

## A Fresh Take

Staying ahead of evolving dynamics in the marketplace and our culture

### Part 2

# A Silver Lining

Exploring the Video Viewing Habits of Adults 65+

September 2023





## Adults 65+ have expanded their definition of TV and are watching video in new ways

Comprised of a steadily growing population and high financial and emotional stability, adults 65+ represent a lucrative consumer segment for brands to engage with.

*However, they are often an overlooked opportunity by marketers.*

This piece explores the substantial role that video plays in their daily lives and how brands can effectively connect with this segment through their evolving viewing behaviors which includes an increased adoption of Connected TV and streaming platforms, especially free ad-supported streaming TV (FAST) services.

---

# A Lucrative Consumer Segment: Recapping the Value of Adults 65+

Click [here](#) to download '[A Silver Lining: Understanding the Consumer Value of Adults 65+](#)' to learn more about the mindset, lifestyle and size of this segment

# Adults 65+ were more likely to fare better emotionally than younger people during the pandemic

- ▶ Older adults tend to have much more stability in their personality, social support networks and day-to-day activities and were thus disrupted much less by the pandemic than younger people...this also shows just how important the perspective of age can be

## The impact of the pandemic on older adults



### Well-being

- ▶ They were the **least likely to report psychological stress / poor physical and mental health** (much less likely than people 16-24)
- ▶ Almost **66%** of adults 80+ say they are living their **'best life possible'** or close to it (vs. 20% of younger adults)



### Relationships

- ▶ 90% of adults 55+ were **extremely or very satisfied with their relationships** during and after the pandemic
- ▶ Three-quarters said their **happiness levels stayed the same** during Covid



### Travel

- ▶ **Multigenerational travel** is up 50%
- ▶ Nearly 40% of adults 65+ are **prioritizing traveling out of state** with more than half **visiting family or friends**



### Work

- ▶ Covid has prompted about one-third of adults to **change the age they anticipate retiring**
- ▶ Nearly 40% of older adults are planning to work **another 3-5 years before retiring**

Source: AARP, *Three Years In, How the Pandemic Has Changed Our Lives (and How It Hasn't)*, March 7, 2023.

# Although we've been in a period of economic uncertainty and inflation, most adults 65+ are not cutting back on their favorite activities because of it

% of adults 65+ who are not cutting back on the following in response to inflation



Exercise / gym memberships

95%



Buying fresh produce

91%



Making personal investments

(trading stocks, bonds, crypto, ETFs)

90%



Their # of TV streaming services

82%



Attending events

(concerts, sports games, etc.)

64%



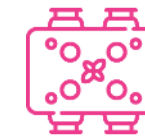
Travel

55%



Buying name brand products

50%



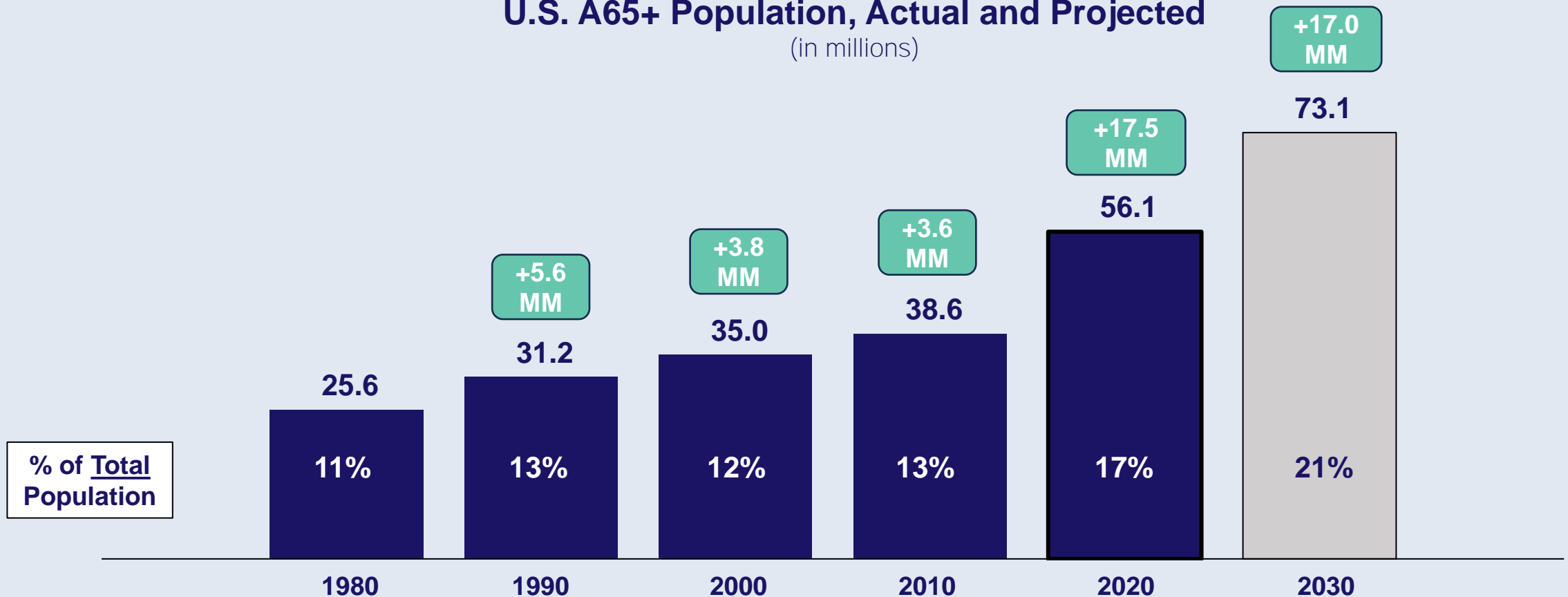
Eating out at restaurants

36%

Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Trending Topics, 2Q 2023 USA Study.

# There are nearly 60 million adults 65+ in the U.S., a population that has more than doubled in size over the last 40 years

## U.S. A65+ Population, Actual and Projected (in millions)



Source: VAB analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data, Population Estimates for 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division: Washington, DC., *Projected Age Groups and Sex Composition of the Population: Main Projections Series for the United States, 2017-2060*.

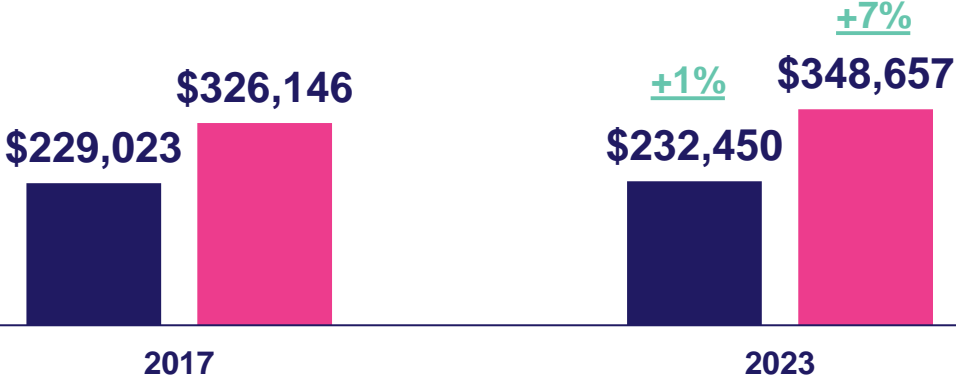
# They have immense spending power and financial stability, especially compared to younger consumers

▶ Household net worth growth for adults 65+ has **outpaced younger demographics**

