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How Consumers Decide Where to Shop

How 524 consumers make trip decisions, from retailer choice to category routing

A Knit Qualitative and Quantitative Research Report

How Consumers Decide Where to Shop

The average consumer doesn't exactly have a shortage of options when it comes to essentials shopping. Between mega-retailers like **Walmart and Amazon** and neighborhood mom-and-pop stores, consumers make a series of sometimes highly calculated and sometimes subconscious decisions about where they'll stock their households.

What factors, exactly, do people consider in those decisions?

We're not wondering about big-ticket items or luxury sales people make on special occasions; we're talking about how they choose which store to visit for the exceedingly common, replenishable goods they use in daily life. These goods are the real economy drivers, so countless brands are vying for seemingly every consumer's attention.

Knit set out to address the questions CPG brands and retailers alike have longed to have answers for:

- How do consumers decide what trip to make for their regular shopping? What parts of the shopping experience drive affinity, repeat visits, and frustration (including navigation, availability, checkout, and fulfillment)?
- How do shoppers define price and value by retailer and by category, and what do those patterns imply for how brands should position offers in different retail environments?
- To what degree do consumers plan their trips in advance, and how much of each trip is spontaneous? How do shoppers route key categories including grocery, home goods, personal care, snacks and beverages, baby, and pet?
- Which retailer-specific shelf, signage, package, search, and promotional signs do shoppers notice, respond to, or ignore?

To find these answers, Knit surveyed **524 U.S. consumers** in charge of shopping for their households. Each respondent had shopped at **Walmart, Kroger, Target, Costco, Sam's Club, Amazon (or Amazon Fresh), Aldi, or Whole Foods** in the past 60 days.

Our key findings?

01

Consumers assign **distinct roles to different retailers** and don't consider them interchangeable.

02

Many categories are highly planned, but immediate, legible value signals can break through the noise and **drive unplanned purchases.**

03

Shoppers employ a **much more complex value equation** in their minds than many brands realize, defining value as "worthiness" (a balance of quality, price, and convenience) rather than simply "cheap."

As such, these findings carry substantial strategic implications for retailers and the CPG brands that sell within them. This report explores what those distinct roles are, how shoppers plan and make trip decisions, and what brands can do to optimize their strategies accordingly.

The Fragmented Retail Landscape: Distinct Roles, Not Just Competitors

Retail strategy used to operate on a simplified premise that shoppers always seek the lowest price for a given product, and retailers compete primarily on cost efficiency and geographic proximity. This approach treats stores as interchangeable destinations — if Walmart is out of stock or too far away, the shopper would seamlessly substitute a Kroger brand, Target, or a membership-based institution like Costco.

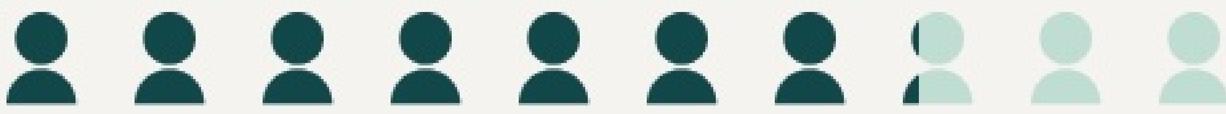
Our data reveals this isn't quite the case. The best way to understand retail influence is to distinguish reach (how many people shop at a given brand) from routine (how often they return). Influencing each retailer's reach and routine indexes are factors like price confidence, one-stop completion, proximity, smooth execution, and familiar default behavior. These metrics reveal which retailers are essential infrastructure and which are situational destinations — in other words, what kind of "mission profile" consumers assign to them.

Mission-Based Routing

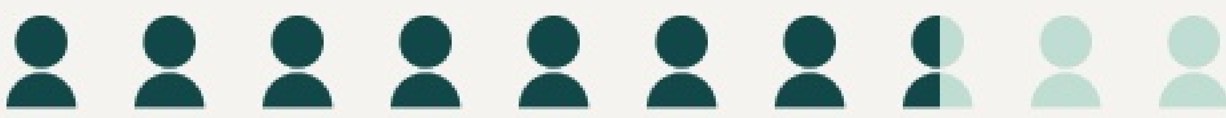
Value Cue	Walmart n=424	Target n=210	Kroger n=177	Costco Wholesale n=163	amazon fresh n=180
Prices generally good	60%	37%	51%	50%	44%
Good promotions/deals	37%	33%	46%	36%	44%
Value on bigger packs/bulk	32%	21%	34%	56%	33%
Wide assortment	45%	36%	40%	44%	42%
Trust quality	40%	42%	52%	52%	35%
Feels more premium	14%	27%	27%	30%	23%

Walmart: The Multi-Mission Workhorse

Walmart dominates both reach and routine dimensions. This isn't particularly surprising, given Walmart's status as the largest retailer in the U.S. (and the largest private-sector employer in the country).



81% **of participants**
(424 of 524) had shopped at Walmart in the previous two months



84% **of those shoppers**
visit weekly or multiple times per month

This high-frequency visitation indicates Walmart's role as a fully-fledged default store. It's the first stop for a significant portion of the population and reduces the cognitive load of decision-making.

Among recent Walmart shoppers:

42.7%
associate it with a **big stock-up trip,**

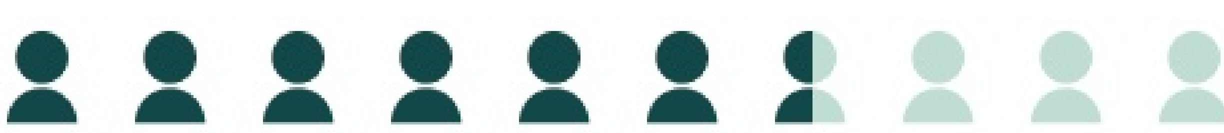
42%
associate it with a **fill-in trip** (grabbing forgotten items), and

37.3%
use it for their **planned weekly shopping.**

One shopper described their rationale: ***"They have good prices, they have good reviews, and I've never had a problem," highlighting the importance of its reliability.***

Target: The Selective, Lighter-Basket Destination

40% **of shoppers**
(210 respondents) with



65% **visiting frequently.**

Target's footprint is smaller than Walmart's but more concentrated among demographics seeking a slightly elevated mass-retail experience. Target's distinct role skews toward lighter, more discretionary trips:

39.5%
associate it with **fill-in trips,**

38.6%
associate it with **quick convenience trips,** and

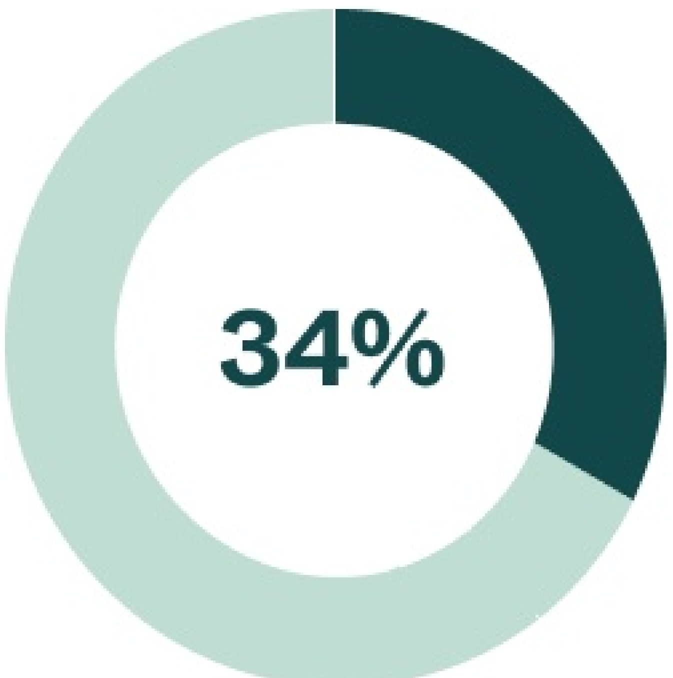
34.3%
associate it with **treat or special-item trips.**

Target is rarely consumers' go-to destination for serious groceries. Instead, it's where shoppers go for home goods, clothing, beauty, and occasional food items. **The "treat" aspect is crucial:** Target shoppers often feel they are indulging in a better experience, so smaller basket sizes make sense.

