





SO MUCH INFORMATION WE ARE LOSING OUR COMMON SENSE

– GULF SOUTH INDEX 2024

**"Everybody gets so much information all day
long that they lose their common sense."
– Gertrude Stein**



In 1993, British rock icons and my wife's favorite band of all-time – Duran Duran – released "Too Much Information." Here's the video if you want to check it out <https://tinyurl.com/36d82jp6>

If it was too much information 30 years ago, what about now?

In the Gulf South today:

- One-quarter of our waking hours (assuming eight hours of sleep) is spent on a smartphone or watching television.
- One of every five people spend MORE THAN FIVE hours on social media A DAY.
- Three out of four of us are active participants on Facebook...Yes. Still.
- Around two out of three of us are watching YouTube.
- Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu and/or Disney+ are subscribed to by at least half of us.

So much information is coming at us all day every day.
Are we losing our common sense?

2024 marks the fifth year of the Gulf South Index. Five years of anything tells us things.

- We are losing faith in achieving our definition of the American Dream. In the Gulf South, people saying they can achieve the American Dream is down 15 points, from 60% in 2020 to 45% in 2024.

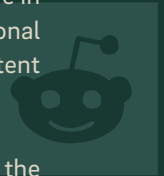
- The optimism of the public that this year will be better than last year can fluctuate between seven and 16 points from year to year. 60% of the Gulf South was more optimistic that 2023 would be better than 2022. Only 43% of the Gulf South said the same about 2024 over 2023.

Last year, we talked about the idea of "backyard optimism" in the Gulf South, meaning the closer you get to someone's backyard the better that person feels about their lot in life. In 2024, we aren't feeling very good. But why? Two out of three of us say that we are in good shape or doing ok when asked about our personal financial situation, which is actually pretty consistent from year to year.

45% are satisfied with the way things are going in the Gulf South. That could be better, but it is still 12 points higher than the 33% that are satisfied with the way things are going in the U.S.

Our individual impression about how we are doing financially outpaces every other issue. But it is perplexing.

- The economy is the No. 1 issue identified in this year's Index by a mile. But we are benefiting from the lowest unemployment ever and increasing wages. "Uncle Sam is putting the rest of the world to shame" economically, according to The Economist.





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“There is too much information in the world for everyone to calmly sift through the data, looking for the most rational, most correct answer. People are busy and emotional, and a good story is always more powerful and persuasive than ice-cold statistics.”

– Morgan Housel, Same As Ever, 2023



- The youngest generation among us in the Gulf South – Gen Z – is spending more than any other generation on things like vacations and cars...and they want to buy houses.
- The oldest generation – Baby Boomers – possesses the highest spending power and the most money, but the worst outlook on the state of the world and nation.

The billions of pieces of information showing up through our devices tell us all kinds of things. We choose what to believe based on our own first-hand experiences – both good and bad.

Fortunately, we still hold local news in high regard as a trusted source. Just as fortunate is that we don’t hold that crazy relative on Facebook or X, formerly known as Twitter, in high regard at all. (Be honest. You were picturing that relative in your head as you read this.)

With all of this information, at some point, we give in. It’s too many brands of coffee to choose from at the store. We just end up picking the thing right in front of our eyes.

Too much information means we need much better stories.

People remember stories.

As professionals and good human beings, our stories should be captivating and accurate. They can consider the qualities that we do share across generations, like the idea of hard work, family and community. These stories can be shared in the places where the people of the Gulf South are. We can listen to what our audiences are telling us, knowing perceptions can change and change quickly.

“The ones who thrive long-term are those who understand the real world is a never-ending chain of absurdity, confusion, messy relationships, and imperfect people.”

– Morgan Housel, Same As Ever

The world is a crazy place, y’all!

For the first time in 2024, we take a specific look at the generations of the Gulf South and their points of view. We will also look more into five years of examining the media habits and levels of trust in the Gulf South. We encourage you to read the 2024 report here. Feel free to share it.

The 2024 Gulf South Index reflects a significant amount of thoughtfulness from Katie Grace Walshe at The Ehrhardt Group and Therese Mulvey and Taylor Danos at Causeway Solutions. We thank them for their hard work.



KEY FINDINGS



**"The young do not know enough to be prudent,
and therefore they attempt the impossible – and
achieve it, generation after generation."
– Pearl S. Buck**

2024 is a pivotal year because the youngest of Generation Z is now 18 years old. This digital-first consumer, sometimes labeled iGeneration, is a focus for marketers, businesses and brands in the hopes of establishing loyalty at an early age.

However, Gen Z is redefining brand loyalty. These young adults rely heavily on social media and peer recommendations to make buying decisions. They're loyal, but the cohort wants brands to be transparent about taking actions aligned with their values. Otherwise, Gen Z will quickly switch loyalties if brands aren't responsive or break promises. The young adults want brands to ask them for reviews, allow feedback and ideas. Gen Z demands personalized customer experiences with perks.

Generational differences – from attitudes, behaviors, media and consumer habits are especially apparent throughout this year's findings. At the same time that Gen Z is coming of age, there are more Americans turning 65 between 2024 and 2027.

Here's a breakdown of the ages and years born for the different generations:

- **Gen Z:** Age 18-27 years old, born 1997-2006
- **Gen Y / Millennials:** Age 28-43 years old, born 1981-1996
- **Gen X:** Age: 44-59 years old, born 1965-1980
- **Baby Boomers:** Age 60-78 years old, born 1946-1964
- **Silent Generation:** Age 79-96 years old, born 1928-1945

The 2024 Gulf South Index shows we have more in common with each other than we may think. When asked "How important is each of the following in your personal life," residents in the Gulf South region and national audiences had similar responses, with family coming in at number one for both survey respondents. Next in priority are hard work and money.

With the growth of experiential marketing, survey participants were asked about following influencers' recommendations, using virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technology and more. The younger Gulf South Index respondents are more likely to have attended a virtual event, used VR or AR or bought a product or gone somewhere based on a recommendation from an influencer, podcast, movie or TV show.

Consumer media usage is a key area of focus. For the third year in a row, local news networks also remain the most trusted source of information in the Gulf South region and nationally. However, over this three-year period, there is a steady erosion of trust in local news for both audiences.

The Gulf South surpasses the national average in several categories: watching TV for four or more hours daily, using a cell phone for four or more hours daily, and spending four or more hours a day on TV-connected devices, such as gaming consoles and streaming devices.



5 YEARS LATER: HOW DIFFERENT ARE WE?

**"A truly American sentiment recognizes the dignity of
labor and the fact that honor lies in honest toil."
– Grover Cleveland**



The Gulf South Index began in 2020, and for five years now we've asked people how they feel about their finances, their country, their media habits and more. Not only have we discovered ways in which the Gulf South is both alike and different to the rest of the United States, we've also noticed how our sentiments may have changed (or stayed the same) over these defining years.

We've included the question, "Do you think you can achieve the American Dream in your area of the U.S.?" since 2020, and this is the second year that the national audience fell below 50%, landing at 49% in 2024 after a high of 62% in 2022. At the same time, the highest percentage of the national respondents said no at 28%, which remains steady for the third consecutive year. This is up from a low of 17% in 2022. Nationally, the percentage of people who are unsure about the American Dream is at its second highest level in five years at 24%, steadily increasing each year since 2020 when 19% were unsure. And the Gulf South has remained flat for the last two years with 47% in 2023 and 45% in 2024 saying yes to this question. The percentage of people in the Gulf South saying no to this question has steadily increased to 19%, just shy of the 21% that said no in 2020. We're much more unsure about the American Dream than people are nationally. 37% of the Gulf South respondents were unsure, 13 points higher than the national percentage.

And when asked how people feel about their personal financial situations, the Gulf South has maintained their percentage of people saying that they are in good shape, coming in at 24% from 26% last year. National audiences outpaced the Gulf South in 2024 with 31% of national respondents saying that they are in good shape, the highest percentage in the history of the Gulf South Index. Nationally, the people saying that "times are tough" is at

its lowest number since 2021, with 35% of respondents responding this way. This is down 5% from 2023. In the Gulf South, the number of people saying "times are tough" is down to 39% - but this group has remained between 42% in 2020 and 39% in 2024.

Over five years of grading the economy, the same range of people give the economy the best grades; those more pessimistic fluctuate from year to year. Since we began asking this question in 2020, there are certain ranges that the Gulf South and national audiences fall into, regardless of the state of the economy. For example, people in the Gulf South giving the economy four or five stars over the last five years are always between 16-24%. Nationally, the audience giving the economy four or five stars always falls between 19-26% - maybe a slightly more positive outlook, but not too far from us - and there was some positive movement from 2023 to 2024 for both audiences. The national audience in 2024 giving four or five stars came in at 26%, a five-point jump from 2023. But there is more volatility when it comes to how bad someone views the economy. From 2020 to 2024, the Gulf South followed this path of results of one to two stars, going from 45% in 2020, 42% in 2021, 56% in 2022, 48% in 2023 and 50% in 2024. During the same period the national audience giving one to two stars to the economy was 51% in 2020, 36% in 2021, 45% in 2022, 46% in 2023 and 41% in 2024. The national audience was consistently lower in giving the economy one or two stars and only once above 50% - back in 2020.