## Household Net Worth by Demo 2017 vs. 2023

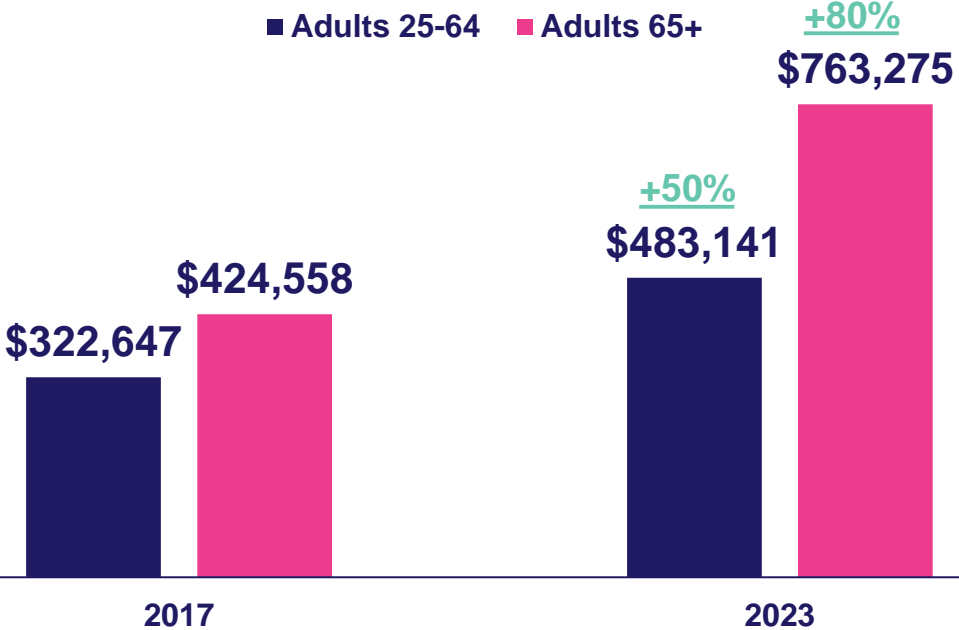
### Median HH Net Worth

■ Adults 25-64 ■ Adults 65+



### Average HH Net Worth

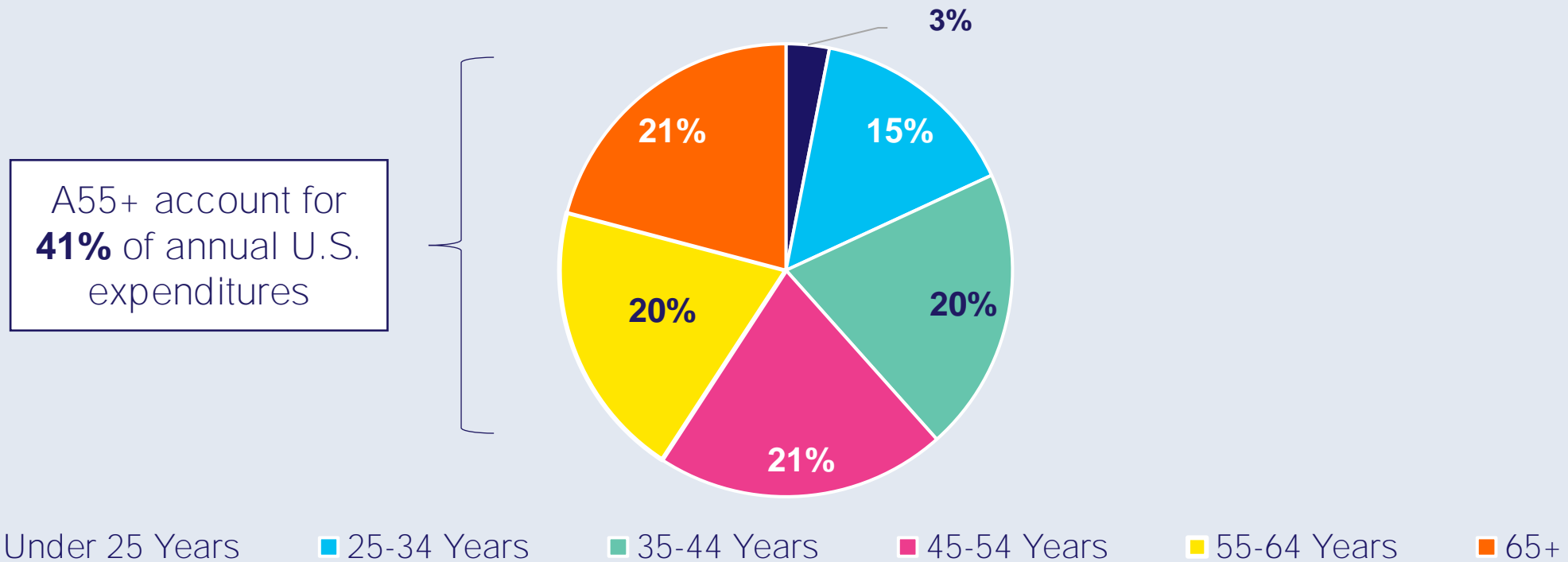
■ Adults 25-64 ■ Adults 65+



Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons USA Study, Spring 2017 & Spring 2023. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 'net worth' is the value of assets owned (cash in bank accounts, investments, retirement accounts, etc. as well as the value of any owned property) minus any liabilities owed (debt, including student loans, credit cards, mortgage, etc.).

# With increased net worth, adults 65+ are active spenders, accounting for 21% of annual total U.S. expenditures, which translates to \$1.9 trillion

% Share of Annual Aggregate Expenditures By Demo



Source: VAB analysis of *Consumer Expenditure Survey 2021* data, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, reported as of September 2022, Data represents adults 65+ due to data age group breakouts.

---

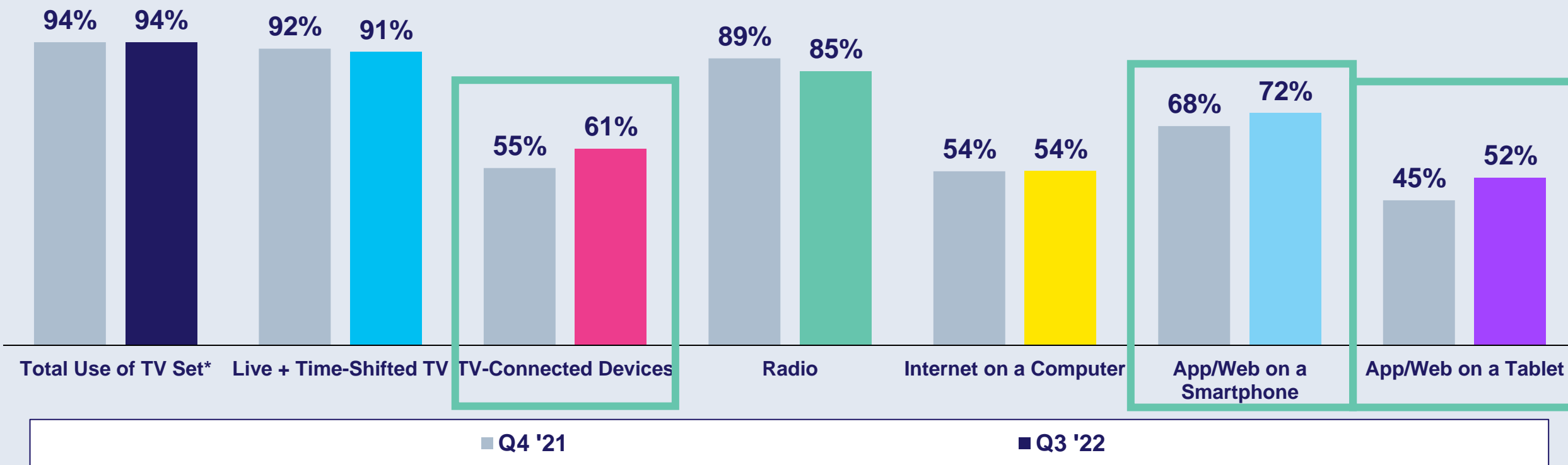
# **Their New Definition of TV:** How adults 65+ are expanding their video viewing beyond linear TV