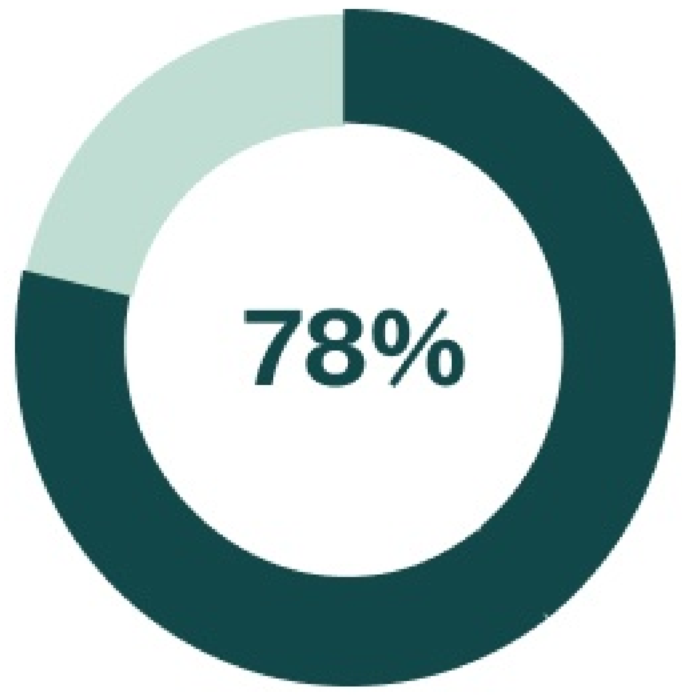
Kroger: The Classic Grocer

Kroger (with a reach of 34% and a routine use of a whopping 78%) remains what people associate most with a "classic" grocery store.

Kroger with a reach of



and a routine use of a whopping



remains what people associate most with a **"classic"** grocery store.

Respondents primarily associate it with big stock-up trips, far ahead of weekly shops **24.5%** and fill-ins **22.1%**

For Kroger shoppers, the store is the primary source of sustenance and is by far the most promotion-driven retailer of the options tracked.

One Kroger shopper expressed it felt **"Really satisfying at the end to look at my receipt total and then see how much I saved through sales and coupons,"** underscoring the emotional reward of smart shopping.

Costco: For the Big Baskets

Costco reaches	Costco reaches
31% **of shoppers** (163 respondents)	**53%** Lower than all other retailers

Costco reaches **31% of shoppers (163 respondents).**

However, its frequency is notably **lower than all other retailers at 53%**

but this is by the company's own design: **fewer visits but larger baskets. Costco is a periodic event for bulk stocking rather than a regular habit.**

The economic efficiency of getting more for less through scale is an emotional payoff in itself. Consumers speak fondly of Costco and joke about how it "tells you what you need" more than any other retailer in this list. Costco's mission, therefore, requires a different store layout, membership model, and product sizing strategy that stoke this narrative.

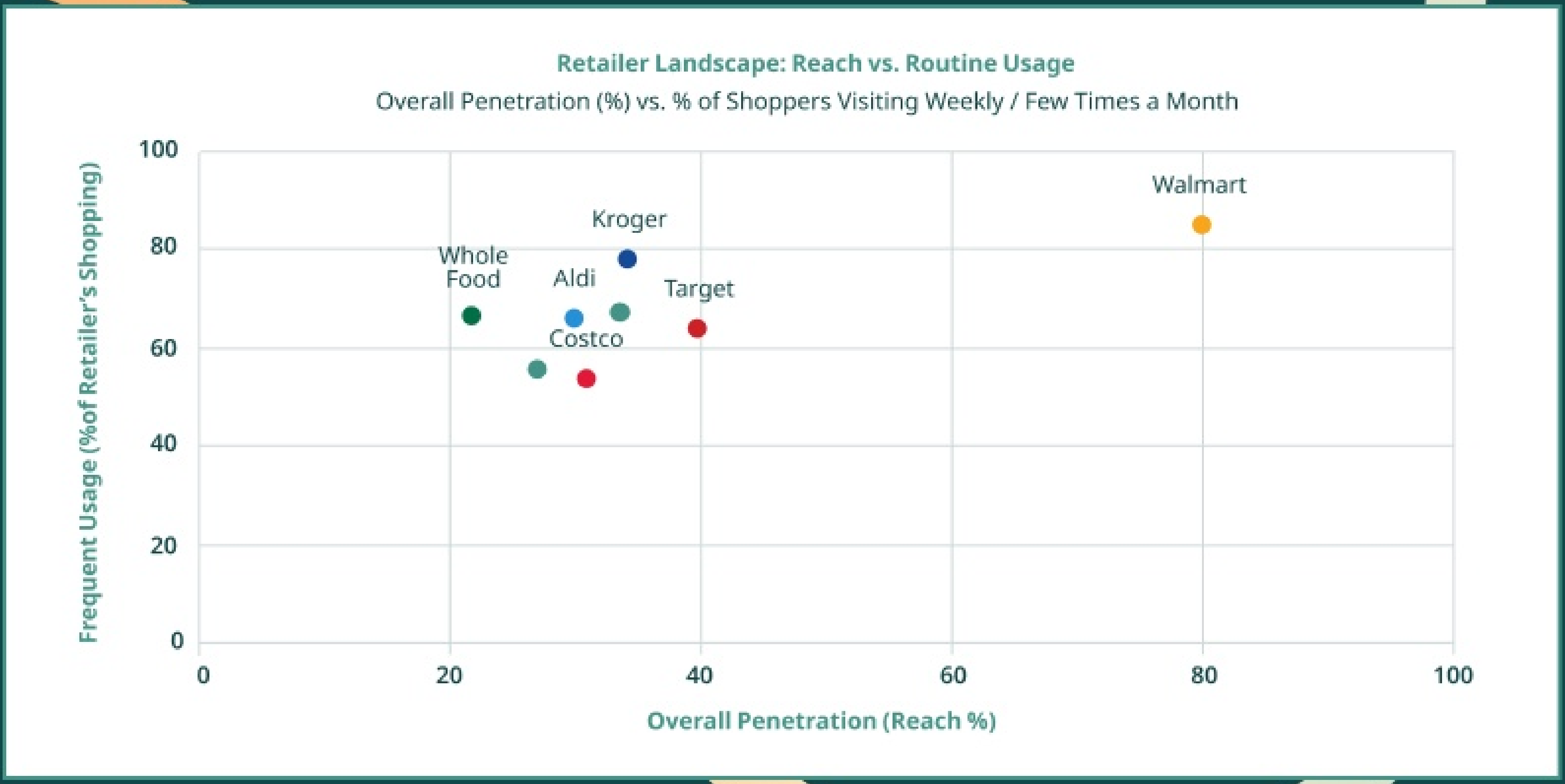
Amazon: The Fulfillment-First Platform

34% reach (180 respondents)	**67%** routine-use profile.	**45%** associate it with delivery, pickup, or ship-to-home orders.

Amazon's reach sits at approximately **34% (180 respondents) with a 67% routine-use profile.** Unsurprisingly, Amazon stands apart as the only retailer whose primary mission is channel-based rather than category-based: **45.6% of recent Amazon shoppers associate it with delivery, pickup, or ship-to-home orders.**

Amazon competes on wide assortment and logistical convenience, not aisle experience. For Amazon, the **"store"** is the app and delivery truck.

Aldi, Sam's Club, and Whole Foods



These retailers occupy more specialized niches.