Although 2020 might feel like a completely different world, the questions in this section show just how different things actually are.

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM?

GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL

GULF SOUTH 2024 - YES

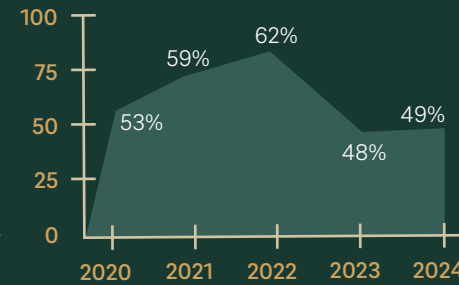
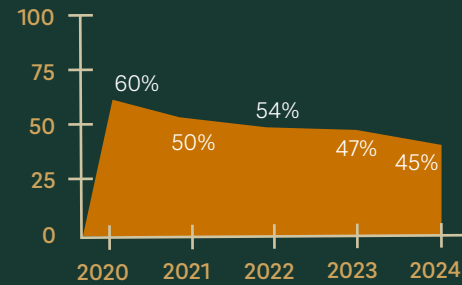
45%



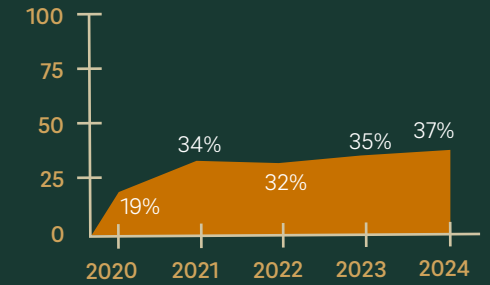
60%

GULF SOUTH 2020 - YES

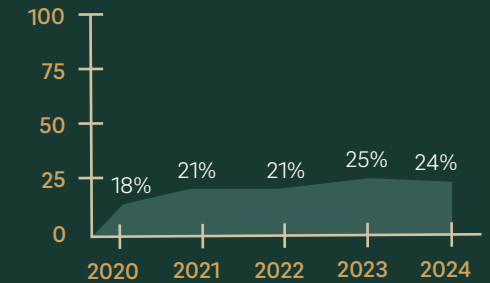
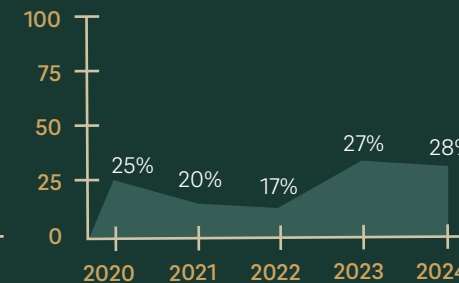
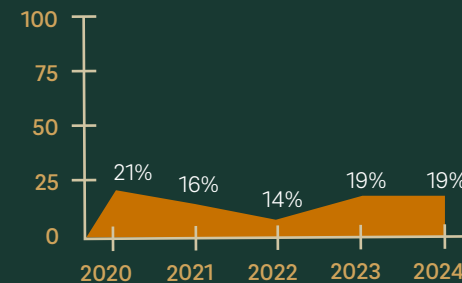
YES



UNSURE



NO



2024 is the second year the national audience fell below 50%, down from a high of 62% in 2022. The Gulf South answering yes holds flat in 2024.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THIS YEAR WILL BE A BETTER YEAR FOR YOU PERSONALLY THAN LAST YEAR?

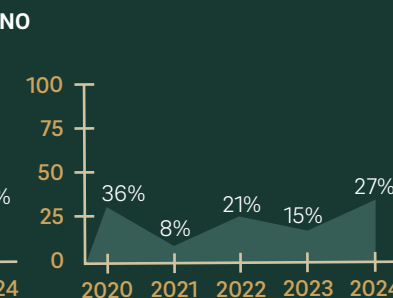
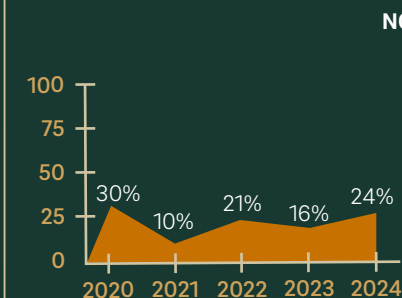
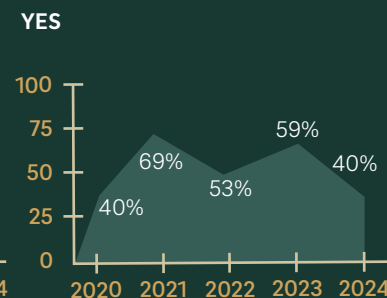
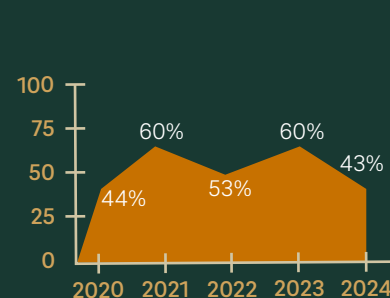


GULF SOUTH 2024 - YES

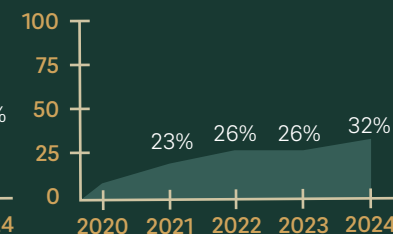
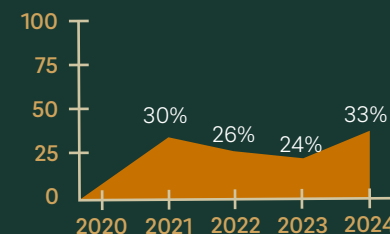
43%



NATIONAL 2024 - YES



ABOUT THE SAME



The Gulf South remains more unsure about the American Dream, 13 points higher than the national percentage.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE U.S. TODAY? FIVE STARS IS THE BEST, AND ONE STAR IS THE WORST.