# Adults 65+ have increased their usage of TV-connected devices and digital platforms on mobile devices

## A65+ Average Weekly Reach By Video Device

% of Users Among U.S. A65+ Population

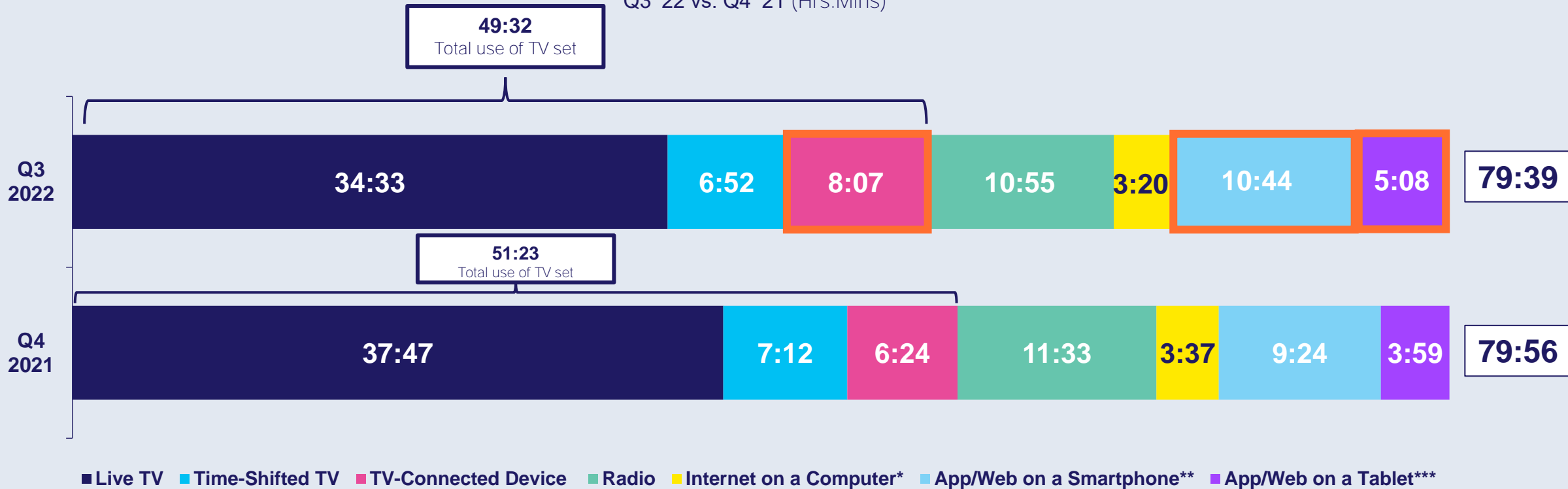


Source: VAB analysis of data from the Nielsen Audience Insights, Q3 2022: reach % of users among U.S. population; reach based on video-focused app/web use for Smartphone, Computer and Tablet. Mobile and computer-related data is not available for P2-11 or P12-17. TV-Connected Device = DVD, game console, internet connected device; Internet Connected Device = devices connected to the TV that are used to stream content such as Apple TV, Roku, Google Chromecast, Amazon Fire TV, Smartphone, Computer/Laptops, etc. (inclusive of smart TV app usage). \*Total use of TV set includes live + time-shifted TV and TV-connected devices.

# Adults 65+ spend over 11 hours each day with media - half of which is with watching content on their TV set (over seven hours per day)

## Average Weekly Time Spent With Media Per Adult 65+

Based On U.S. Population  
Q3 '22 vs. Q4 '21 (Hrs:Mins)

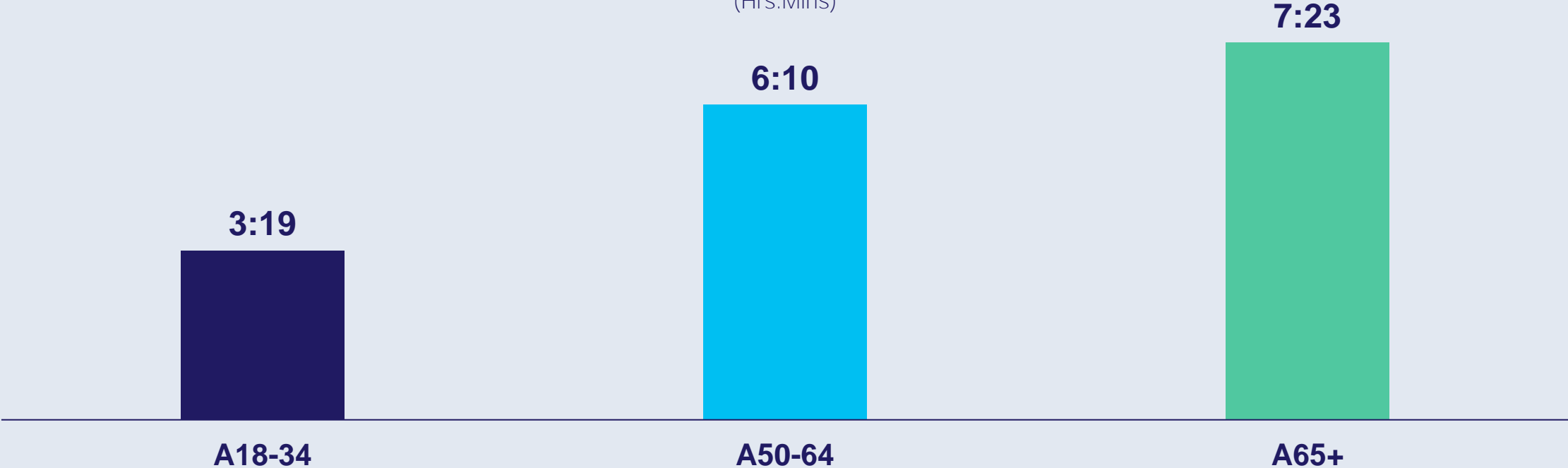


Source: VAB analysis of data from the Nielsen Audience Insights, Q4 2021 & Q3 2022. Note: Some amount of simultaneous usage may occur across devices. TV-Connected Device = DVD, game console, internet connected device; Internet Connected Device = devices connected to the TV that are used to stream content such as Apple TV, Roku, Google Chromecast, Amazon Fire TV, Smartphone, Computer/Laptops, etc. (inclusive of smart TV app usage). Note: Q4 '2021 is the most recent comparison period with available data prior to Q3 2022. \*Internet on computer inclusive of social networking on a computer. \*\*App/web on a smartphone inclusive of video focused app/web on a smartphone, streaming audio on a smartphone and social networking on a smartphone. \*\*\*App/web on a tablet inclusive of streaming audio on a tablet and social networking on a tablet.