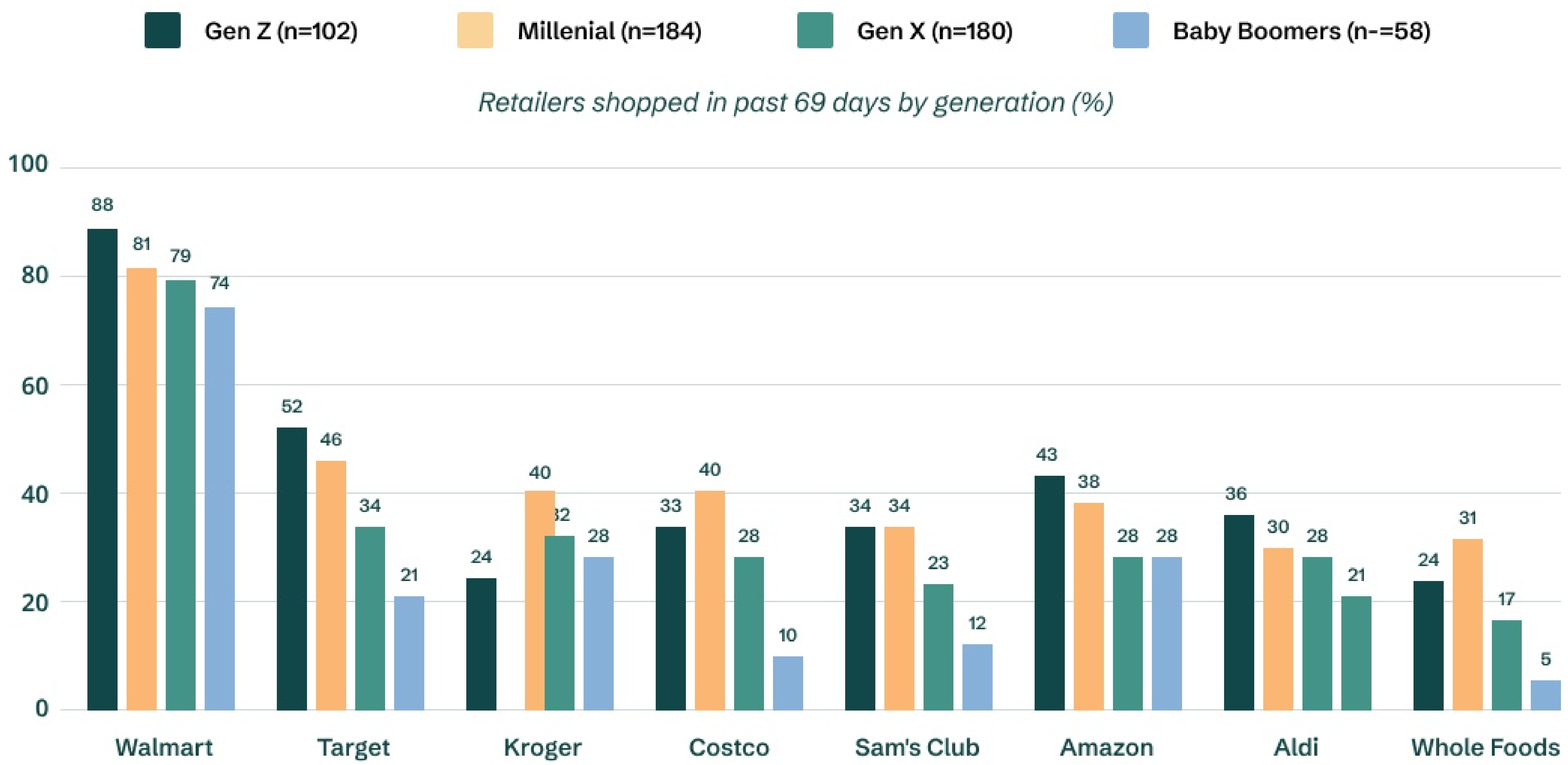
Aldi (30% reach) appeals to the strictly budget-conscious; **Sam's Club (28%) mirrors Costco's bulk model; and Whole Foods (22%)** serves the premium and health-conscious segments.

What This Means

Reach does not equal dominance. **Walmart's power** comes from the combination of both massive reach and high frequency. Competitors cannot win by simply trying to increase their footfall to Walmart levels; they must deepen engagement with their specific demographic and psychographic niches.

Generational and Demographic Divides

Retailer preference shifts dramatically across generational lines and household compositions.



Gen Z: The Pragmatists

Gen Z shoppers (ages ~18-27 in this study) display a unique relationship with retail. They are, interestingly, more likely than **Baby Boomers and Gen X** to have **shopped at Walmart in the past 60 days.** Contrary to stereotypes of **Gen Z rejecting big-box retailers,** the participants of this study turn to Walmart for its reputation for deals and quick convenience.

However, **Gen Z and Millennials** are significantly more likely to **shop at Target.** This suggests an intriguing duality in **Gen Z behavior: Walmart is for efficiency, but Target is for lifestyle and discovery.** Younger generations are optimizing retail for different purposes rather than abandoning it outright.

Family Dynamics and Bulk Buying

Household composition strongly predicts retailer choice. Families with children under 18 are significantly more likely to **shop at Target, Costco, Sam's Club, and Whole Foods** compared to singles or partners without children.

Costco and Sam's Club skew toward family-building cohorts, reflecting the need for bulk economics and pantry-stocking missions.

Whole Foods also attracts families, likely driven by health-conscious parenting and willingness to pay a premium for perceived quality.

Singles, on the other hand, shop more habitually (25.8% operate on "mostly habit or autopilot") and are less likely to make large-scale trips.

Income and Value Perception

Naturally, income also wields a strong influence**. Walmart is the strongest in lower-income brackets ($10k-$49k annually)** where price sensitivity is highest. As income rises, consumers tend to opt for Costco, Whole Foods, and Target.

In-Category Dynamics

A retailer's general market share, however, does not directly translate to category leadership. Shopper behavior shifts significantly depending on what they're buying.

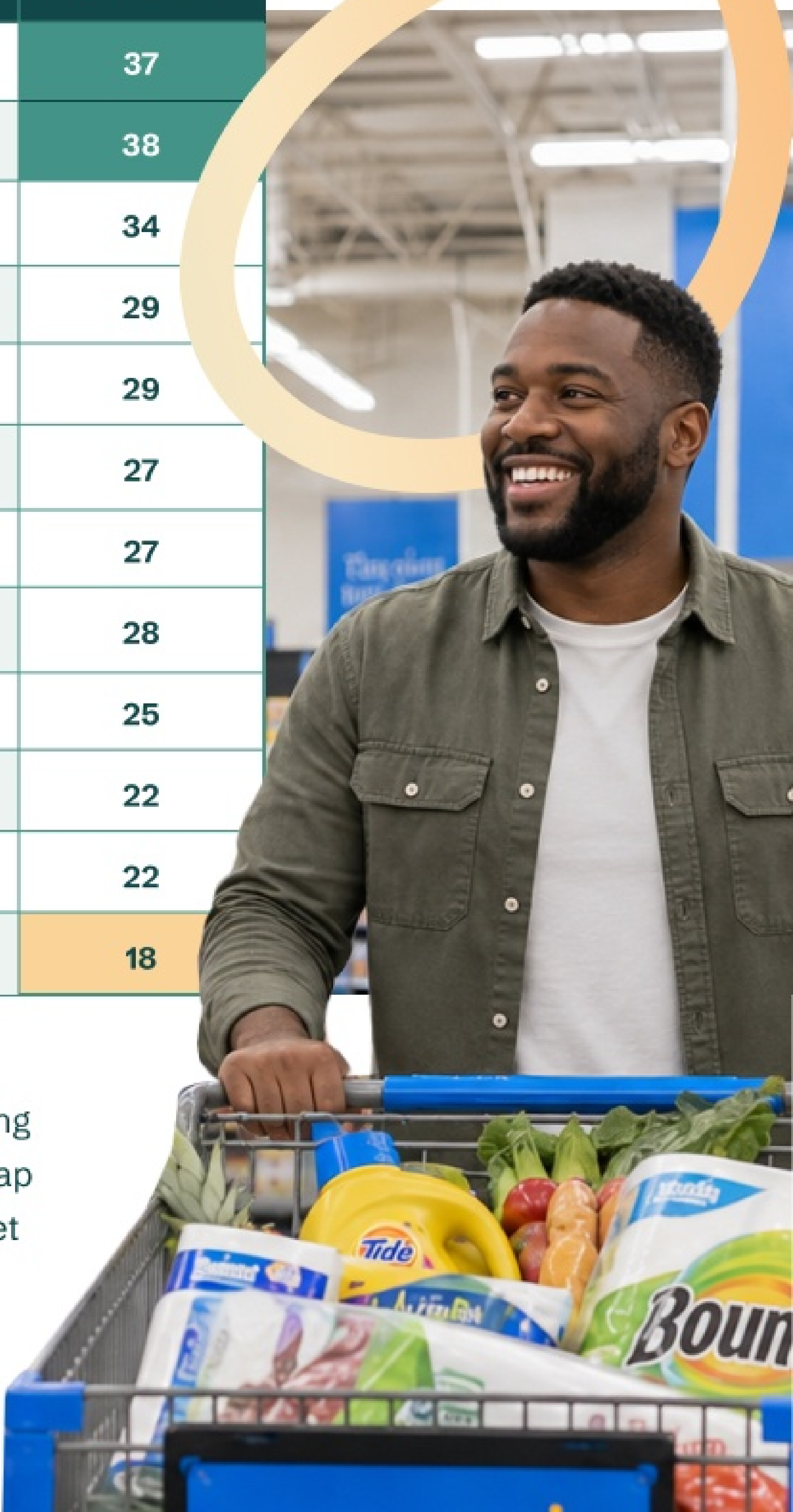
Our study reveals two distinct battlegrounds: against Walmart's hegemony, which requires acting defensively to retain customers; and for contestable frontiers, where fragmentation leaves openings for challengers. Understanding these distinctions is vital for retailers optimizing shelf space and CPG brands allocating media spend.

There's also the question of how much shoppers plan their trips in advance. What do they decide to buy before arriving, and where can the shelf win them over with deal-driven impulses?