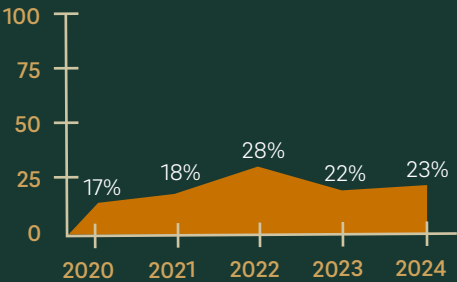
GULF SOUTH

GULF SOUTH 2024 - 5 STARS

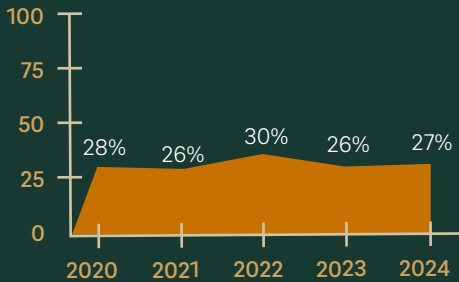


GULF SOUTH 2020 - 5 STARS

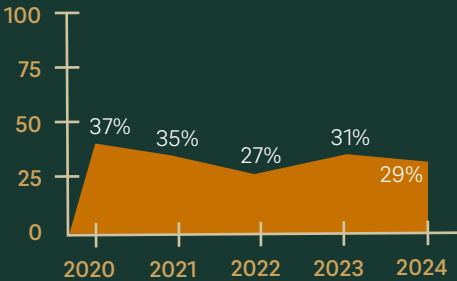
1 STAR



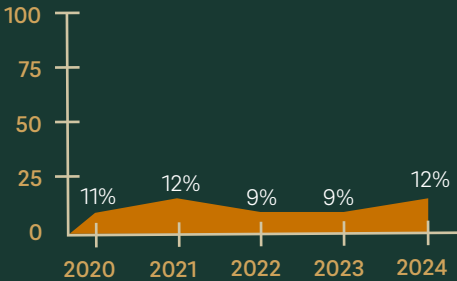
2 STARS



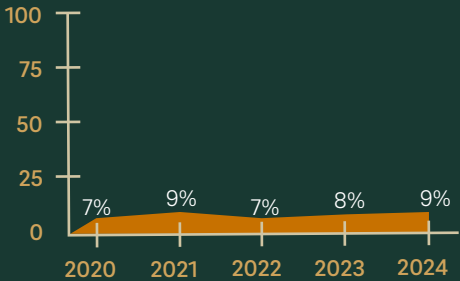
3 STARS



4 STARS



5 STARS



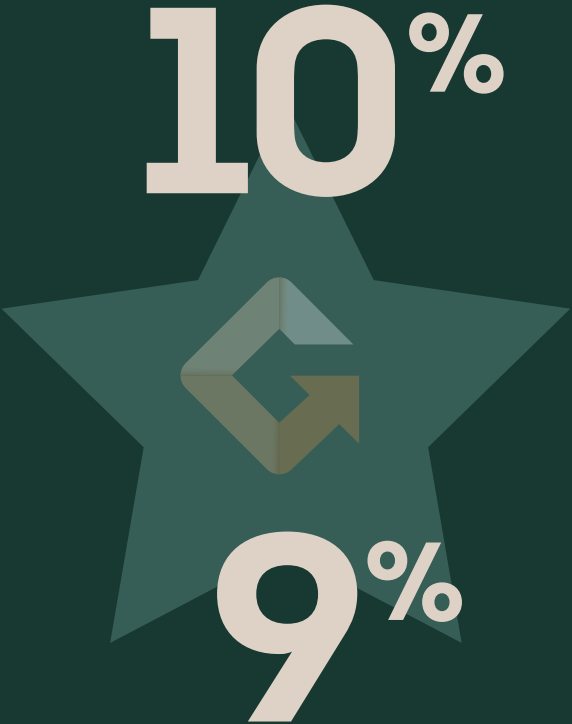
Is perception reality? Since we began asking this question in 2020, Gulf South audiences fall into certain ranges in their view of the economy, regardless of the actual state of the economy. For example, the people in the Gulf South giving the economy four or five stars always falls between 15% and 21%. However, things are looking up. The jump from 2023-2024 in giving the economy four or five stars was the largest year-over-year increase in the history of the Gulf South Index.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE U.S. TODAY?

FIVE STARS IS THE BEST, AND ONE STAR IS THE WORST.

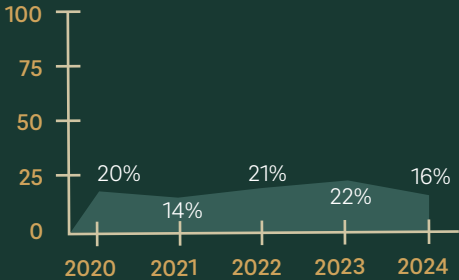
NATIONAL

NATIONAL 2024 - 5 STARS

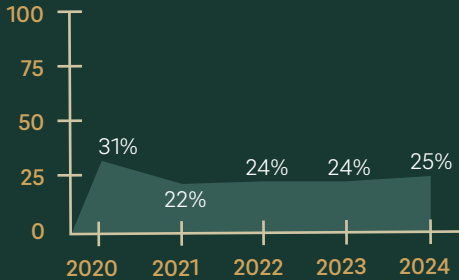


NATIONAL 2020 - 5 STARS

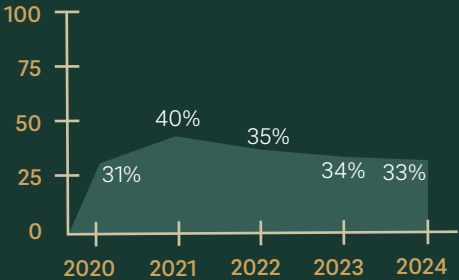
1 STAR



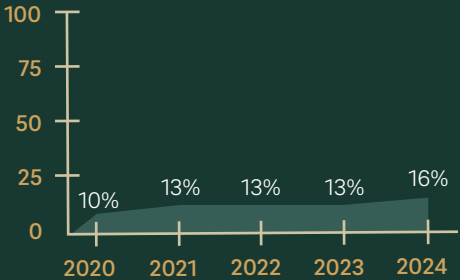
2 STARS



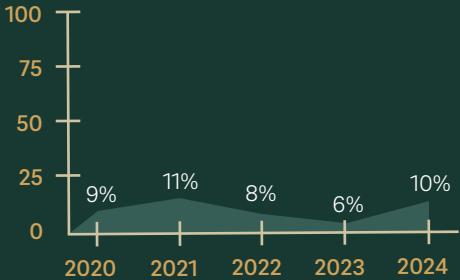
3 STARS



4 STARS



5 STARS

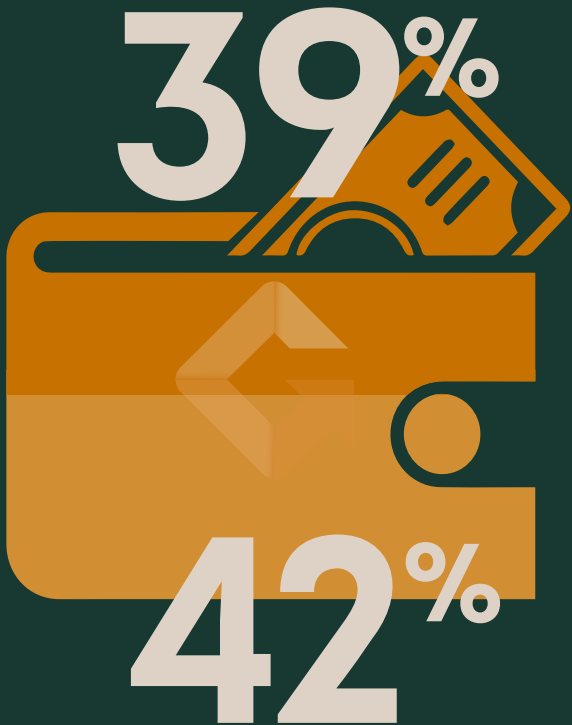


Is perception reality - part two? Nationally, audiences giving the economy four or five stars always falls between 19% and 26%, regardless of the actual state of the economy. National audiences giving the economy one or two stars has been consistently lower than the Gulf South, going above 50% once in 2020.

WHICH STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT PERSONAL FINANCIAL SITUATION?

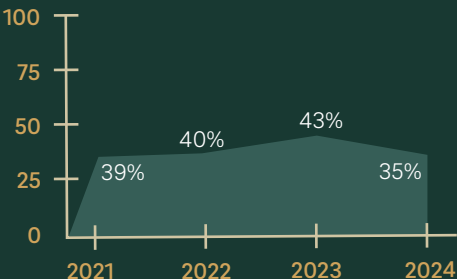
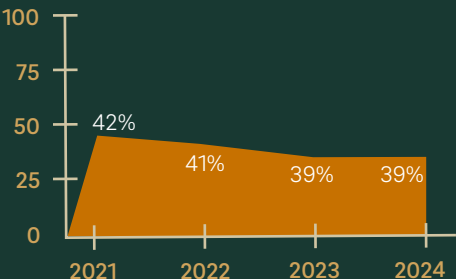
GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL

GULF SOUTH 2024 - TIMES ARE TOUGH

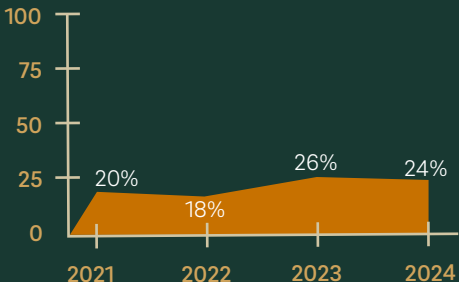


GULF SOUTH 2021 - TIMES ARE TOUGH

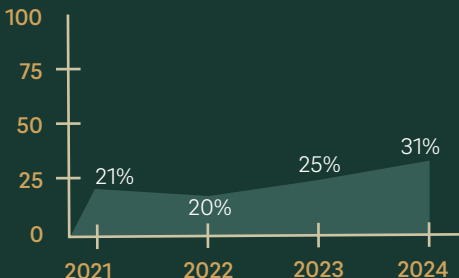
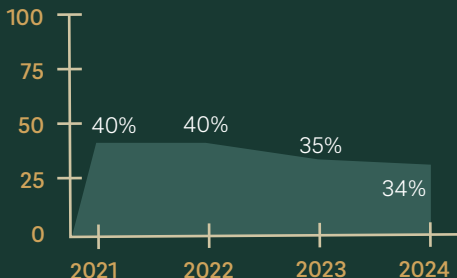
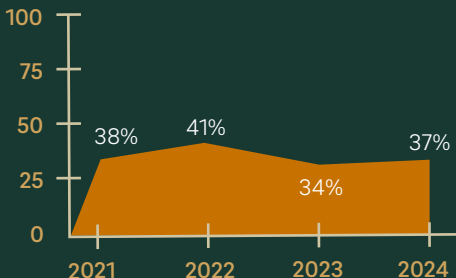
TIMES ARE TOUGH.
WE ARE TRYING TO PAY OUR BILLS.



