppers are holding out for sales, cutting non-essentials, or skipping purchases entirely. This is hard to swallow because real loyalty is not only about preference, but also repeat purchases. Right now, price sensitivity is cutting into that core.

## How **loyal** are you to your preferred brands or retailers today?

# 66%

"I'll stick around... unless the price goes up"

**Somewhat loyal**



# 13%

"I choose them regardless of price"

**Very loyal**



# 4%

"I shop purely on price/value"

**Not at all loyal**



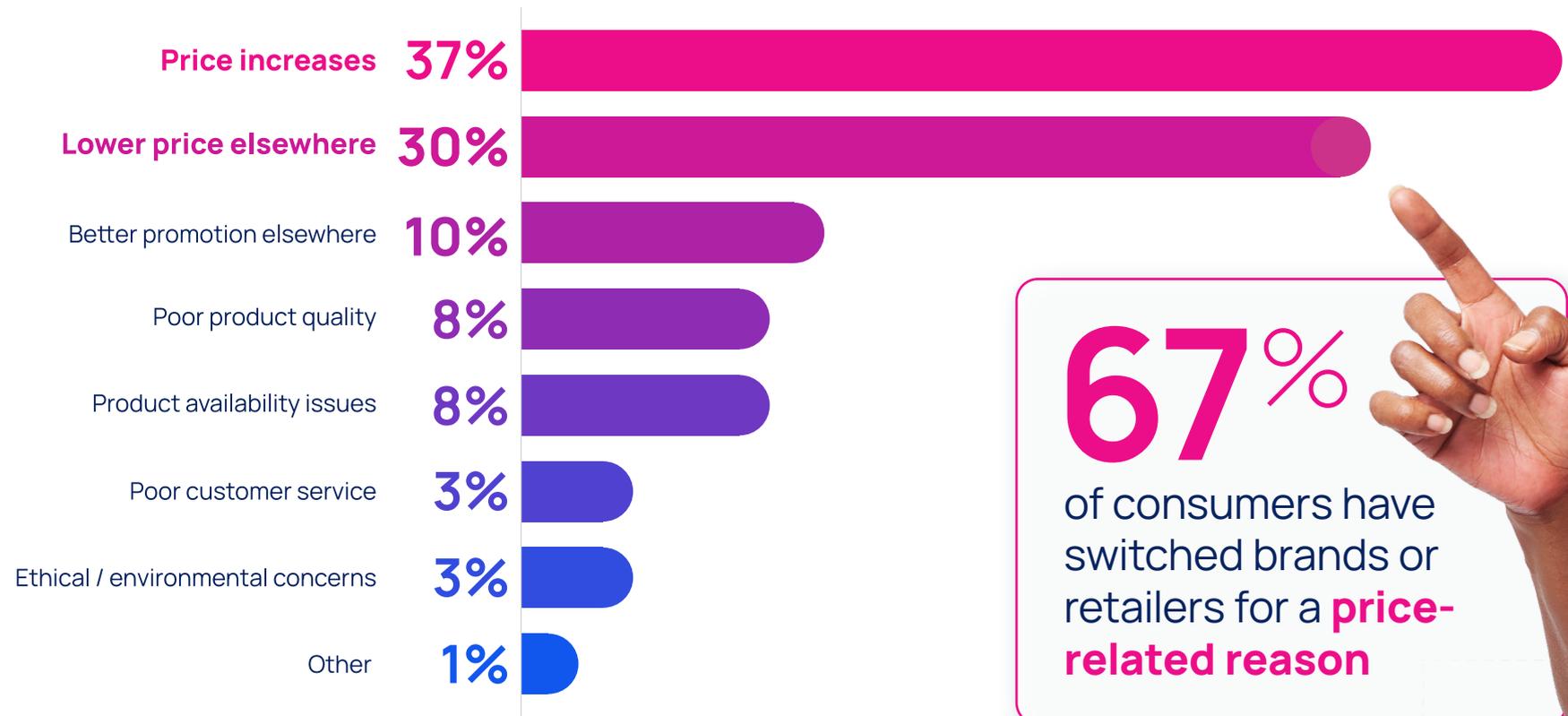
# 17%

"I mostly choose the best deal"