The Walmart Hegemony

Walmart leads usual retail choice in all **12 measured categories,** which are:
Pantry staples lock in tightest; produce and functional foods stay contestable

Category	#1 Retailer	#1 Share	#2 Retailer	#2 Share	Lead Gap
Baking basics	Walmart	52%	Kroger	14%	37
Pet food & supplies	Walmart	51%	Walmart	13%	38
Sauce & condiments	Walmart	47%	Kroger	13%	34
RTD beverages	Walmart	46%	Kroger	17%	29
Frozen meals	Walmart	46%	Kroger	17%	29
Baby & toddler	Walmart	47%	Target	19%	27
Dairy	Walmart	44%	Kroger	17%	27
Shelf-stable snacks	Walmart	42%	Kroger	14%	28
Breakfast items	Walmart	42%	Kroger	17%	25
Proteins	Walmart	40%	Kroger	18%	22
Functional foods	Walmart	36%	Costco	14%	22
Fresh produce	Walmart	39%	Kroger	21%	18



You'll see that Walmart's dominance is near-total, creating high barriers to entry for competitors. For example, it commands over **50% of usual retailer** share in both baking and pet food and supplies, dwarfing the second-highest shareholders. This massive gap indicates that people who use Walmart as a pantry-stocking hub (where baking and pet supplies often reside in-home) view it as a reliable source for routine replenishment thanks to its convenience and price consistency.

What This Means for Brands

Fighting for share against Walmart in these categories is expensive and often inefficient. Instead, brands should prioritize defensive strategies:

Secure prime placement	Ensure availability in high-traffic aisles and endcaps within Walmart.
Price-pack architecture	Offer value packs that reinforce Walmart's "everyday low price" narrative.
Digital integration	Leverage Walmart's app and scan-and-go features to take advantage of habitual shoppers' list-building processes.

Attempting to pull these shoppers to Target or Kroger requires a compelling counter-narrative (such as superior quality or exclusive varieties) that outweighs the convenience Walmart offers.

Contestable Frontiers

That said, Walmart doesn't have every category locked down. Its margins vary, so these smaller-gap categories are where the most room for differentiation lies.

Fresh Produce

Fresh produce is the most competitive major category in our study. While Walmart still leads with **38.9% usual retailer share, it has a mere 17.9-point gap over Kroger.**

This category is the most contestable because perishable foods require trust. Shoppers are willing to travel further or pay more if they believe the produce is fresher or of higher quality. Kroger, as we've established, smartly leans into its traditional grocery reputation and local sourcing stories.

> **The Opportunity:** Challenger suppliers, brands, and retailers can win by emphasizing freshness guarantees, local partnerships, and visual merchandising that highlights ripeness and variety. Placement in Kroger or Whole Foods may have more potential to yield higher margins.

Functional Foods

Functional foods (e.g., vitamins, supplements, protein shakes, health drinks) is a rather fragmented category in terms of usual retailer share:

Walmart 36.3%	Costco Wholesale 13.9%	Kroger, Target — Tied at 11%

Why so dispersed? Because "functional foods" is an incredibly broad umbrella, so consumers have diverse motivations for purchasing them. For instance, some shoppers might get vitamins in bulk at Costco, while others prefer curated wellness selections at Whole Foods.

> **The Opportunity:** Brands can tailor assortments by retailer. Sell large, value-oriented bundles at Costco; offer trendy, lifestyle-aligned SKUs at Target and Whole Foods; and provide clinical, trust-backed options at Kroger pharmacies.

Proteins

Proteins are also relatively open. Walmart leads but faces stiff competition from Kroger and specialty meat departments. Trust in meat quality is paramount, allowing grocers with notable butcher programs to retain loyal customers despite Walmart's price advantage.

> **The Opportunity:** For retailers in contestable categories, differentiation beats discounting. Most stores can't beat Walmart on price alone, so they have to win on perceived freshness and expert curation.

The Psychology of Choice

Our study reveals that overall, trip planning is highly deliberate. However, it's not monolithic, either: advanced routing varies by category and demographic, creating pockets of vulnerability where promotions can break through.

% a Catergory is "Very Planned"		If not "Very Planned", the Second-Best Driver Is...	
Pet food & supplies	44%	Habit	23%
Proteins	44%	Habit	22%
Fresh produce	43%	Habit	22%
Dairy	42%	Habit	25%
Baby & toddler	42%	Habit	19%
Baking basics	35%	Habit	23%
Breakfast items	34%	Habit	24%
Frozen meals	34%	Deal-Driven	22%
Functional foods	34%	Deal-Driven	23%
Sauce & condiments	32%	Habit	22%
RTD beverages	30%	Habit	23%
Shelf-stable snacks	30%	Deal-Driven	25%

36.8% of the 4,036 category-routing decisions we tracked were **"very planned."** You can see in the chart above that pet food and supplies, protein, fresh produce, dairy, and baby and toddler products are the most planned for. Shoppers usually know what they need, where they get it, and build lists beforehand.
This data indicates that shoppers are less open to in-store discovery in these categories (more on protein later in this report, though).

It makes sense: these are the categories that consumers often want to research in advance or are more mindful of when it comes to health and quality. As such, pre-trip influence for these groups is vital. The more brands can show up in digital search results, retailer apps, and email newsletters before shoppers leave their homes, the more likely consumers will include them on their grocery lists.

Where Deals Win

The gap between **"very planned"** and **"mostly deal-driven"** behavior is narrower in categories like shelf-stable snacks (the most contestable category), ready-to-drink beverages, functional foods, and frozen meals. Shoppers enter the store without rigid plans here, making them more responsive to endcaps, checkout displays, temporary promotions, and switching brands if a coupon is available.

Generational Nuances

Very Planned	Convenience-Driven
29.8% of respondents described their routing as **"very planned".**	**17.2%** while conversely, they're the most **convenience-driven**

It's also noteworthy that according to our data, Gen Z is the cohort least likely to plan ahead. Only 29.8% of respondents described their routing as "very planned," while conversely, they're the most convenience-driven (17.2%).

These findings suggest that Gen Z shoppers are more susceptible to last-minute changes, mobile coupons, and proximity-based recommendations.

Retailers targeting Gen Z should optimize for speed and mobile-first engagement (e.g., scan-as-you-go).

Older cohorts rely more on established patterns and are less likely to deviate for a sale unless it involves a staple item. Traditional loyalty programs and circular mailers could prove effective here.

What CPG Brands Should Do

CPG brands would be wise to adopt a two-fold strategy:

Defend Routine (Planned Categories)

In pet food, dairy, proteins, and baby products, focus on habit reinforcement. Use reminder ads, subscription services, and consistent packaging to keep the brand top-of-mind during list building.

Attack Impulse (Deal-Driven Categories)

In snacks, RTDs, and frozen meals, invest heavily in in-store activation. Secure eye-level shelf space, negotiate prominent endcap placements, and deploy aggressive short-term promotions to capture undecided shoppers.