IN GOOD SHAPE.
WE CAN PAY FOR OUR NECESSITIES AND
HAVE MONEY IN THE BANK.



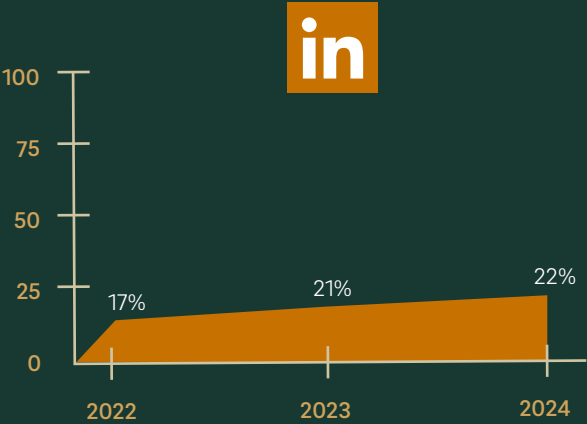
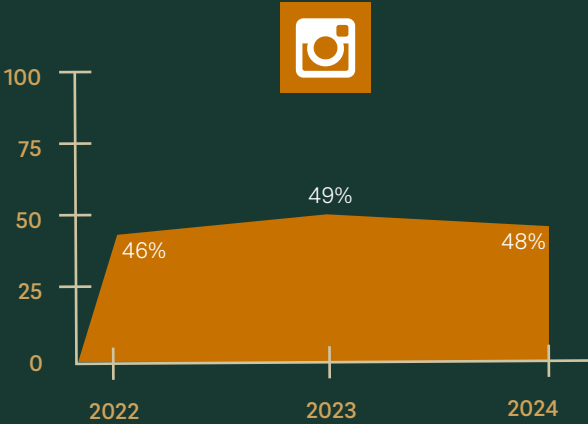
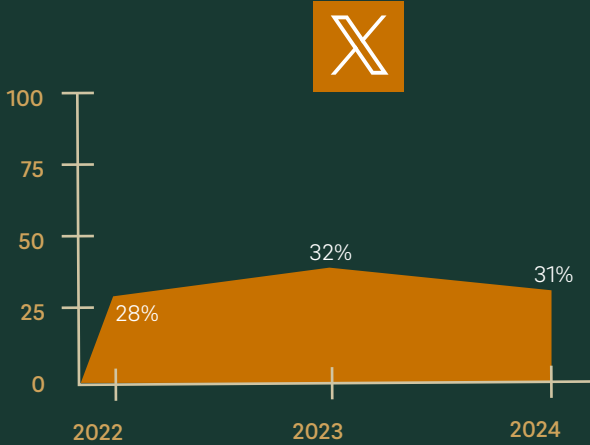
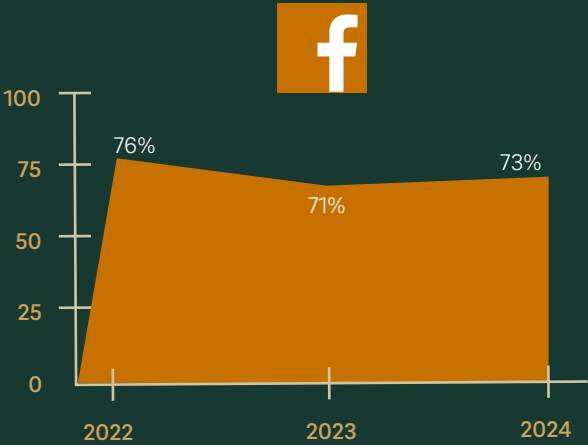
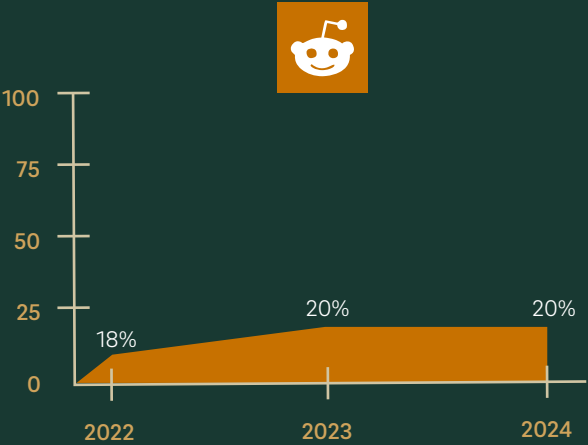
DOING OK.
WE CAN PAY OUR BILLS WITH SOME MONEY LEFT OVER.



Between 2020 and 2024, the number of people in the Gulf South saying that “times are tough” stayed between 39% and 42%. Gulf South citizens that are “in good shape” sit at 24%, up six points from a low of 18% in 2022.

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ONLINE COMMUNITIES?

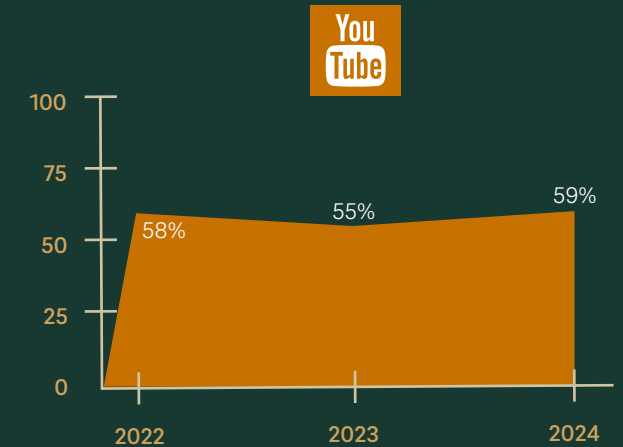
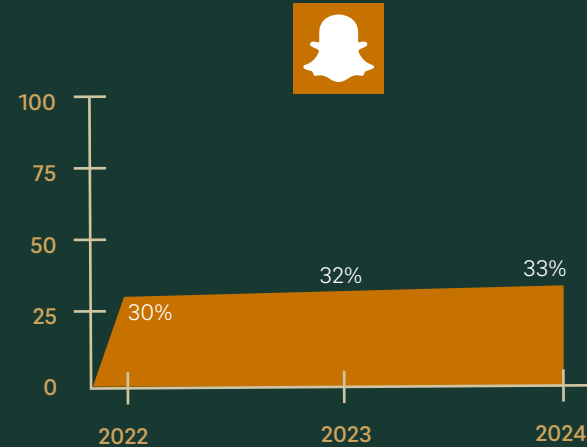
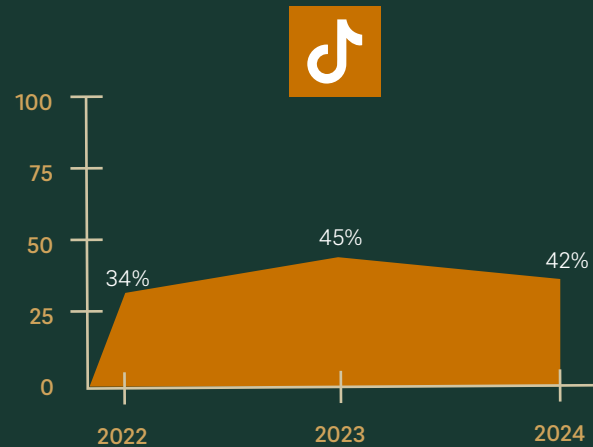
GULF SOUTH



The Gulf South is sticking with Facebook. Nearly three out of four people in the region use Facebook. The Gulf South also uses YouTube in a higher percentage than national audiences – 59% to 52%. Overall, the percentage of people using various platforms remains steady from year to year, regardless of the platform.

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ONLINE COMMUNITIES?