# Adults 65+ are huge consumers of video, spending twice as much time with it across platforms as millennials

## Daily Time Spent With Video

Based On Total U.S. Population, 3Q '22  
(Hrs:Mins)

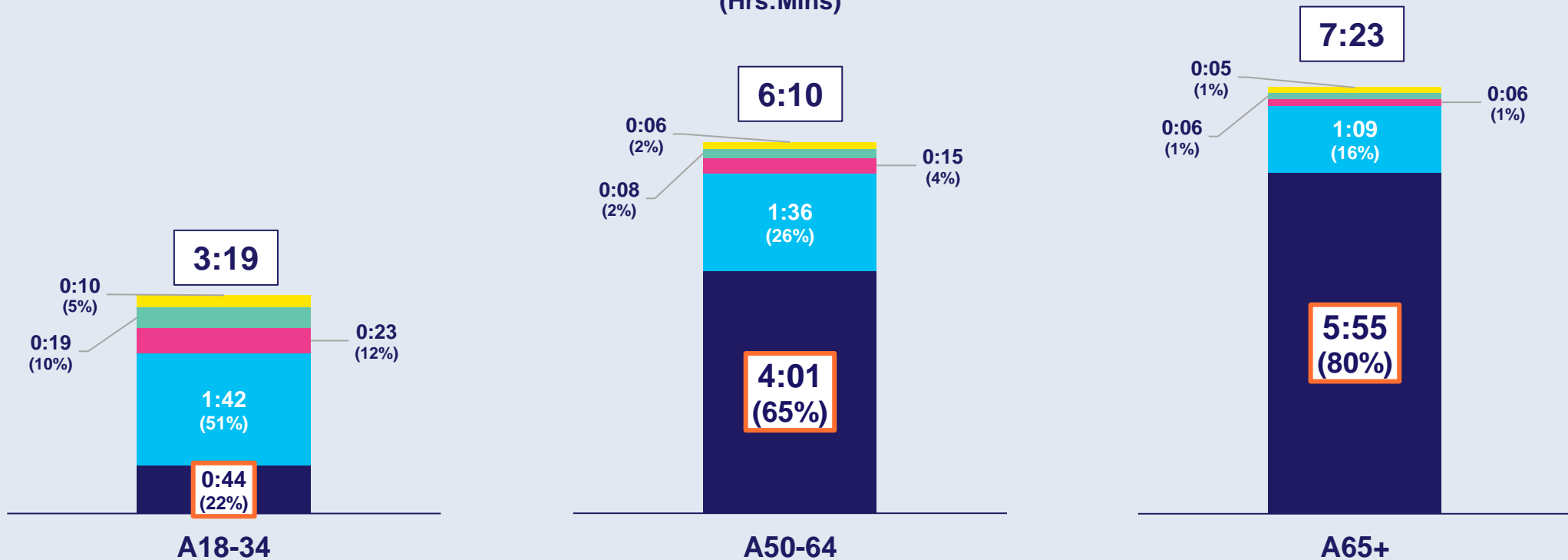


Source: VAB analysis of data from the Nielsen Audience Insights, Q3 2022. Video includes: Live + Time-Shifted TV, TV-Connected Devices, Video on a Computer, Video on a Smartphone & Video on a Tablet. TV-Connected Device = DVD, game console, internet connected device; Internet Connected Device = devices connected to the TV that are used to stream content such as Apple TV, Roku, Google Chromecast, Amazon Fire TV, Smartphone, Computer/Laptops, etc. (inclusive of smart TV app usage).

# More specifically, they are much more likely to be found consuming ad-supported linear TV

## % Share Of Average Daily Time Spent with Video By Platform

Based On Total U.S. Population, 3Q '22  
(Hrs:Mins)



■ TV (Live+Time-Shifted) ■ TV-Connected Devices ■ Video on a Computer ■ Video Focused App/Web on a Smartphone ■ Video Focused App/Web on a Tablet

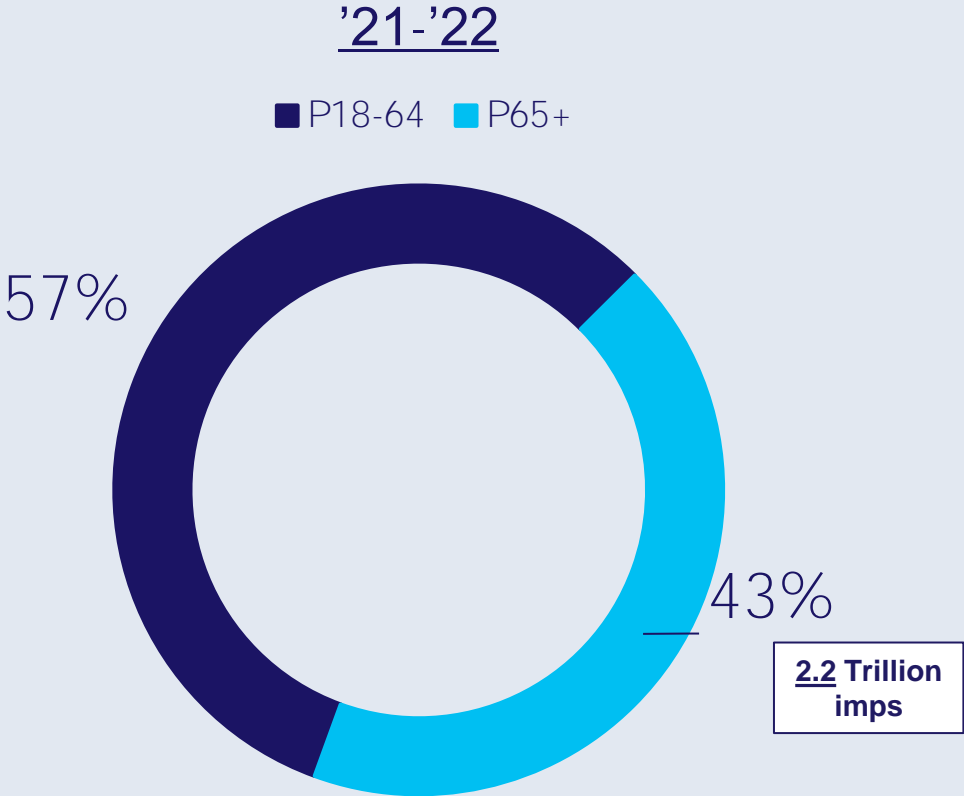
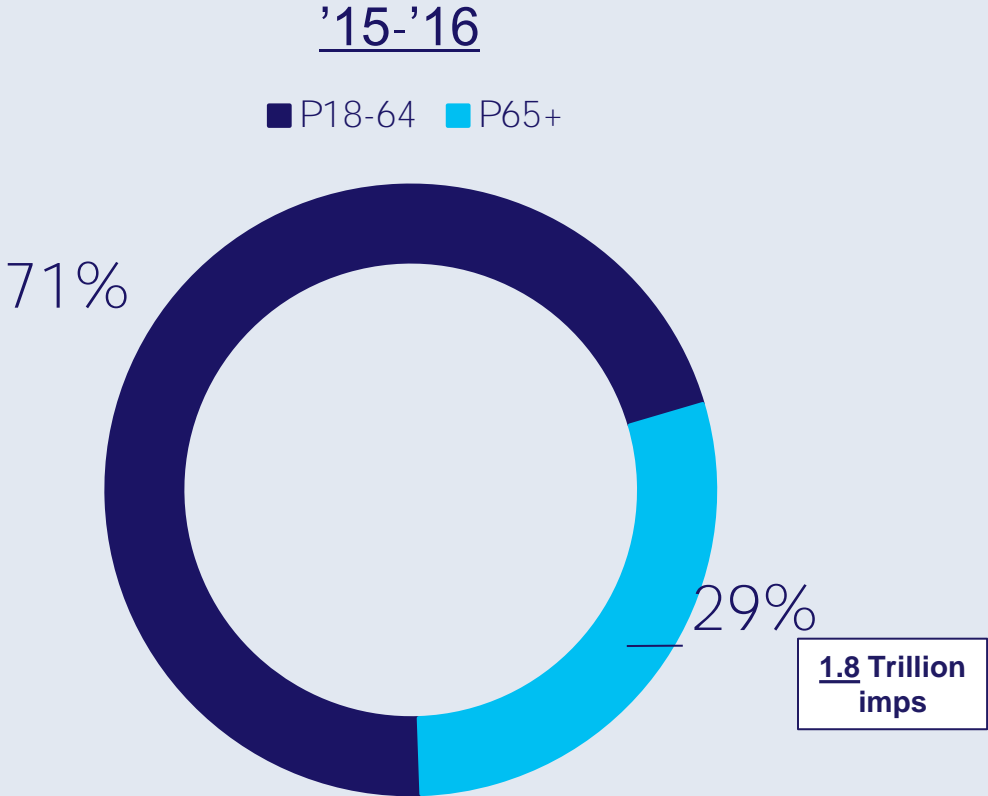
Source: VAB analysis of data from the Nielsen Audience Insights, Q3 2022. Note: Some amount of simultaneous usage may occur across devices. TV-Connected Device = DVD, game console, internet connected device; Internet Connected Device = devices connected to the TV that are used to stream content such as Apple TV, Roku, Google Chromecast, Amazon Fire TV, Smartphone, Computer/Laptops, etc. (inclusive of smart TV app usage).