Inside the Trip: Friction and Flow

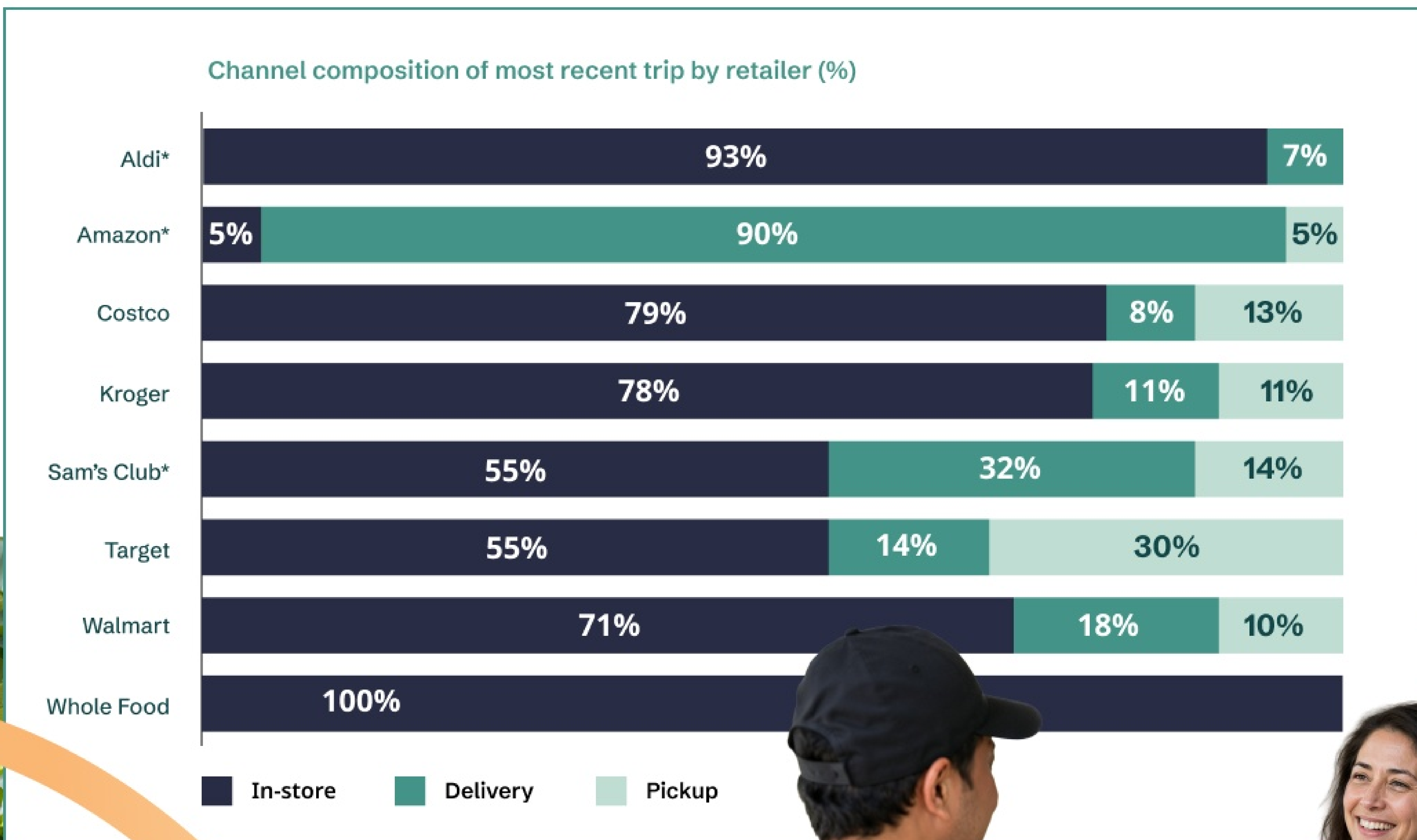
While digital channels capture headlines for their growth velocity, our data confirms that physical stores remain the dominant arena for household supply shopping. 68.9% of our respondents' most recent key trips were in-store only.

Digital fulfillment accounts for the remaining third, but specific retailers heavily influence which avenue **(delivery vs. pickup).**

For most consumers, however, the experience is tangible and environmental. Let's explore what happens during shopping trips to understand what facilitates smooth conversion and what creates friction.

Physical vs. Digital Channel Preferences

Amazon is delivery-led; Target over-indexes on pickup; big-box stays in-store



You'll notice in the graph above that in-store shopping underscores the importance of the physical retail experience. Consumers overwhelmingly value the ability to inspect products, obtain items immediately, and navigate the social or leisure aspects of household replenishment.

However, digital channels aren't just supplementary for when consumers don't feel like going in-person; they serve distinct strategic roles and align with each retailer's core competency.

Amazon, for instance, is (as expected) the undisputed leader in home delivery with almost all of its key "trips" fulfilled remotely. Notably, Amazon owns the Whole Foods brand, which consisted entirely of in-store shopping — unique amongst all the retailers we tracked.

Amazon therefore has a significant grasp on both delivery and in-store purchasing channels, trailing behind only in pickup.

Speaking of pickup, Target is the retailer that indexes the highest here. **30% of Target's key trips happened via buy-online-pickup-in-store (BOPIS).** This hybrid model appeals to shoppers who want the convenience of digital selection but the immediacy of physical retrieval, often combining the trip with other errands.

Though growing their digital offerings, traditional grocers like Kroger and Walmart remain primarily foot-traffic brands. Their digital strategies focus on enhancing the in-store trip through list-building apps, digital coupons, and inventory checks rather than replacing it.

What this means for retailers: Retailers should not force a one-size-fits-all digital strategy. Amazon would be pragmatic to optimize last-mile logistics, while Target should streamline the handoff process between order and curbside pickup. Traditional grocers should use digital tools to reduce in-store search time and increase basket size rather than competing directly on delivery speed against specialized players.

What Impedes a Trip?

Nearly half report no major frustration; named pain points are easy to picture

Friction point	% of shoppers
Nothing major frustrated me	**47%**
Crowded/narrow/blocked aisles	**19%**
Usual product out of stock	**17%**
Too many similar options	**16%**
Messy/poorly stocked shelf	**14%**
Hard to compare prices/value	**14%**
Hard to find product quickly	**12%**
Confusing/cluttered labels	**10%**
Unclear or missing signage	**10%**

Retail consultants might say that shoppers are perpetually frustrated, but our data suggests otherwise: almost half of respondents reported no major frustrations during their most recent trip. **The ease of finding items scored highly (20.1% Top 2 Box at Walmart), and 87.4% rated checkout and payment ease positively.** Ultimately, retailers are doing their jobs well. **That said, when friction does occur, it's memorable. Shoppers cited that their top three pain points were:**

Crowded or blocked aisles **19%**

Physical obstruction prevents access to products and slows navigation.

Usual product out of stock **17%**

Stockouts break trust and force substitution, which may lead to brand switching or abandoned carts.

Too many similar options **16%**

Decision fatigue cased by cluttered shelves or redundant SKUs.

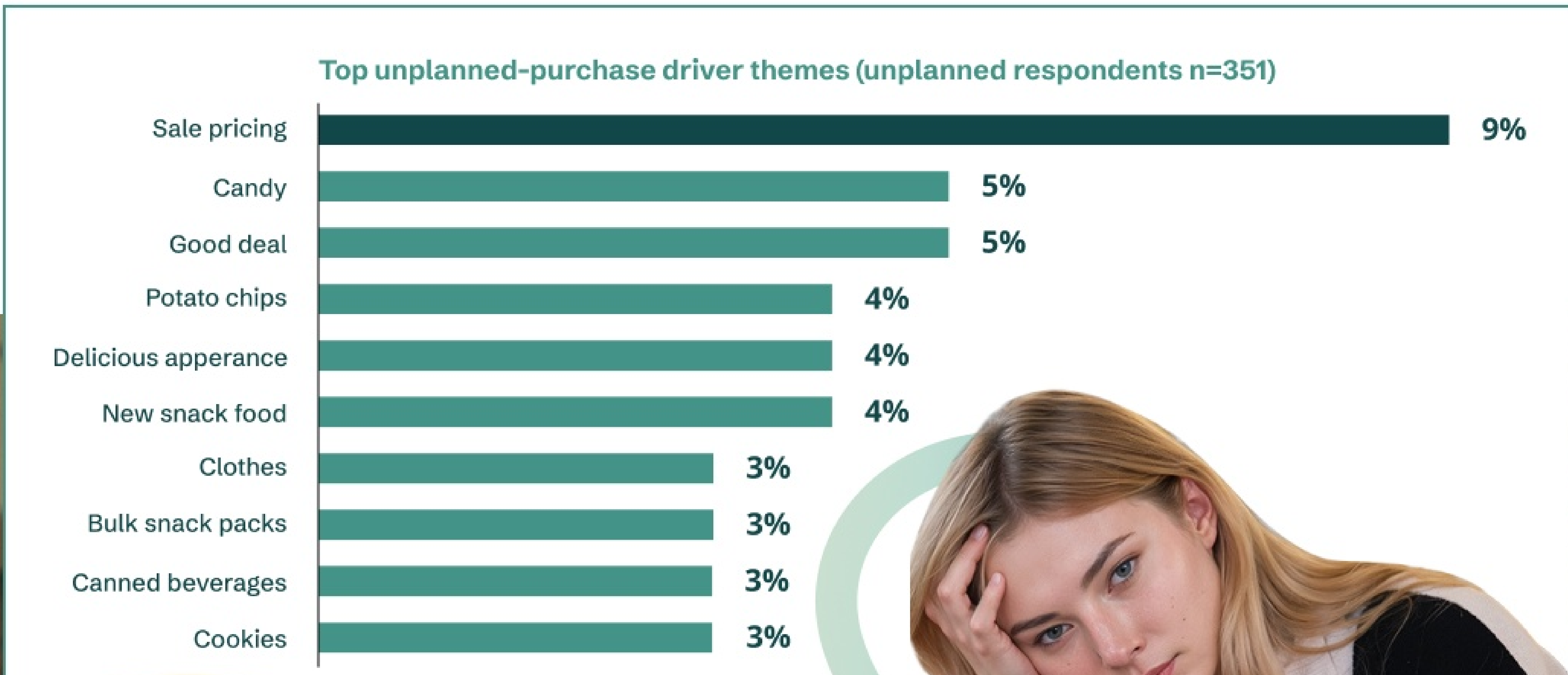
These pain points are significant because they interfere with how shoppers expect efficiency. They view shopping trips as transactions with clear needs and predictable results, so when something goes wrong, it induces frustration.