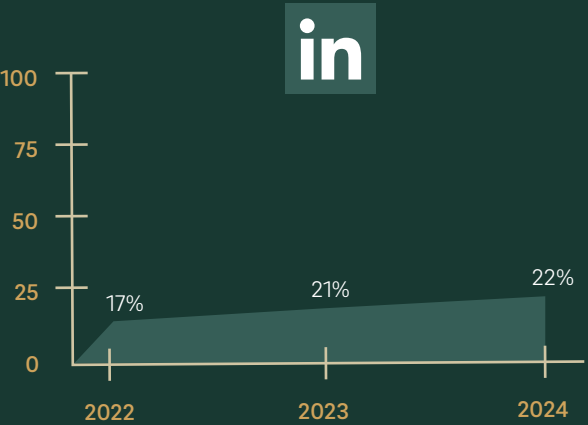
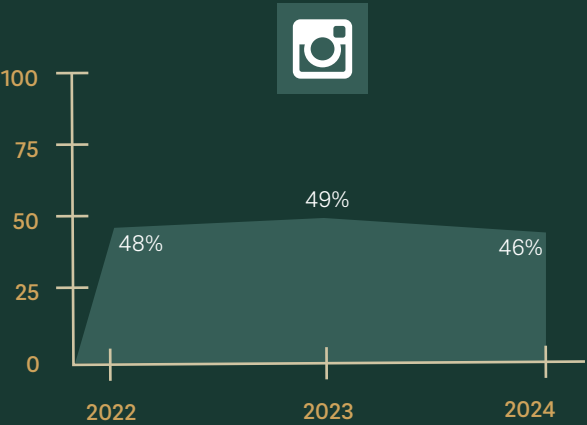
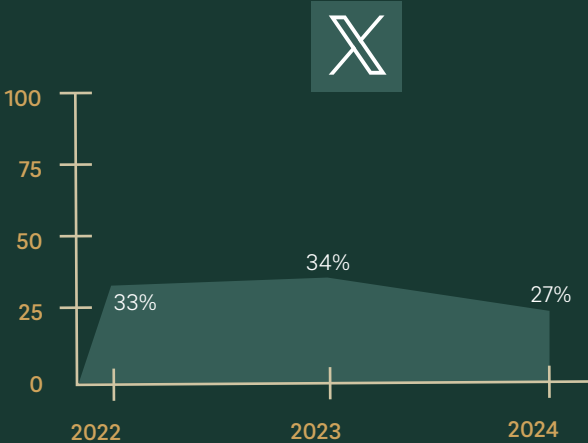
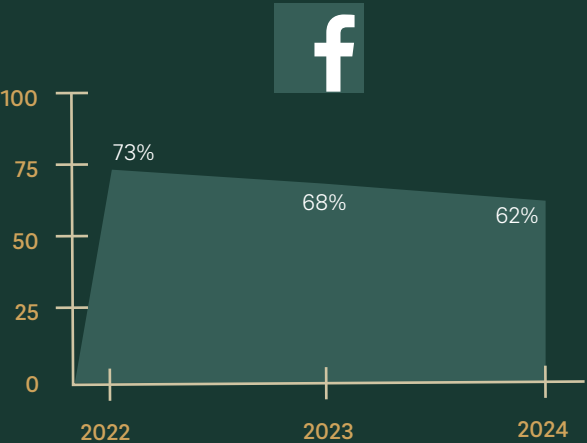
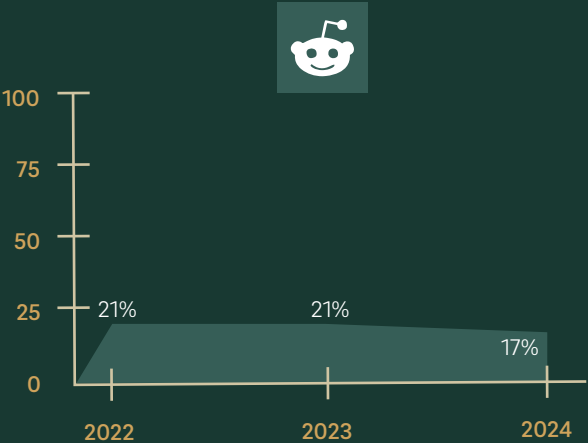
 GULF SOUTH



The Gulf South and national audiences rank in the popularity of each platform in the same order. However, the percentage of how many people in the Gulf South and nationally use each platform differs.

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ONLINE COMMUNITIES?

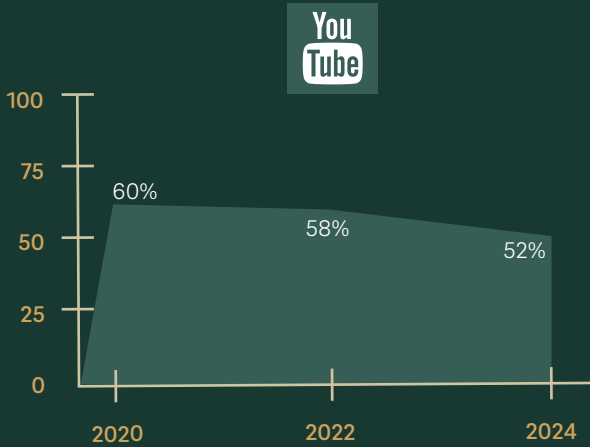
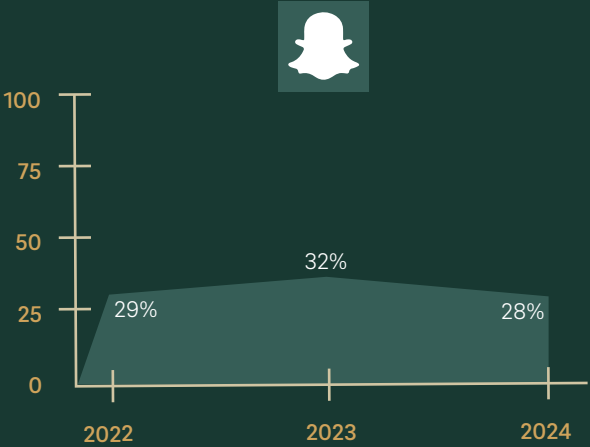
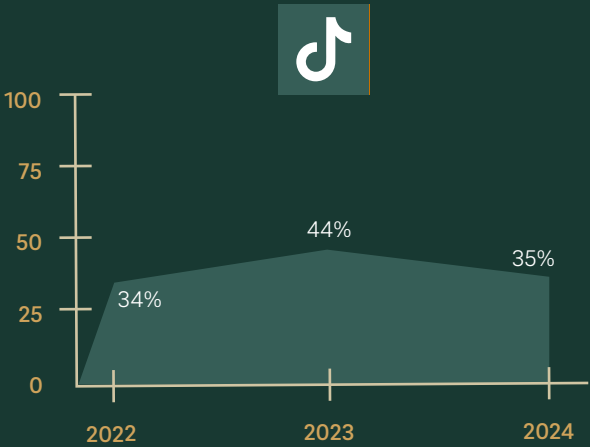
NATIONAL



While Facebook remains the top social media platform, national audiences have cooled on the platform, dropping from 68% in 2023 to 62% in 2024. Twitter/X comes in 6th for both national and Gulf South audiences, behind Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Snapchat.

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ONLINE COMMUNITIES?

NATIONAL





FROM BOOMERS TO ZOOMERS: WHAT DOES OUR AGE SAY ABOUT US?

"Each generation imagines itself to be more intelligent than the one that went before it, and wiser than the one that comes after it."

— George Orwell



Beyond our typical inclusion of the Gulf South versus national sentiment, this year we discovered another interesting perspective: generational. How do Gulf South Gen Z'ers relate to Baby Boomers? How do they not relate? Breaking this down not only gives us an idea of how people might behave in the future, it can also help us understand each other more in the now. Insights from the 2024 Gulf South Index underscore the contrasts across the generations with regard to attitudes, planned purchases, media preferences, etc.

Key examples include:

Gen Z

- 28% of respondents have lost a job and are looking for work – 10 points higher than total adults in the study.
- 31% of Gen Z left a job for a higher paying opportunity.
- 69% say they are likely to buy a home in the next six months, 21 points higher than total adults.
- 75% of respondents plan to travel in the next six months, compared to 44% of Gen X and 33% of Baby Boomers.
- They're using Snapchat and TikTok in greater numbers than older generations.

Gen Z has seen the most movement when it comes to making a living in the Gulf South region. These young adults are feeling the hurt of losing a job and trying to find a new one. On a positive note, Gen Z is also feeling the benefits of leaving one job for another job that pays more, which is most likely the reason they're shopping for a home.

Gen Y / Millennials

- 32% of Millennials have left a job for a higher paying opportunity, compared to 23% of total adults.
- 59% bought a major appliance in 2023, compared to 50% of total adults.
- 41% traveled in 2023, compared to 33% of total adults.
- 66% of Millennials say they are likely to buy a car in the next six months, compared to 59% of total adults.
- Millennials are using all social media with 77% on Facebook, 67% on YouTube and 60% on Instagram.

Millennials have been shaped by economic fluctuations, technological advancements, as well as social and political discord. They cherish work-life balance, seeking collaboration and sharing of responsibilities. Millennials value experiences over material possessions. This generation seeks brands who embrace social responsibility, ethical practices, diversity and inclusion.



FROM BOOMERS TO ZOOMERS: WHAT DOES OUR AGE SAY ABOUT US?



Gen X

- 79% of Gen X care deeply or somewhat about news outside where they live.
- 46% of Gen X say “times are tough” when it comes to personal finances, seven points higher than total adults in the study.
- Only 19% say “they’re in good shape” when it comes to personal finances, five points lower than total adults.
- 43% say they are worse off financially than they were two years ago.
- Gen X are just behind Millennials when it comes to using social media, including 79% on Facebook, 61% on YouTube and 46% on Instagram.