# Due to an aging population and cord cutting among younger audiences, the share of national TV imps delivered against A65+ has greatly increased

▶ In fact, the number of delivered ad impressions against adults 65+ is higher than it was six years ago

## % Demo Share of National TV P18+ Equivalized IMPs

C3, Broadcast Years

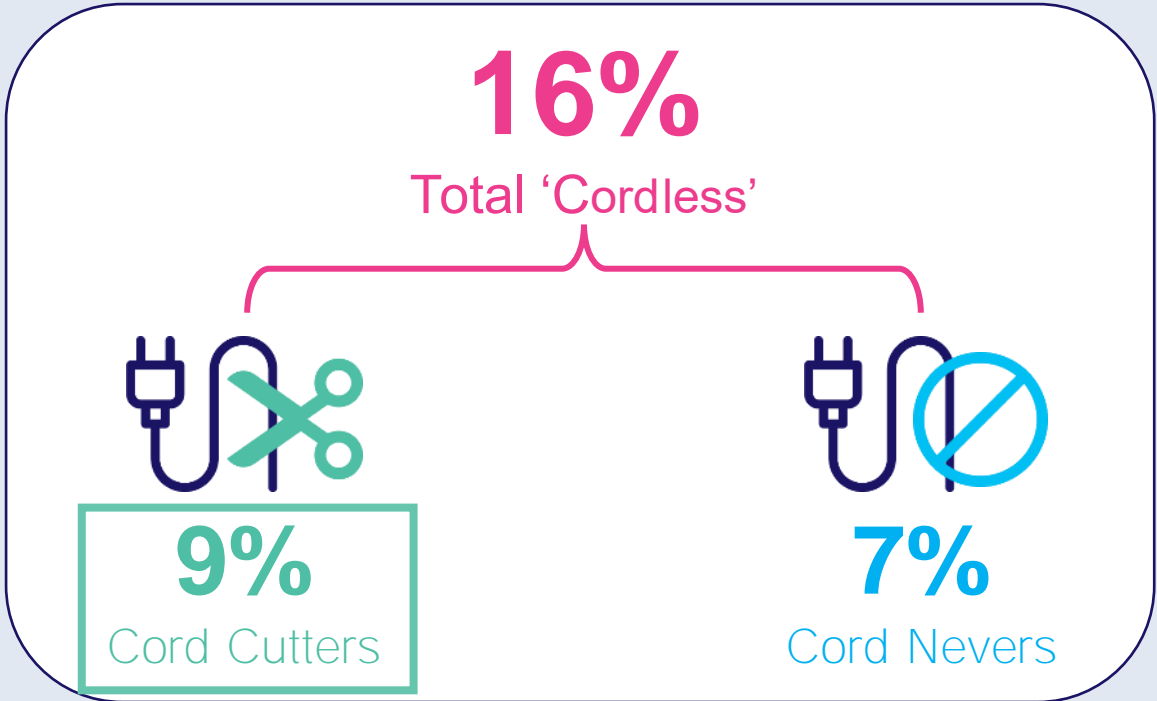


Source: VAB analysis of Nielsen Ad Intel data. National TV (broadcast TV, cable TV), Total Day, All Genres, C3, excludes Promos / PSAs / Local Avails, Broadcast Years represent: 9/21/15-9/18/16 & 9/20/21-9/18/22. Base: P18+. Note: C3 stream does not include Spanish-Language network data.

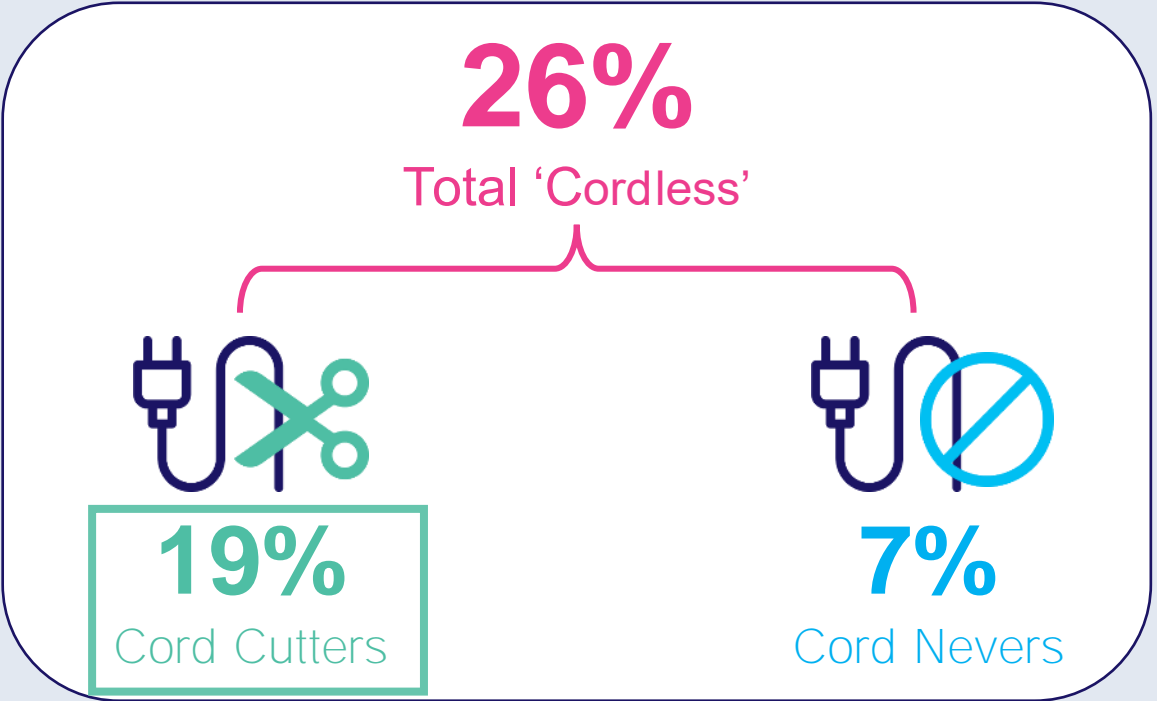
# However, cord cutting is on the rise among older audiences who are expanding into streaming services (+63% increase vs. 2020)

## % of adults 65+ who are 'Cord Cutters' or 'Cord Nevers'

February 2020



March 2023



Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study, February 2020 & March 2023, A65+. 'Cord Cutters': no pay-TV; cancelled it, 'Cord Nevers': no pay-TV; never had it.