> **The Opportunity:** Thankfully for retailers, these frictions are operational issues, not fundamental problems in the retail model itself. They are manageable execution issues they can easily improve on with increased staffing to clear aisles, simplifying shelf layout, and redlining inventory management to prevent stockouts.

How Unplanned Purchases Happen

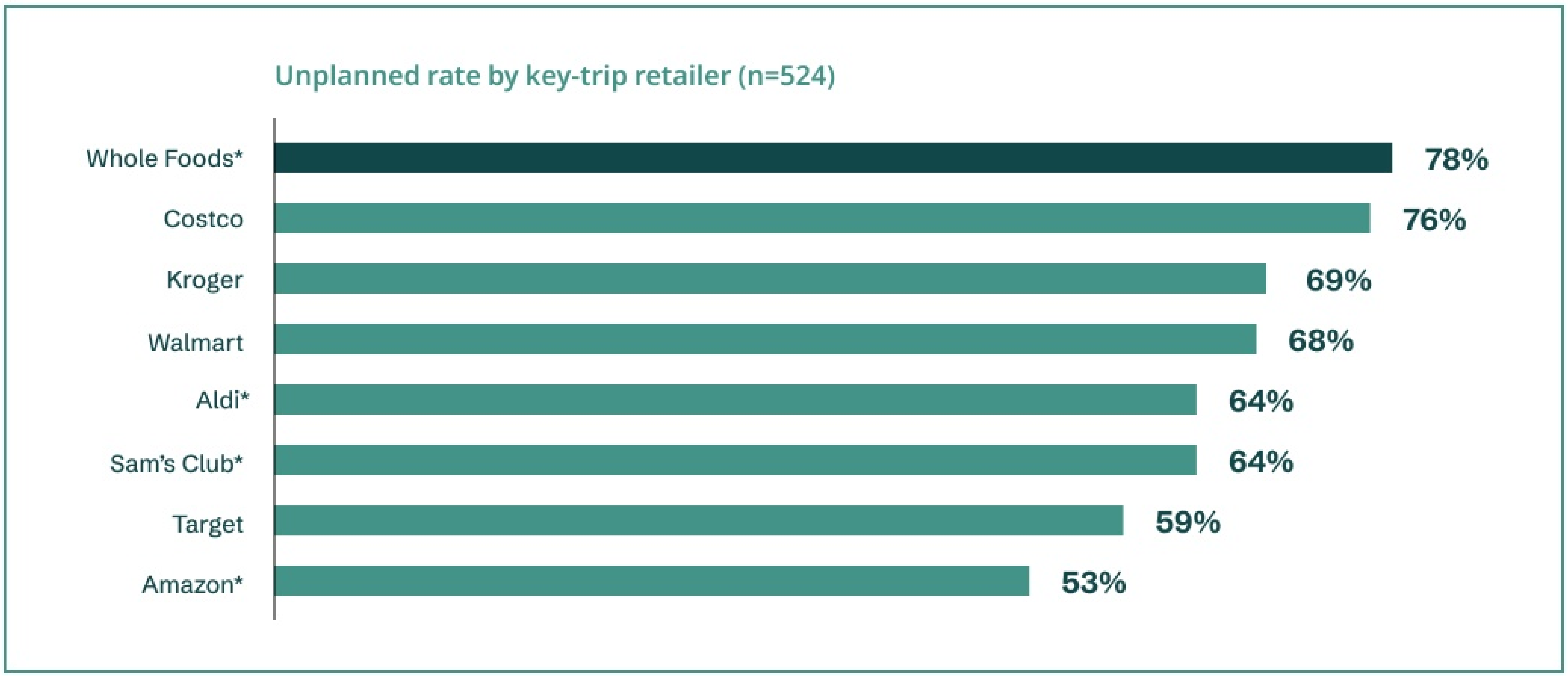
Despite planned routing's prevalence, **67% of shoppers made at least one unplanned purchase** in their most recent trip. Shoppers aren't disciplined list-followers; they're open to discovery if something stands out.

Sale pricing (8.8% of the unplanned base) is the largest driver theme of unplanned buying. Other factors include:



One shopper noted that they picked up "choclate milk, since I realized it was on sale and I wanted it." That's the classic attitude brands hope to capture consumers during. The shopper entered the store with a plan, encountered a concrete savings cue, and adjusted their plan accordingly because the deal provided justification for the deviation.