Gen Xers tend to be at or near their highest-earning years. However, they’re likely to be part of the sandwich generation, raising children while caring for aging parents. Gen X uses the internet to research businesses after seeing their ads. They appreciate discounts and loyalty programs and are open to direct mail and emails. This middle-aged consumer watches videos and is attracted to nostalgic marketing messages.

Baby Boomers

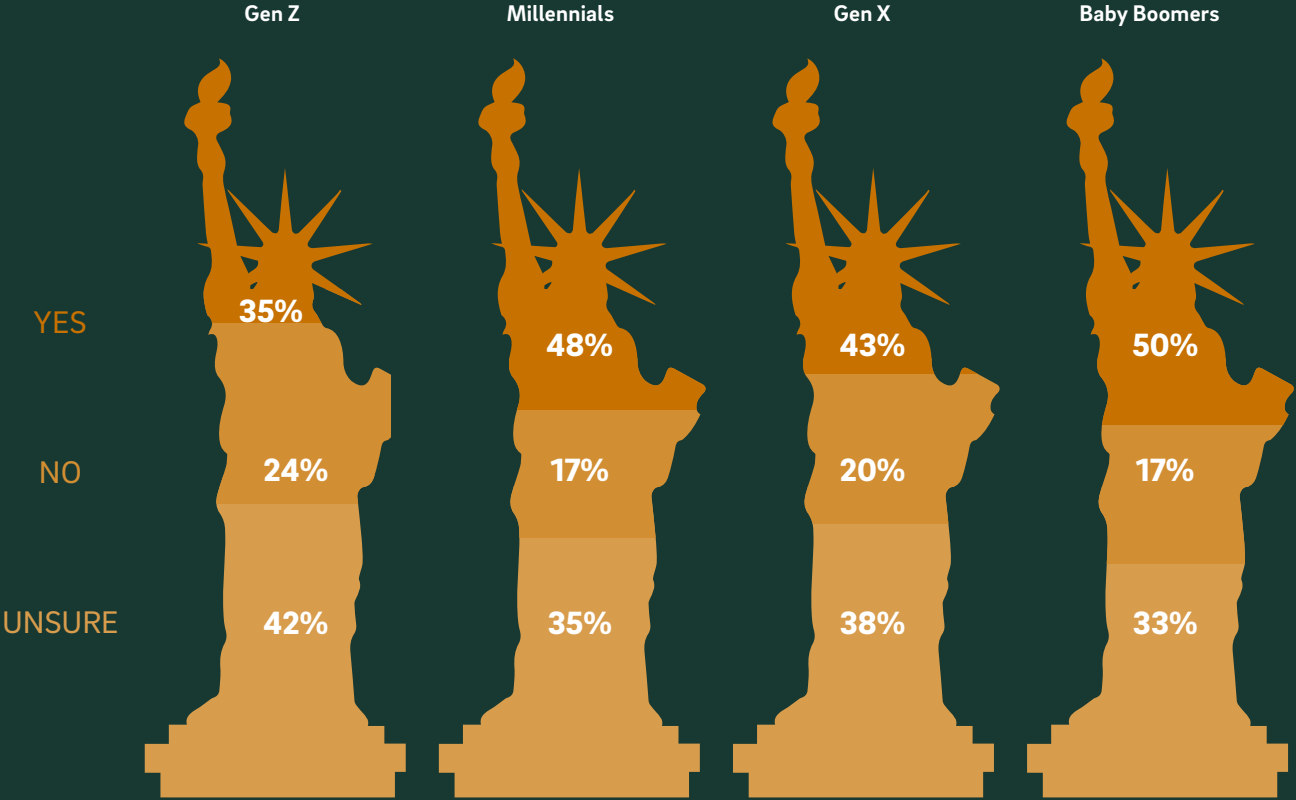
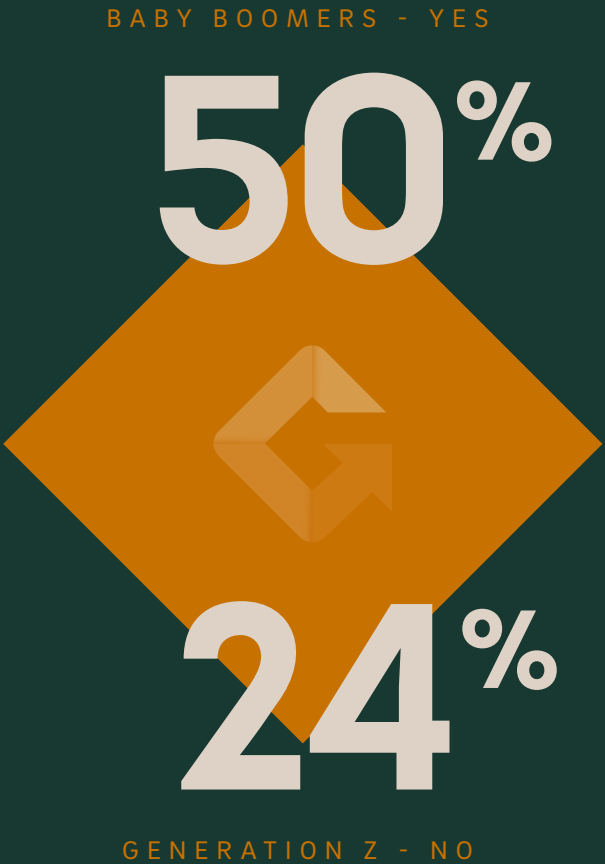
- 33% of Baby Boomers plan to travel in the next six months.
- 80% care deeply or somewhat about news outside where they live.
- 31% say “they’re in good shape” when it comes to personal finances, seven points higher than total adults in the study.
- When asked to rank what was most important in their personal lives, Baby Boomers ranked as most important: 95% having a family, 90% tolerance of others and 89% patriotism.
- 73% of Baby Boomers use Facebook.



Although there are now more Millennials than Baby Boomers, this older cohort continues to be a significant segment of the population with high purchasing power that makes a considerable impact on the U.S. economy. Baby Boomers refuse to grow old! Many choose to continue working during their golden years, maintaining lifestyles with disposable income. Smart businesses and savvy marketers will cater to Baby Boomers by making their messages more accessible. Using larger font sizes, including email and phone support options and having clear links to policies and documentations will entice this vibrant, valuable segment of the population.

DO YOU THINK YOU CAN ACHIEVE THE AMERICAN DREAM IN THE GULF SOUTH?

GULF SOUTH



Gen Z in the Gulf South is not optimistic about the American Dream with only 35% saying yes. This is the lowest percentage among the generations and 10 points lower than the total Gulf South population.

HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE U.S. TODAY? FIVE STARS IS THE BEST, AND ONE STAR IS THE WORST.



The older you are, the worse you feel about the economy. A majority of the respondents from Gen Z, Gen X, and Baby Boomers in the Gulf South give the economy one or two stars. The only generation coming under 50% were Millennials at 46%.

ARE YOU BETTER OR WORSE OFF FINANCIALLY THAN YOU WERE TWO YEARS AGO?