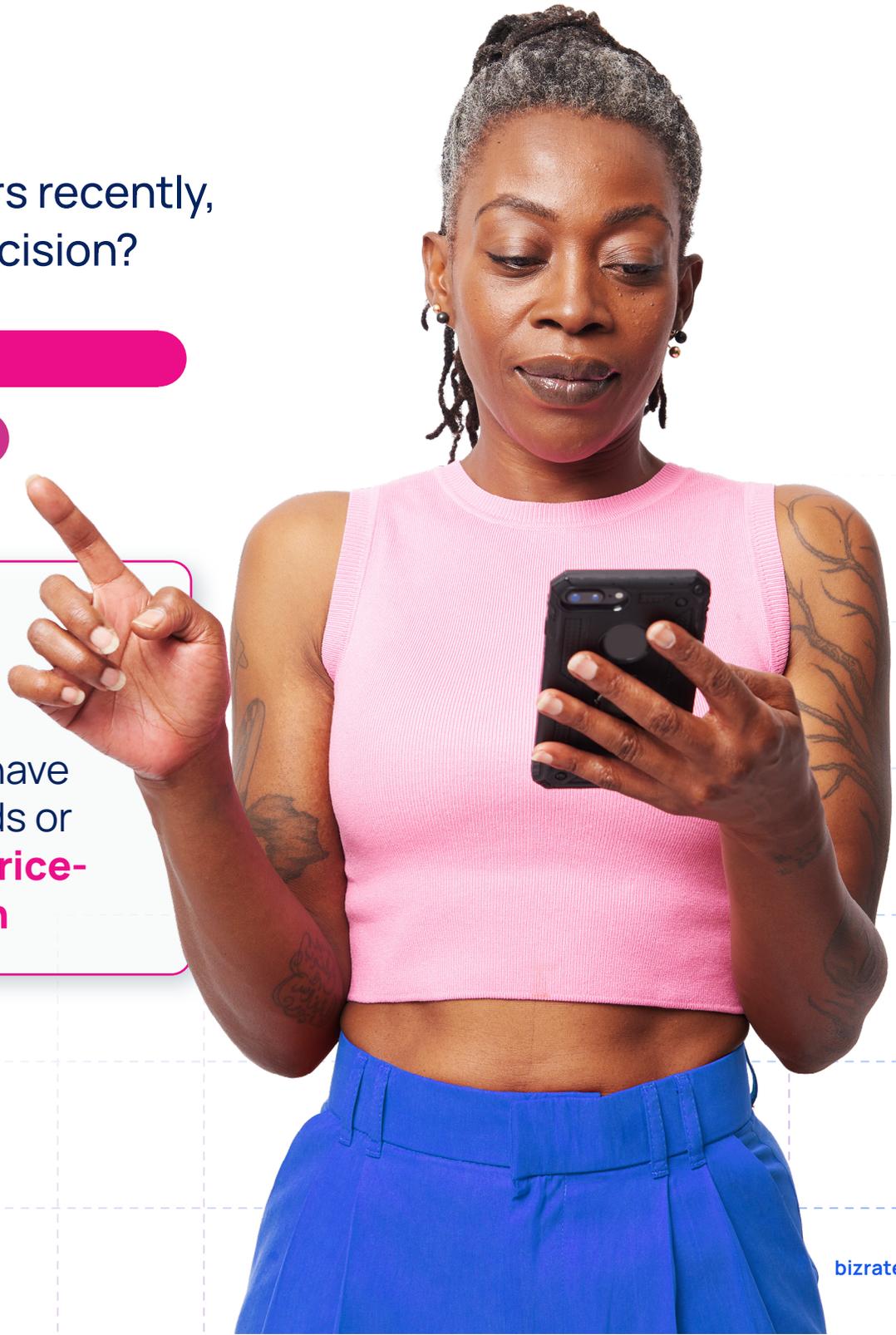
**Not very loyal**



If you have **switched** brands or retailers recently, what was the **main reason** for your decision?