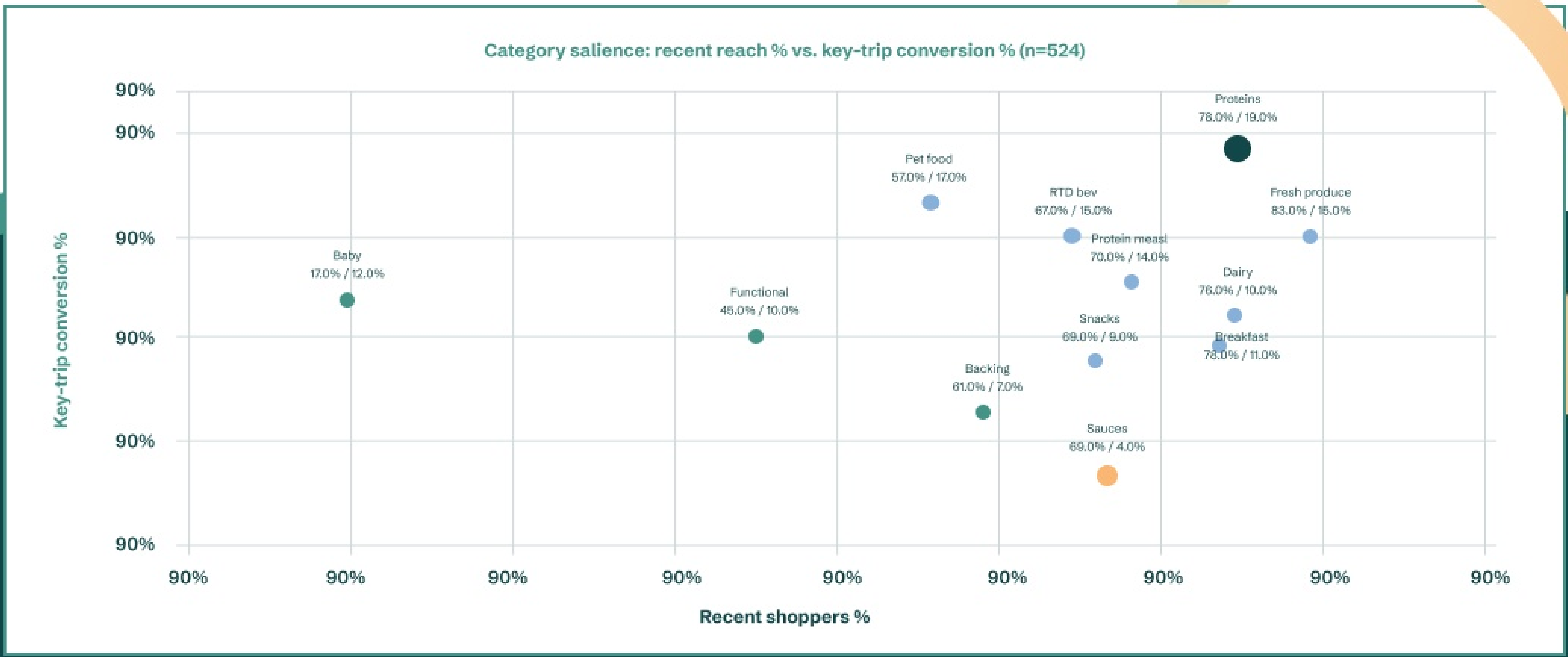
Unplanned Purchases by Retailer



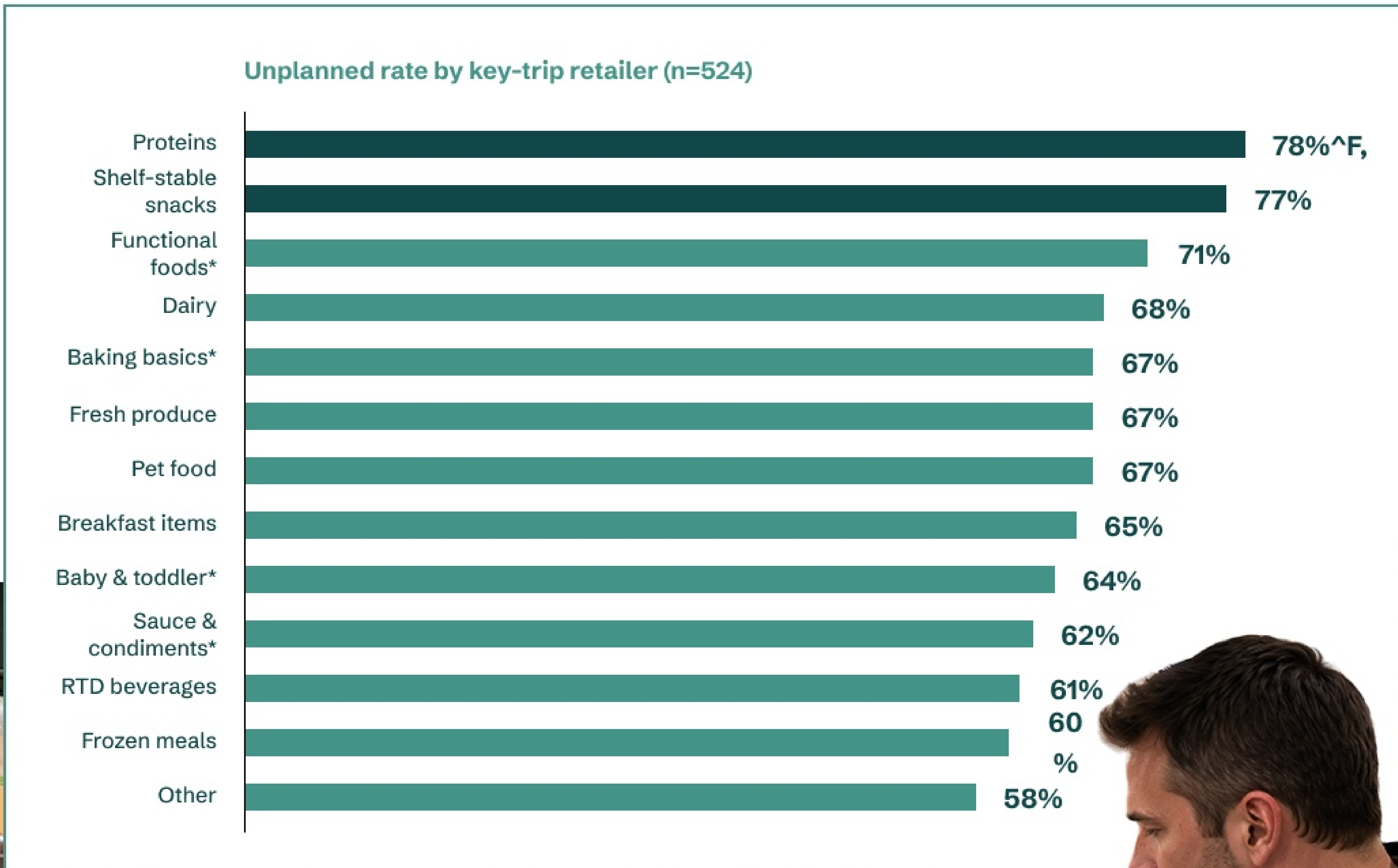
Amazon experienced the lowest rate of unplanned purchases of all tracked retailers. This is logical given how Amazon is primarily delivery-led, so consumers are less likely to make discovery purchases when buying online.

Whole Foods, however, witnessed the highest rate of unplanned purchases (with just a slight edge above Coscto), which may indicate Whole Food's health-first messaging strategy proves effective, especially in categories where unplanned purchases are more likely (sauces and snacks, for example).

The Protein Conundrum



Of the categories that anchor shopping trips above, **proteins and pet food exhibit the highest key-trip conversion percentage** (sauces, snacks, baking supplies, and breakfast items break routine most or are a habitual add-on). It's also noteworthy that of all categories, proteins experience the highest unplanned rate.



And yet, you may recall from earlier in this report that protein is one of the most-planned categories (at 44% “very planned”).

What do we make of this apparent contradiction?
Protein is a predominant trip anchor: when people run out, it initiates a shopping trip for all other categories. Consumers tend to know what they want, but given that protein is often a meal anchor as well, they often buy additional protein items based on deals or an interest in exploring other options. Someone who goes to the store with the intent to buy chicken for that night is likely to think, **“Why not? I’ll get fish for tomorrow.”**