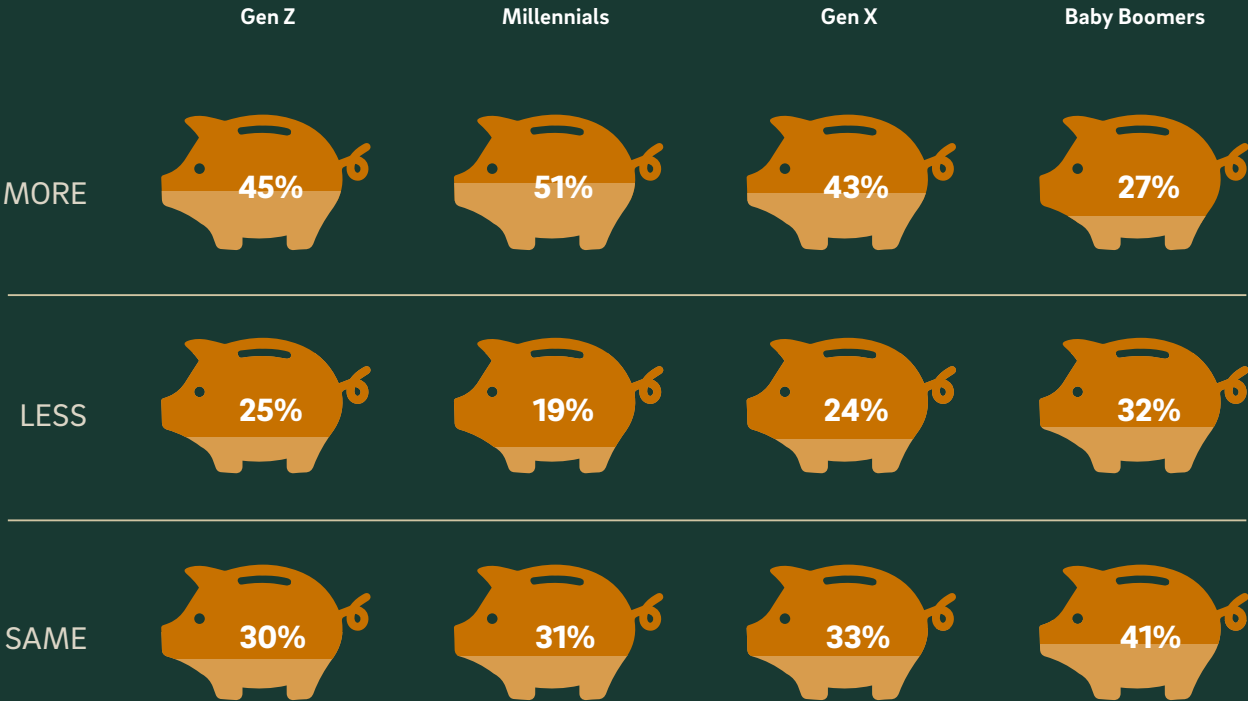
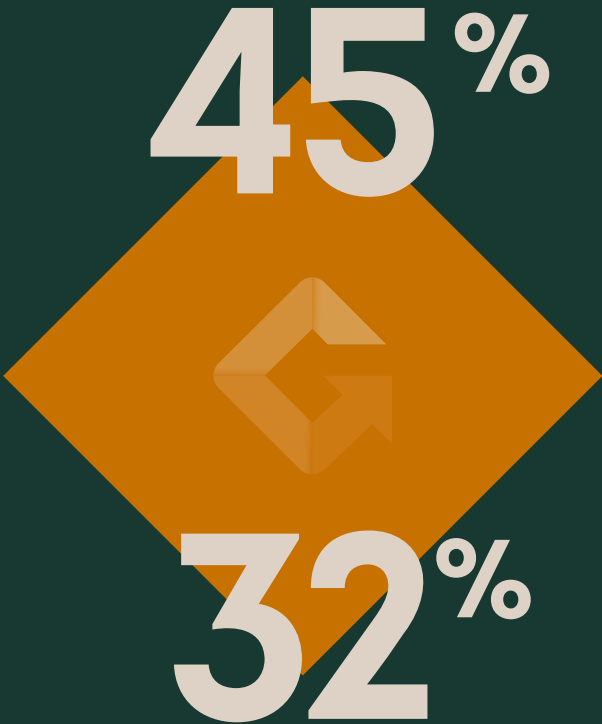


43% of Gen X say they are worse off, along with 40% of Baby Boomers, the two highest percentages among the generations. For Gen X, it is likely they are feeling inflationary pressure, high prices across the board, paying for college tuition and having more people in their household than other generations. Baby Boomers likely feel the pinch as they retire or live on more fixed incomes and ride the ups and downs of the stock market.

ARE YOU MORE OPTIMISTIC IN 2024 THAN YOU WERE IN 2023, LESS OPTIMISTIC, OR ABOUT THE SAME?

GULF SOUTH

GENERATION Z - MORE OPTIMISTIC



BABY BOOMERS - LESS OPTIMISTIC

Millennials are the most optimistic of the generations and the only generation above 50% in being more optimistic about 2024 than 2023. The least optimistic? Baby Boomers, with 32% saying they are less optimistic, at least seven points higher than the other generations.

WHICH STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CURRENT PERSONAL FINANCIAL SITUATION?

GULF SOUTH

GENERATION X - TIMES ARE TOUGH

46%

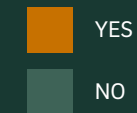
31%

BABY BOOMERS - IN GOOD SHAPE



Gen X has the highest percentage of people saying “times are tough” at 46%, seven points higher than the Gulf South overall.
Baby Boomers have the lowest percentage of people saying “times are tough” at 28%, 11 points lower than the Gulf South overall.

DID YOU MAKE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING MAJOR PURCHASES IN 2023?



MILLENNIALS - MAJOR APPLIANCE

59%

50%

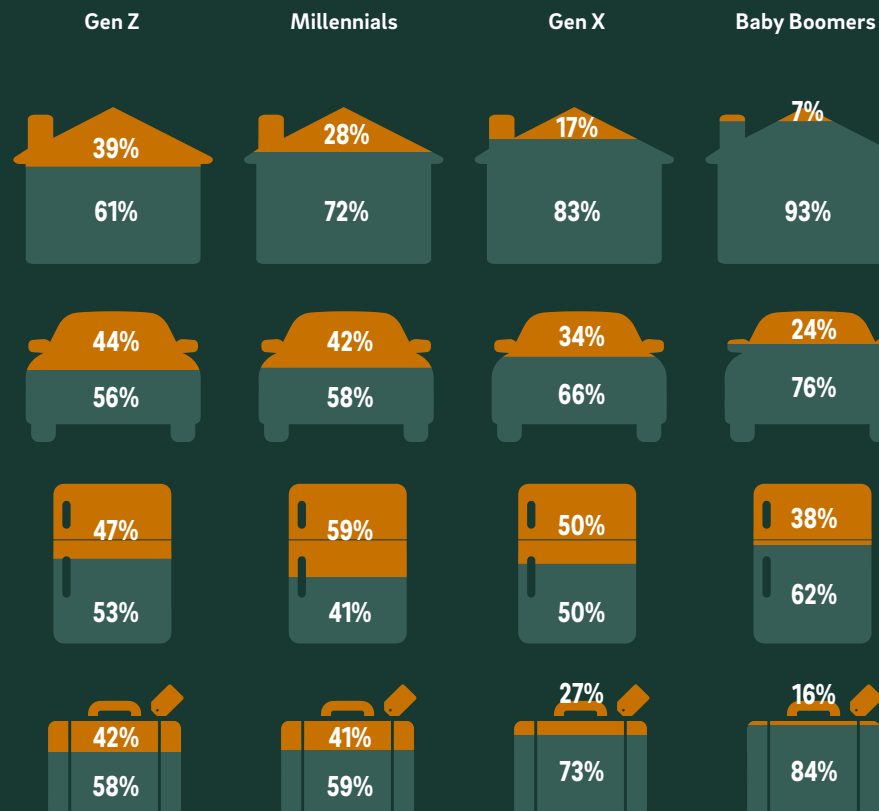
GENERATION X - MAJOR APPLIANCE

LONG DISTANCE VACATION

MAJOR APPLIANCE

CAR

HOUSE



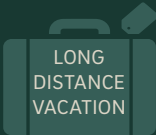
Gen Z and Millennials are spenders and travelers. Just like having the most movement between jobs, these two generations outpace others when it comes to buying cars and appliances. What's more, 42% of Gen Z and 41% of Millennials looked to travel in 2023, compared to just 33% of the Gulf South overall.

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO MAKE ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PURCHASES OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS?

GULF SOUTH

BUY A HOUSE - NOT AT ALL
BABY BOOMERS

86%



68%

BUY A HOUSE - NOT AT ALL
GENERATION X

	EXTREMELY LIKELY	VERY LIKELY	SOMEWHAT LIKELY	NOT AT ALL LIKELY
Gen Z	19%	18%	25%	39%
Millennials	13%	17%	20%	50%
Gen X	9%	9%	14%	68%
Baby Boomers	5%	2%	7%	86%

Gen Z	21%	22%	25%	31%
Millennials	24%	17%	25%	34%
Gen X	17%	19%	23%	42%
Baby Boomers	7%	7%	23%	62%

Gen Z	19%	24%	25%	32%
Millennials	20%	21%	32%	27%
Gen X	12%	21%	32%	35%
Baby Boomers	9%	7%	35%	50%