**67%** of consumers have switched brands or retailers for a **price-related reason**



60%

of shoppers say **stable pricing** will most likely keep them loyal to a brand or retailer



# What's Worth Staying Loyal For

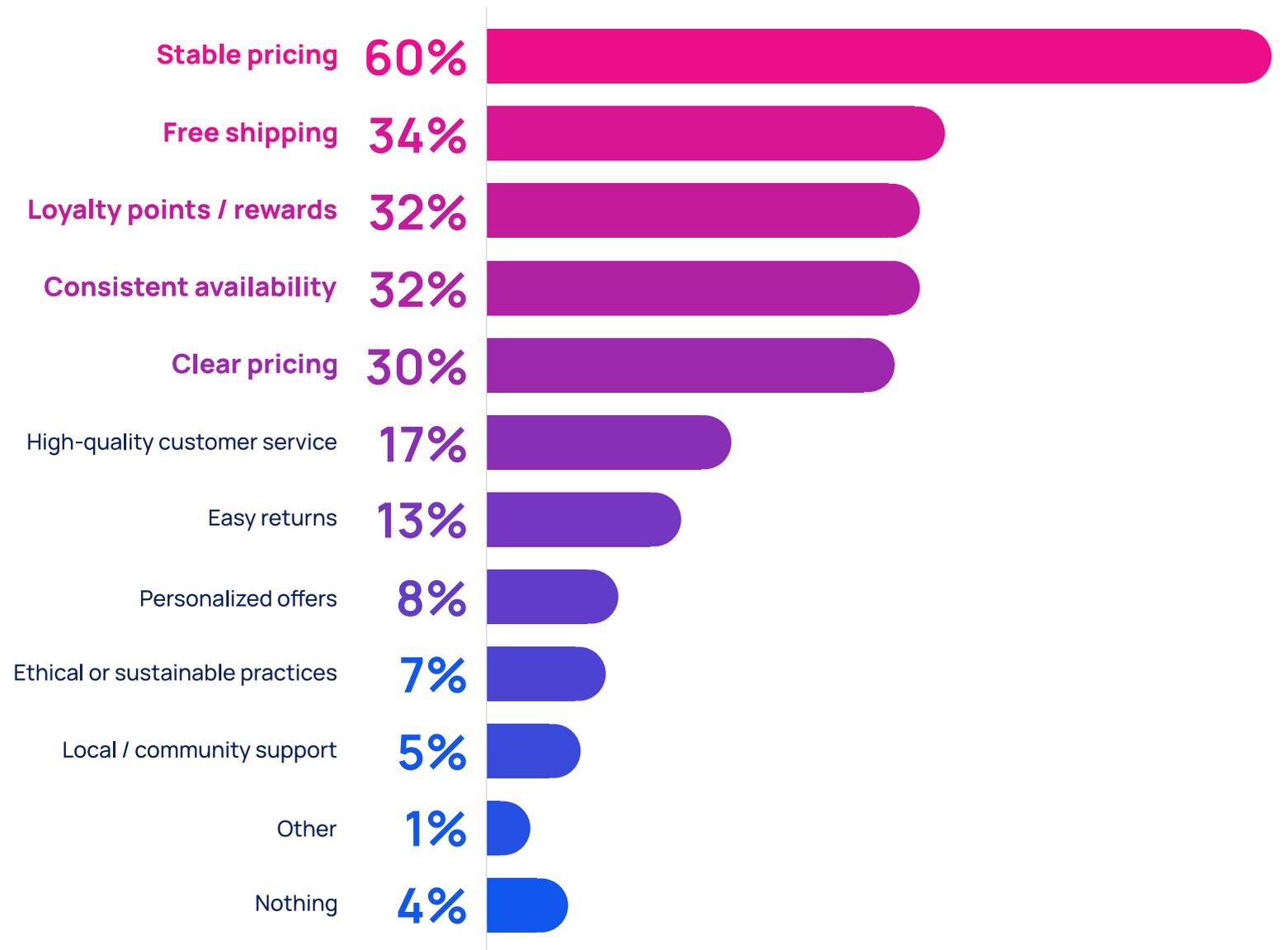
Predictably, when times get tough, the #1 thing that keeps shoppers around is stable pricing, with 60% saying that's the top reason they'll stay loyal to a brand or retailer.

After that, the biggest factors are free shipping (34%), loyalty points or rewards (32%), and making sure products are actually in stock (32%). Clear and upfront pricing also matters (30%).