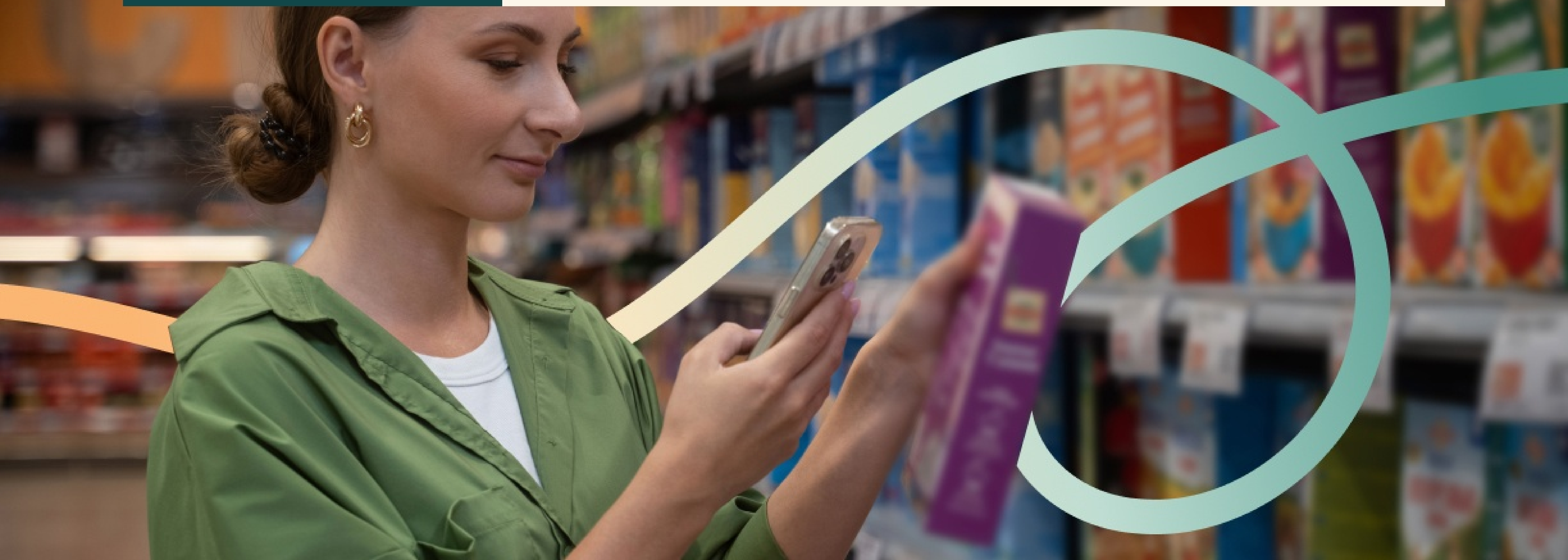
What Value Really Means

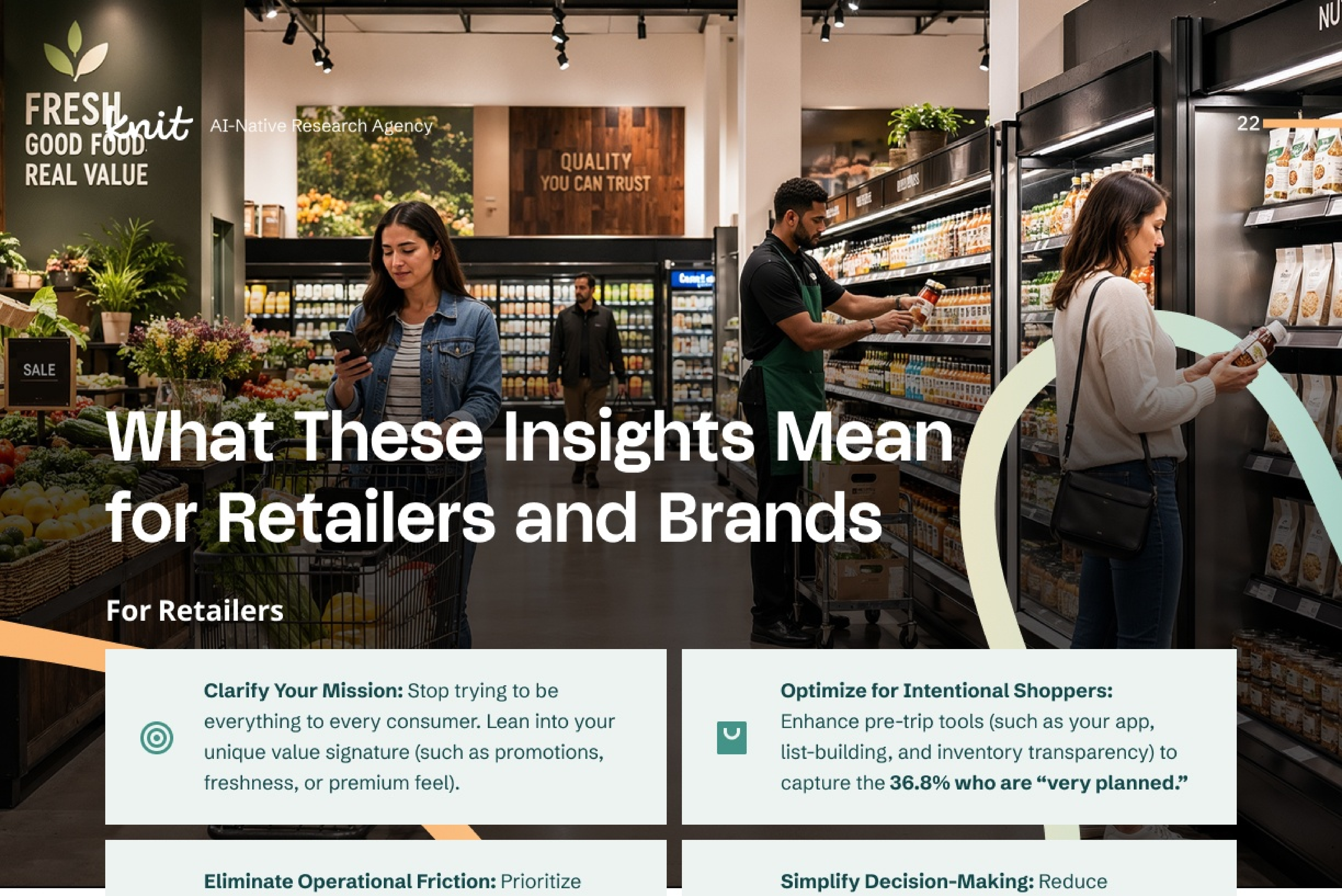
Modern shoppers don't default to whatever is cheapest. Affordability doesn't define value, rather, they look for "worthiness" to justify a particular pricetag.

Many factors **compose this value equation,** including price, quality, convenience, and trust. A product might be cheap, but if the shopper doubts its quality or finds the shopping experience frustrating, its value declines. Conversely, they might consider a slightly higher-priced item at a trusted retailer with a smooth checkout experience "worth it" bcause it delivered on reliability and peace of mind.

Some of our study's key themes in this regard include:

Price-Quality Fit 21.9%	Respondents were particularly interested in the relationship between cost and quality, noting **"Reasonable price for a quality item"** and **"Cost of goods vs. the quality you get"** in open-ended video responses.
High Quality Products 21.4%	Shoppers associate quality with dependability, taste (where applicable), and freshness. A consistently well-performing product accumulates enough value equity that shoppers are less likely to switch to untested alternatives.
Low Cost 16.8%	To be clear, affordability is rarely the sole deciding factor, but it's still essential. Shoppers mentioned low cost frequently, but usually in conjunction with other factors.
Fair Cost 14.9%	The line between **"low"** and **"fair"** can sound thin, but consumers have an internal sense of fairness. They resent feeling taken advantage of, but also accept paying a premium for convenience, reputation, or ethical sourcing if they view a transaction as equitable and transparent.





What These Insights Mean for Retailers and Brands

For Retailers

Clarify Your Mission: Stop trying to be everything to every consumer. Lean into your unique value signature (such as promotions, freshness, or premium feel).

Optimize for Intentional Shoppers: Enhance pre-trip tools (such as your app, list-building, and inventory transparency) to capture the **36.8% who are "very planned."**

Eliminate Operational Friction: Prioritize staffing to clear aisles and rigorous inventory management to prevent out-of-stocks on hero SKUs.

Simplify Decision-Making: Reduce clutter in congested categories to help shoppers make faster choices, reducing perceived friction.

For CPG Brands and Category Teams

Build Retailer-Specific Playbooks: Tailor your messaging to specific retailers' value signatures. For example, don't pitch "lowest price" at Target; opt for messaging that emphasizes premium quality or how a product is "worth it." Make savings mechanics visible at Kroger; Costco execution should focus on pack economics; prioritize digital findability and assortment confidence on Amazon; and emphasize dependable everyday.

Make Savings Instantly Legible: Especially in deal-driven categories, use clear, concrete promotional mechanics (e.g., BOGO, percentages off, fixed-dollar markdowns) so that shoppers can act on immediately or recall for their follow-up trips. These cues dominate signal memory.

Influence Category Decisions Pre-Trip: Pet food and supplies, proteins, fresh produce, baby and toddler products, and dairy are the categories with the highest planned-routing levels, so prioritize them for pre-trip influence. The best categories to prioritize for deal-led interruption include shelf-stable snacks, frozen meals, functional foods, and ready-to-drink beverages.

VS.

Defend vs. Attack: Defend habits (i.e., ensure availability and price-pack architecture in Walmart-dominated categories like pet food and baking) and attack in contestable categories like snacks and RTD (also invest in endcaps, digital badges, and impulse placements).

Appendix: Methodology & Sample Profile

This study was conducted via quantitative online survey with embedded video open-ends, fielded in late Q2/early Q3 of 2026. Total sample size: N=524 with N=59 video qualitative responses. All respondents are predominantly responsible for shopping on behalf of themselves and their households and had shopped at one qualifying retailer in the past 60 days.

Demographics analyzed:

- **Age:** Mean 42.9 (Gen Z 19.5%, Millennial 35.1%, Gen X 34.4%, Boomer+ 11.1%).
- **Gender:** 52.5% Women, 46.9% Men.
- **Region:** South (41.2%), West (20.6%), Midwest (20.2%), Northeast (17.9%).
- **Income:** Skews lower-middle ($25k-$49k largest band).
- **Household:** Families with children (32.4%), Singles (27.5%), Partners without children (19.8%).

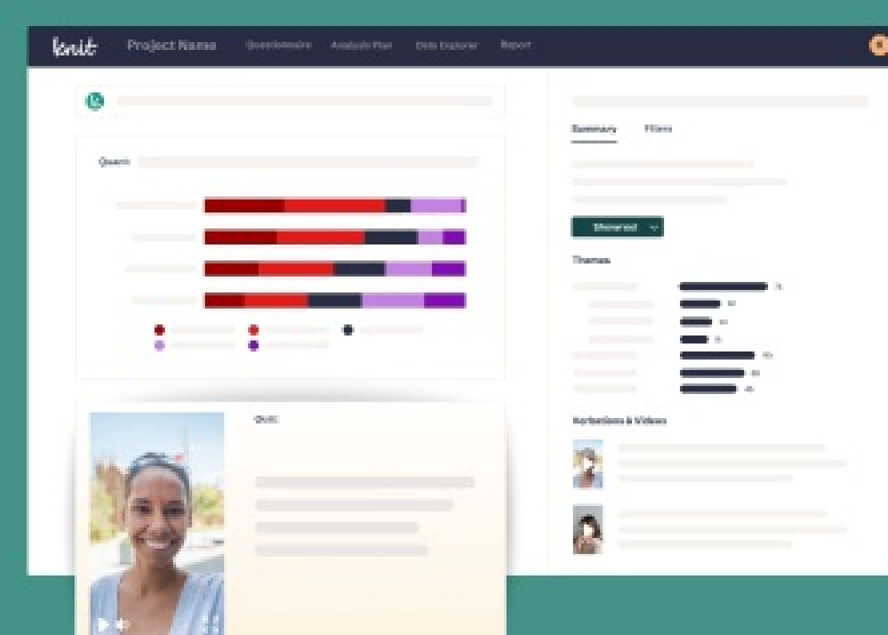
Want to see how we collected this data/ran this particular study? Let our experts give you a demo.

[Schedule a Walk-Through]

About Knit

Knit's researcher-driven AI takes the guesswork out of insight. Every chart here comes from real consumer voices — analyzed, thematically coded, and segmented automatically. It means researchers can move from **open-ended chaos to quantifiable clarity** in minutes.

When you see a chart that captures emotion and behavior side-by-side — that's Knit turning qualitative depth into measurable impact.



Learn more

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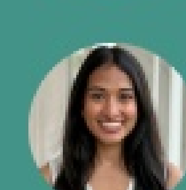

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