# Even so, adults 65+ continue to view streaming as a complement to linear TV because of the value they gain from additional entertainment content



**‘I think of streaming as an addition to watching traditional TV, not a replacement’**

% of adults 65+ who agree

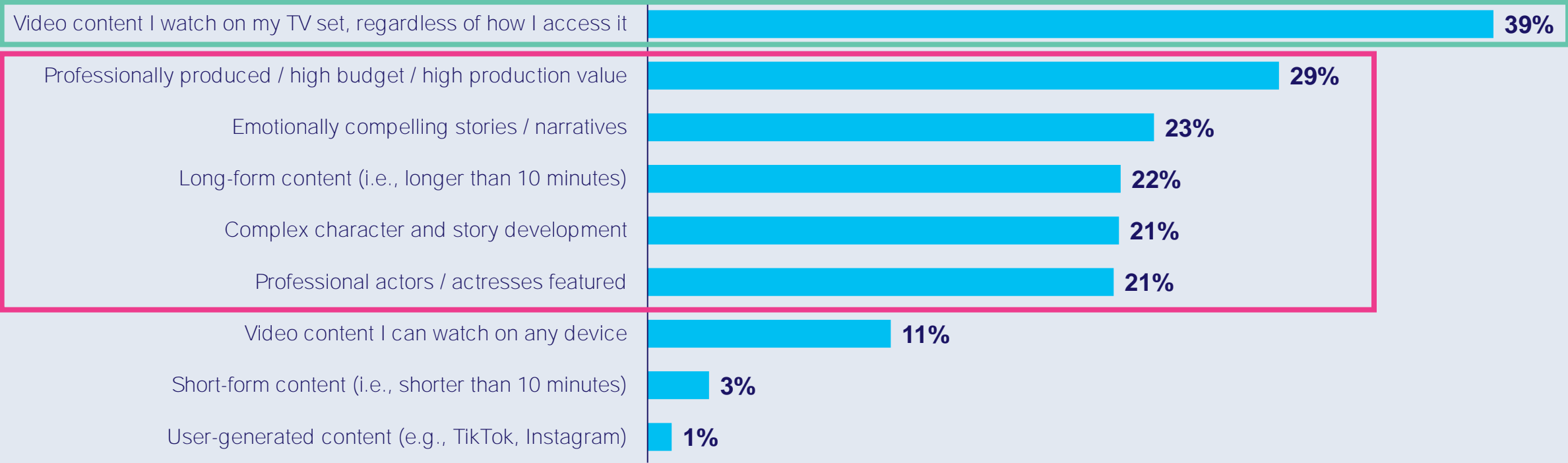
**55%**

Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study, March 2023.

# Their definition of 'TV' includes content on the TV set across distribution platforms but there are certain tenets that make it 'TV' in their eyes

## Which of the following statements are how you would define 'TV'?

% of A65+



Source: VAB custom research fielded by Hub Entertainment Research as part of the 2023 *Evolution of Video Branding* report. Data sourced from Hub's survey of 2,400 TV consumers, ages 16-74 who meet the following criteria: watch at least one hour of TV / week, have broadband access. Data collected early February 2023. Q2: Which of the following statements are how you would define 'TV'?

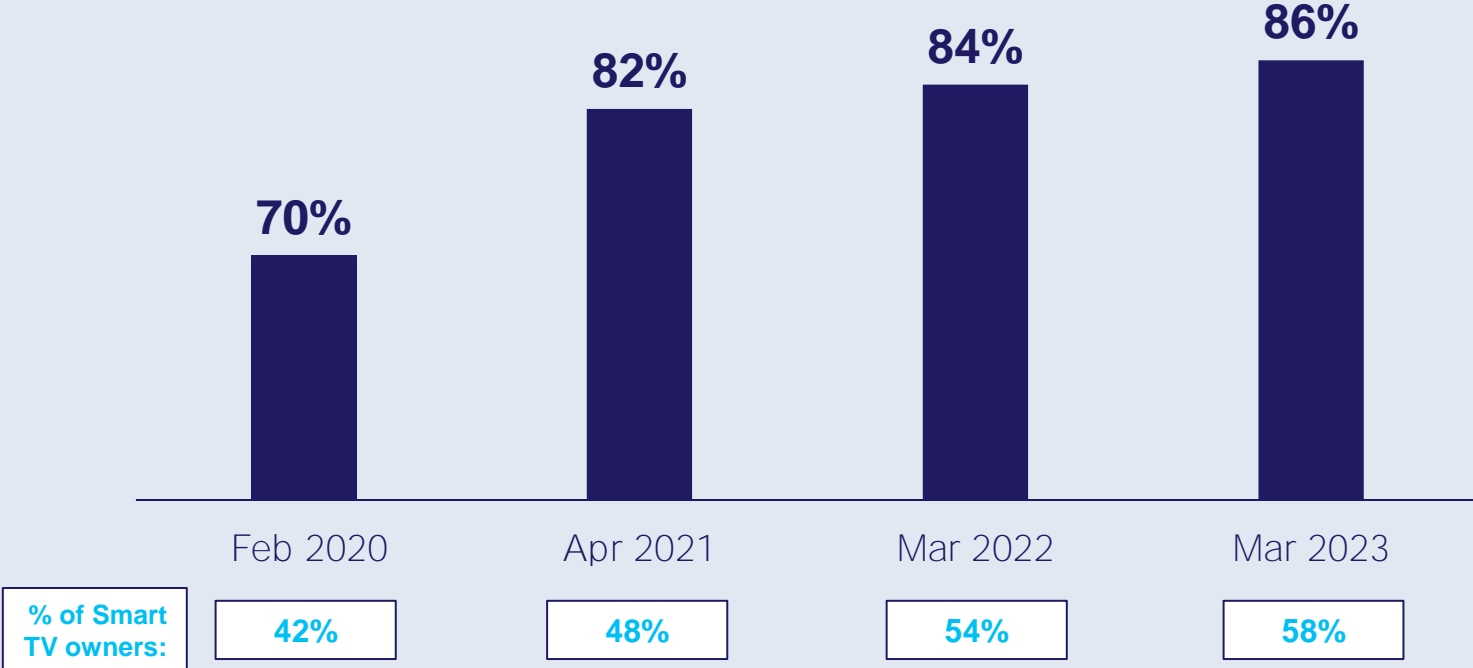
# Driven by the desire to upgrade their TVs, internet-connected TV devices are now owned by 86% of adults 65+



**86%**

of adults 65+ owned a Smart TV or Connected Device in March 2023 compared to **70%** in February 2020

% of adults 65+ who own a smart TV or connected TV device



Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study, February 2020, April 2021, March 2022 & March 2023. Base = 'Streamed in the past 12 months.' March '23: Connected device includes Air TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Apple TV, Chromecast, Roku, TiVo or TV provider's video on demand service. March '22: Connected device includes Air TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Apple TV, Chromecast, Roku, TiVo or TV provider's video on demand service. April '21: Connected device includes Air TV, Amazon Fire TV, Android TV, Apple TV, Chromecast, Roku, TiVo or TV provider's video on demand service. February '20: Connected device includes Amazon Fire TV Stick, Apple TV, Chromecast, Roku or TiVo.