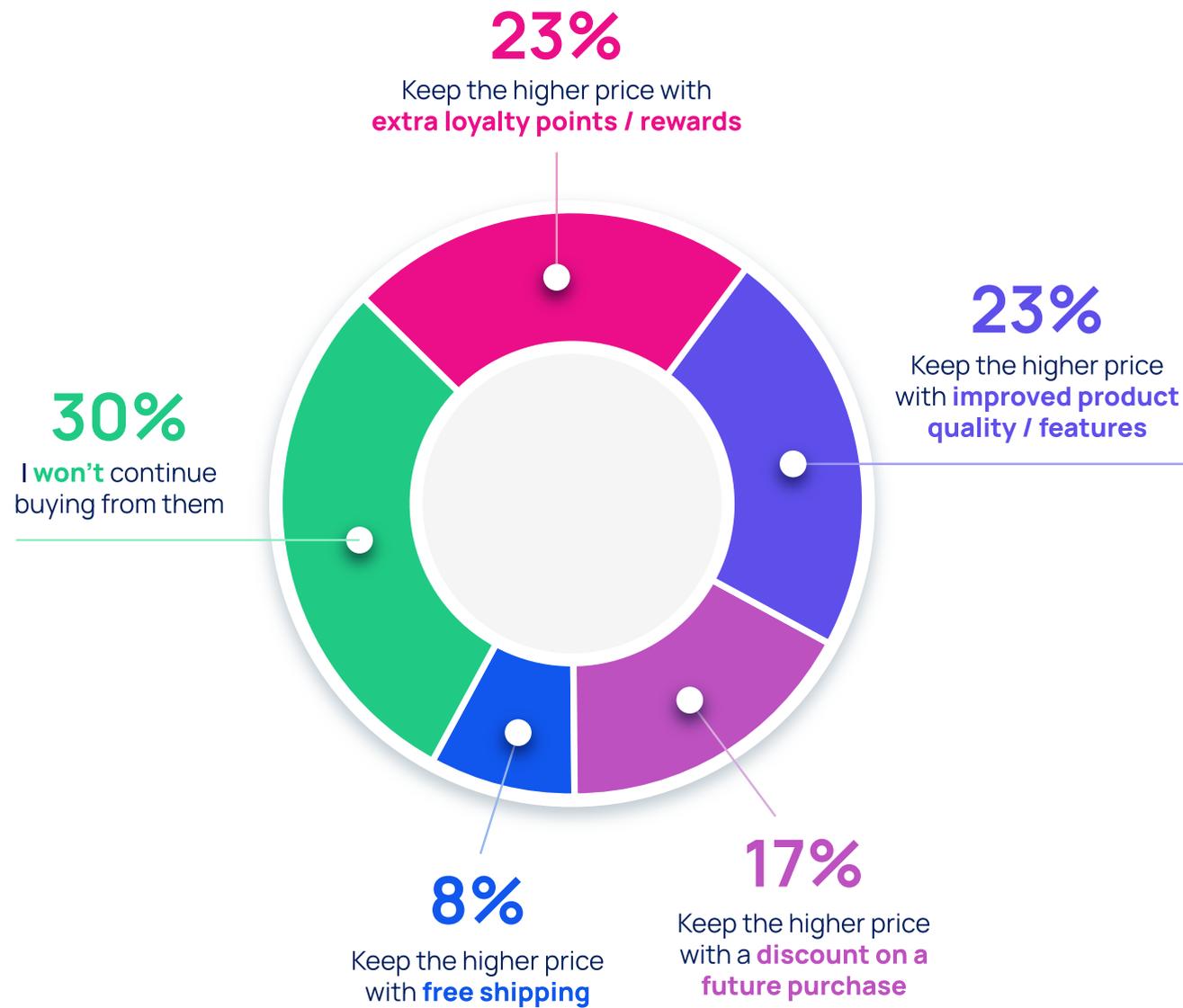
### QUICK TAKEAWAY

**Price is king, but it's not the only thing.** Shoppers might zero in on the price tag, but they also weigh perks like free shipping and loyalty rewards when deciding if buying from you feels worth it. Don't ignore these other factors that influence an overall sense of value to shoppers.

In times of economic uncertainty, which **factors** are most likely to **keep you loyal** to a brand or retailer?



## What would **keep you buying** from a preferred brand / retailer through a price hike?



## What Makes Shoppers Stick Through Price Hikes

Shoppers aren't shy about walking away when things get more expensive, unless you help them save elsewhere. While 30% say flat out they wouldn't stick around if their go-to brand or retailer raised prices, others are open to staying based on what they get in return. About a quarter (23%) say they'd be more open if higher prices came with extra loyalty points or improved product quality. Another 17% would keep buying if it meant a discount on a future purchase, while 8% would stick it out for free shipping.

### QUICK TAKEAWAY

**If you can't hold prices steady, sweeten the deal.** Boost loyalty rewards, invest in quality, or give shoppers something back for their loyalty. To really find what works, invest in tools that help you measure customer sentiment on what's most important to them.

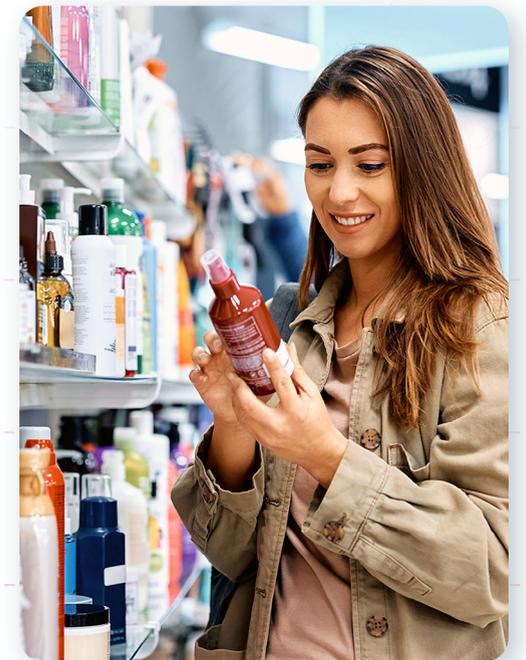
# How Loyalty Looks Across Categories and Price Bumps

In the midst of price hikes, groceries top the list when it comes to loyalty, with 46% of men and 40% of women saying they'll keep buying from their go-to grocery brand or retailer. This isn't surprising as a leading category, given that groceries are not only essentials, but people might also be limited to the selection of available stores in their regions.

Beyond groceries, gender differences begin to stand out. Women are more loyal to personal care and beauty (40% vs. 21%) and health and wellness (31% vs. 23%), while men show stronger loyalty in electronics and appliances (28% vs. 17%) and apparel and accessories (25% vs. 16%). Pet care and household cleaning land in the middle, with both genders showing similar (though smaller) levels of loyalty.

# 28%

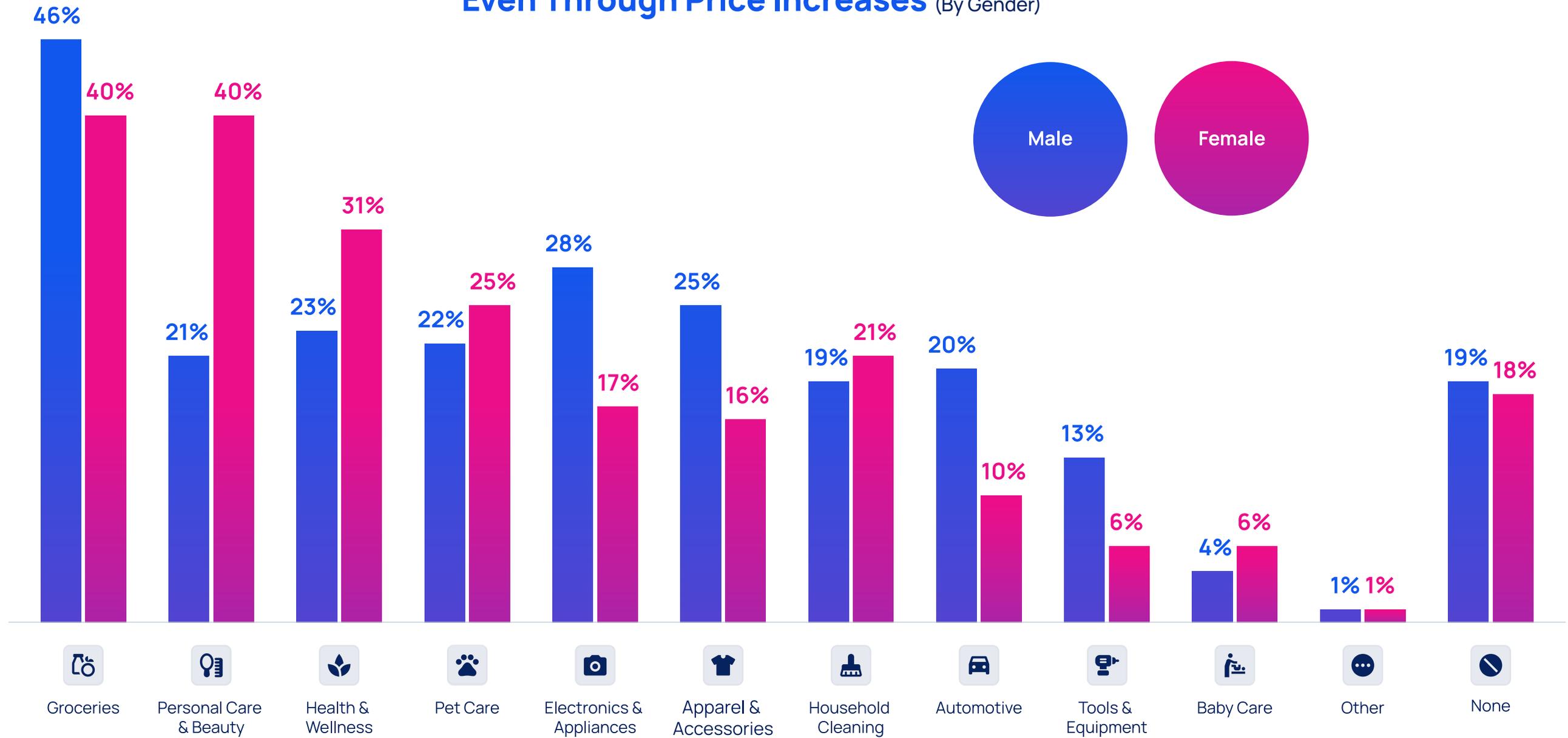
of **men** will keep buying from their preferred **electronics and appliance** brands despite higher prices