# With greater access to connected TV devices, streaming among adults 65+ has been increasing with one-third now streaming daily

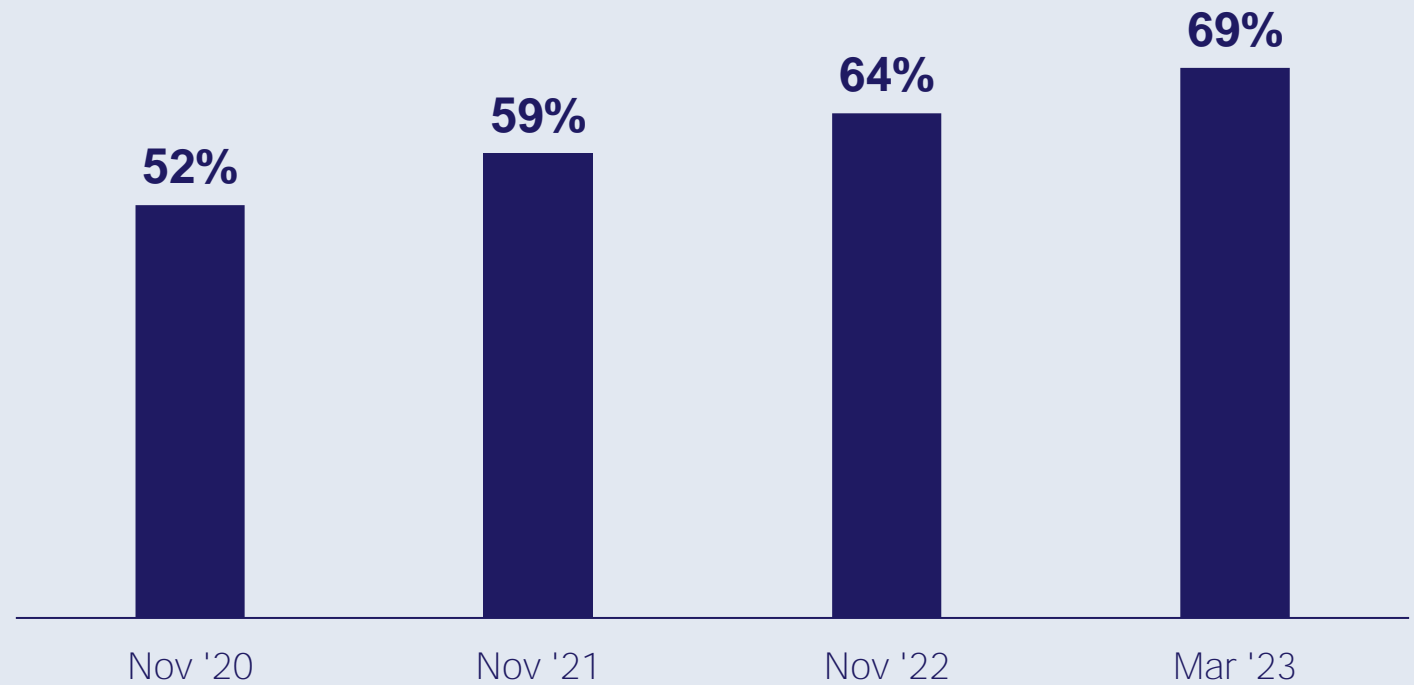


**34%**

of adults 60-69 **stream entertainment daily**

**26%**  
A70+

% of adults 65+ that have 'streamed in the past 12 months'\*



Source: AARP, *2023 Tech Trends and Adults 50+*, January 2023. Survey was conducted between September 23 – October 6, 2022 (n=2,979 adults 50+). \*VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study, November 2020, November 2021, November 2022, March 2023.

---

# Shift to Ad-Supported Streaming:

## Why adults 65+ are embracing ad-based streaming services, especially FASTs

# Streaming services appeal to older consumers because of their extensive libraries of both classic and exclusive content

## Top 5 Benefits of Streaming

% of A65+ streamers



54%

Large selection of TV shows, movies, and videos



53%

There are TV shows, movies, or videos that I want to watch that are only available through streaming



50%

It is easier to catch up on shows / watch on my own schedule



48%

It makes it easier to binge watch shows



46%

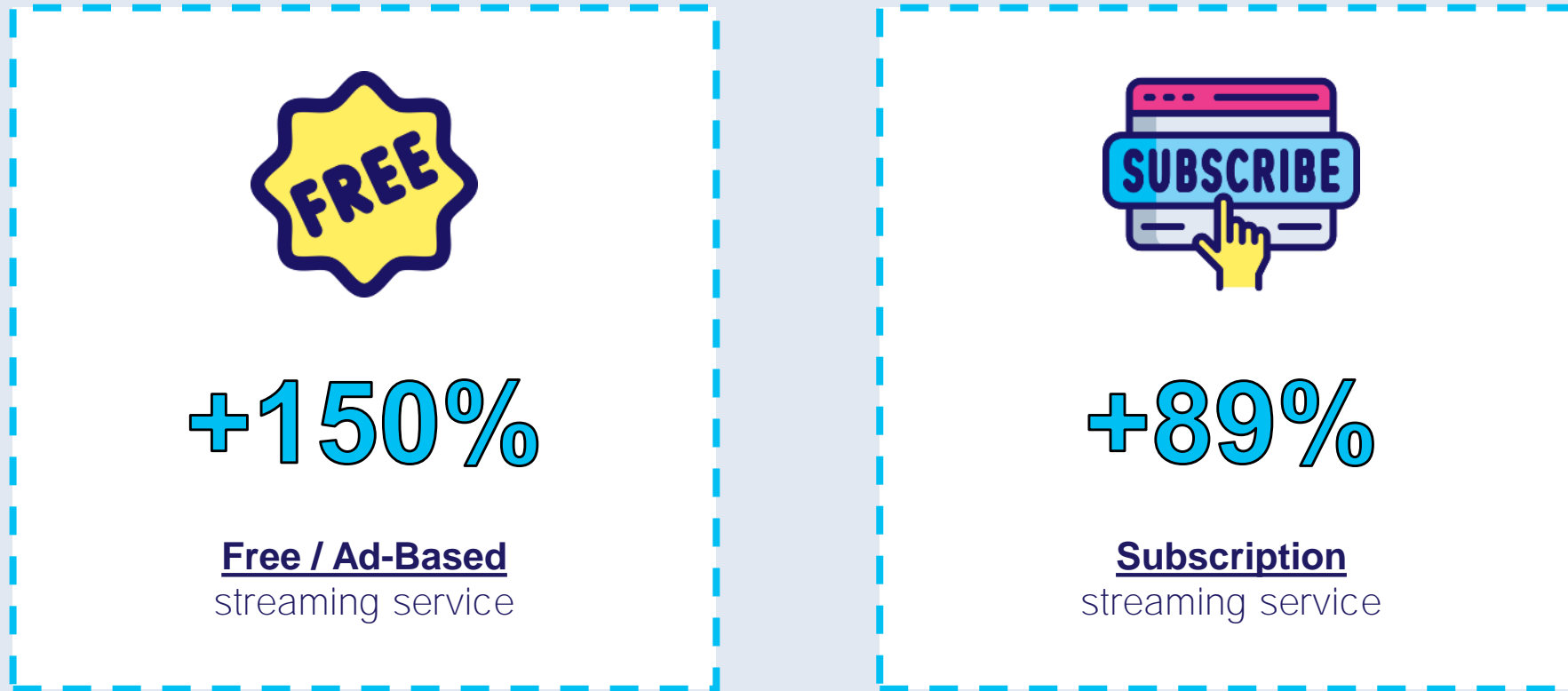
It is convenient – I can watch anywhere on any device

Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study, March 2023. Base = 'Streamed in the past 12 months.'

# Motivated by a desire for more content, older audiences are expanding into new platforms, especially free streaming services

- ▶ Their growing interest in ad-supported platforms is providing marketers **more opportunities to reach this segment**

**% change in A65+ streamers who have access to a...**  
Nov '20 vs. Mar '23



Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study, November 2020 & March 2023. Base = 'Streamed in the past 12 months'. Free Streaming services (e.g., Pluto TV, YouTube, Tubi, etc.). Subscription services may include ads or limited ad load tiers.

Specifically, older audiences enjoy the mix of contemporary, classic and news programs that free ad-supported streaming TV (FAST) services offer

### Examples of 'Contemporary' Programs

Modern TV shows that are either currently airing or aired in recent years



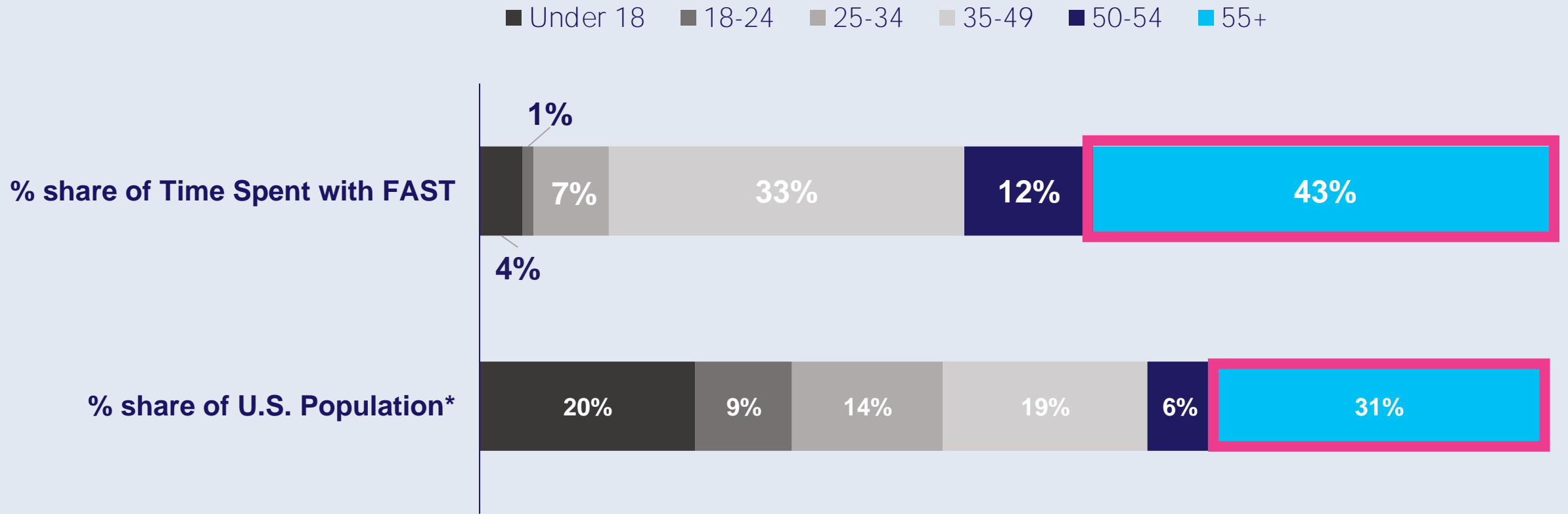
### Examples of 'Classic' Programs

Nostalgic TV shows from previous decades that hold a special place in viewers' hearts and minds



# Older viewers are spending more time with FAST than younger age groups to satisfy their content needs

% share of time spent with FAST services vs. U.S. population by age group



Source: TVision, *The State of CTV Advertising*, February 2023. \*Nielsen, *National Universe Estimates of persons in households*, 2022-2023.

# Adults 65+ are turning to free ad-supported streaming TV (FAST) services to expand the amount of content they have access to and to watch ‘classics’

Which of the following are reasons for why you have watched / signed up for a free ad-supported streaming TV service?  
 % of total respondents (rank 1-3)



Source: VAB custom research fielded by Hub Entertainment Research as part of the 2023 *Evolution of Video Branding* report. Data sourced from Hub's survey of 2,400 TV consumers, ages 16-74 who meet the following criteria: watch at least one hour of TV / week, have broadband access. Data collected early February 2023. Q2: Which of the following are reasons for why you have watched / signed up for a free ad-supported streaming TV service?

# While most adults 65+ prefer streaming free content with ads, they are much less likely to see ads that are relevant to them

▶ This current lack of ad relevancy creates a **strategic opportunity for savvy marketers** to effectively engage with this audience

% of adults 65+ streamers who agree with the following statements



61%

**'I prefer streaming free video content with ads/commercials** instead of paying for a subscription without ads / commercials'



29%

**'The ads / commercials I see on streaming services I use are relevant to me'**

Source: VAB analysis of MRI-Simmons Cord Evolution Study, March, 2023. Base = 'Streamed in the past 12 months.'

# Key Marketer Takeaways

- ▶ With the TV set as their centerpiece, video plays a key role in the lives of adults 65+ and they have expanded their definition of TV as they access and explore new and classic content across distribution platforms
- ▶ Brands can specifically reach an engaged, and lucrative, older audience through free ad-supported streaming TV (FAST), since they spend more time with these services than any other consumer demographic

# Creators

## Jason Wiese

SVP, Director of Strategic Insights  
jasonw@thevab.com

## Leah Montner-Dixon

Director, Audience & Behavioral Insights  
leahm@thevab.com

## Karolina Guillen

Insights Manager  
karolinag@thevab.com

# Discover more

Looking for more data, insights and takeaways?  
Check out this related VAB content



We are committed to providing marketers with the data and insights they need to develop thoughtful, inclusive campaigns & strategies. To find out more on the unique media consumption behaviors and cultural trends of diverse consumers, visit the VAB's [\*\*DEIB Marketing Resources Center.\*\*](#)



**A Silver Lining**  
Understanding the Consumer Value of Adults 65+



**The Secret of My Success**  
Examining The Winning Marketing Strategy That's Fueling High-Growth DTC Brands



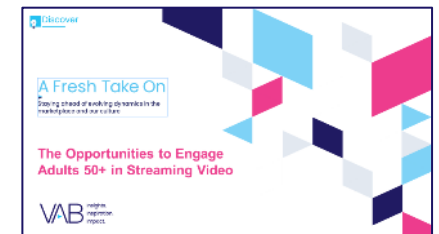
**Audience Migration in Context**  
Leveraging Population Shifts To Unlock \$4 Trillion In Buying Power



**Delayed Adulthood**  
How Younger & Older Generations Are Achieving 'Life Milestones' at Their Own Pace



**The FAST and the Curious**  
What is Free Ad-Supported Streaming TV (FAST)?



**The Opportunities to Engage Adults 50+ in Streaming Video**

**VAB Members, brand marketers and agencies get free and immediate access to VAB's content library. Get access at [theVAB.com](https://thevab.com)**

# About VAB

VAB is an insights-driven organization that inspires marketers to reimagine their media strategies resulting in fully informed decisions.

Drawing on our marketing expertise, we **simplify** the complexities in our industry and **discover** new insights that **transform** the way marketers look at their media strategy.



We are committed to your business growth and proud to offer VAB members, brand marketers and agencies **complimentary access** to our continuously-growing Insights library. **Get immediate access at theVAB.com.**

*Curious to learn more about VAB?* Check out this [quick video](#) to see what we do and how we can help you develop business-driving marketing strategies.