# 40%

of **women** will stick with their favorite **personal care and beauty** products, even as prices climb

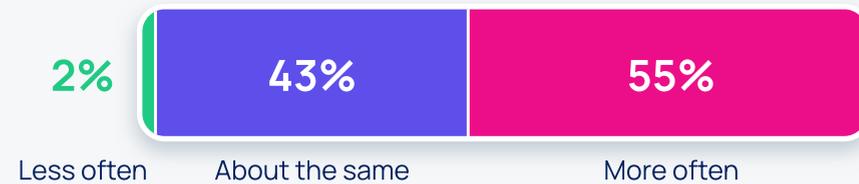
## Product Categories Where Shoppers **Stay Loyal** to a Brand / Retailer, Even Through Price Increases (By Gender)



87%

of shoppers will likely **switch** to a retailer's **store or generic brand** if their preferred brand becomes more expensive

How **often** are you buying cheaper or store / generic brands now compared to last year?



How likely are you to **switch** to a retailer's store / generic brand if your preferred brand becomes more expensive?



How would you rate the **value** offered by store / generic brands today compared to national brands?



## Store Brands Step Into the Spotlight

In today's economy, people are turning to value. Store brands are filling up shopping carts, with more than half of consumers (55%) buying lower-cost or store/generic brands more often now than last year. And if their go-to brand hikes prices, then 87% are ready to switch to a retailer's store brand instead.

What's more, shoppers don't see these as a downgrade. In fact, 47% believe store or generic brands offer *more* value than national brands.

### QUICK TAKEAWAY

**Retailers, lean into your store brands.** Shoppers already see the value, and they're buying in. Bolster these lines with quality, visibility, and promotion, and you'll not only capture switching shoppers but also turn them into fans.

# Conclusion

At the end of the day, price increases have impacted almost everyone, and loyalty is looking a lot more fragile than it used to. While some categories might seem a bit more resilient, the data shows that price sensitivity is universal. Brands and retailers that meet shoppers where they are today, and consistently deliver on value, will set themselves up for success.

## Key Takeaways

### **Keep costs steady if you can.**

Shoppers are very sensitive to price hikes today, so stable pricing (or at least crystal-clear pricing) goes a long way in staying in their orbit.

### **Add extra value if prices rise.**

Loyalty rewards, free shipping, future discounts, or product quality upgrades can soften the sting and help keep shoppers around. If competitors are cutting back on perks, consider leaning in as a way to stand out.

### **Don't sleep on store brands.**

With more shoppers turning to them for value, bolstering your private label or generic options could be one of the smartest plays in today's economy.

/ We Can Help

# Build a Winning Customer Experience Strategy

Deepen customer trust at every stage of the shopping journey, from browsing to post-purchase, with tools that help you:

- | Listen to your customers
- | Understand their needs, preferences, and concerns
- | Deliver meaningful experiences that resonate

We deliver reviews, ratings, and customer verbatims to help you build a deeper, more emotional connection with shoppers that will keep them coming back for more.

See how Bizrate Insights can work for you at  
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