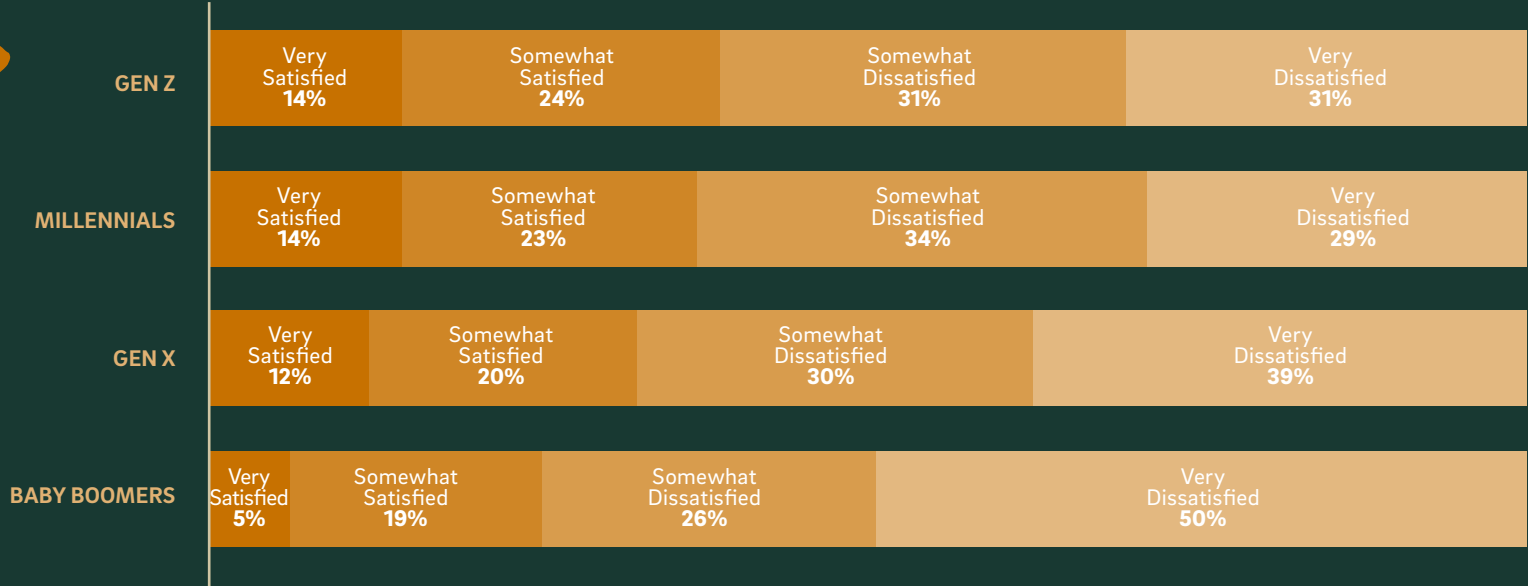
Gen Z	25%	23%	27%	25%
Millennials	23%	16%	21%	39%
Gen X	14%	12%	19%	55%
Baby Boomers	8%	7%	17%	67%

Gen Z in the Gulf South want to buy homes. 62% of Gen Z in the region say they are likely to buy a home. 23 points higher than the Gulf South overall.

IN GENERAL, ARE YOU SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING IN THE UNITED STATES AT THIS TIME?

GULF SOUTH

GENERATION Z - SOMEWHAT SATISFIED



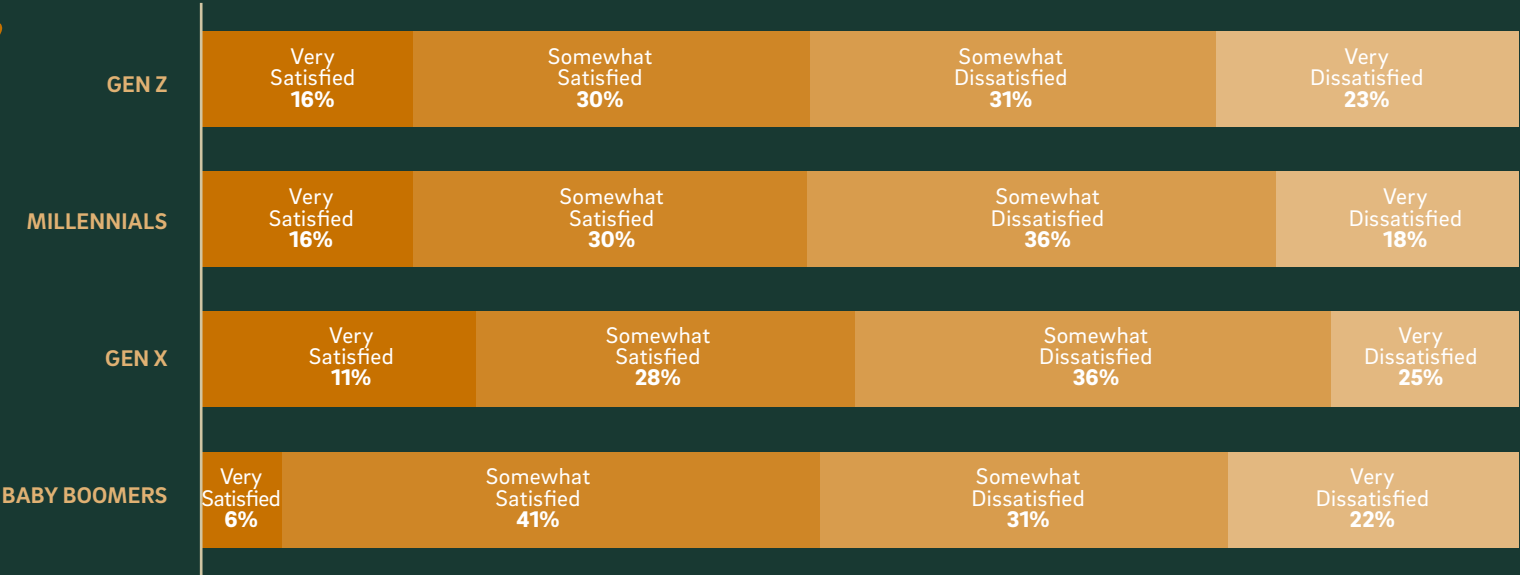
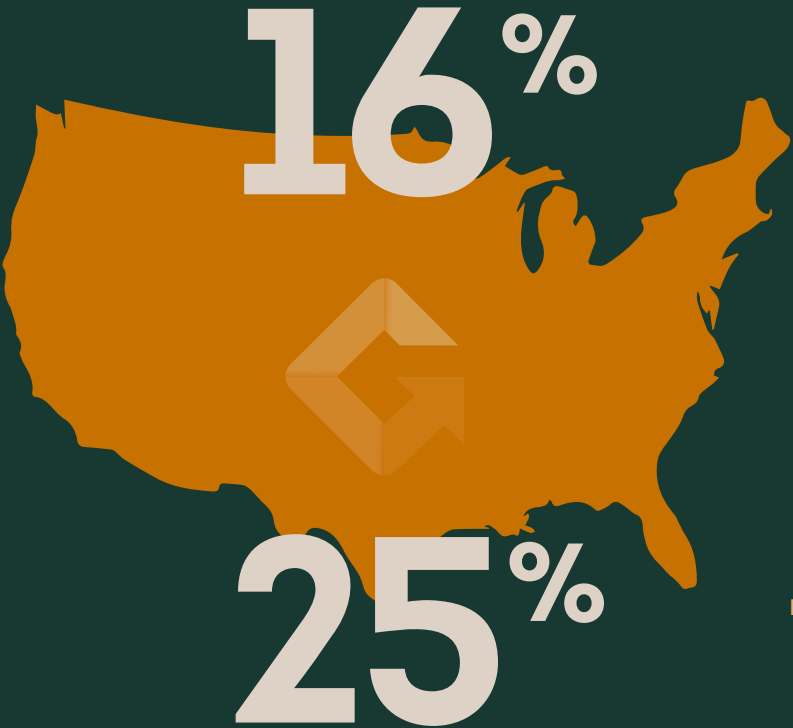
BABY BOOMERS - VERY DISSATISFIED

The older you are, the more dissatisfied you are with the direction of the U.S. Even though Gen Z has a brighter outlook and is seeing some of the most activity with buying and traveling, 62% still say they are dissatisfied with the U.S’s direction.

IN GENERAL, ARE YOU SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING IN YOUR STATE AT THIS TIME?

GULF SOUTH

GENERATION Z - VERY SATISFIED



GENERATION X - VERY DISSATISFIED

The divide between Gen Xers saying they are satisfied with the direction of their state (39%) vs those who are dissatisfied (61%) is -22 points. This is twice the differential of any of the generations. Overall, people who are dissatisfied come in higher than those who are satisfied across each generation.

HOW MUCH, IF AT ALL, DO YOU TRUST THE INFORMATION THAT COMES FROM EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCES?

 GULF SOUTH

		A great deal	Somewhat	Not Much/At All
Cable News Networks	Gen Z	31%	27%	43%
	Millennials	35%	31%	35%
	Gen X	25%	38%	37%
	Baby Boomers	20%	38%	42%
Local News Networks	Gen Z	39%	30%	32%
	Millennials	46%	32%	23%
	Gen X	41%	40%	18%
	Baby Boomers	35%	45%	20%
Online News Websites	Gen Z	39%	27%	33%
	Millennials	33%	38%	29%
	Gen X	28%	41%	31%
	Baby Boomers	16%	47%	38%
Social media websites like Facebook and Twitter/X	Gen Z	44%	21%	35%
	Millennials	31%	29%	41%
	Gen X	22%	28%	50%
	Baby Boomers	5%	24%	71%

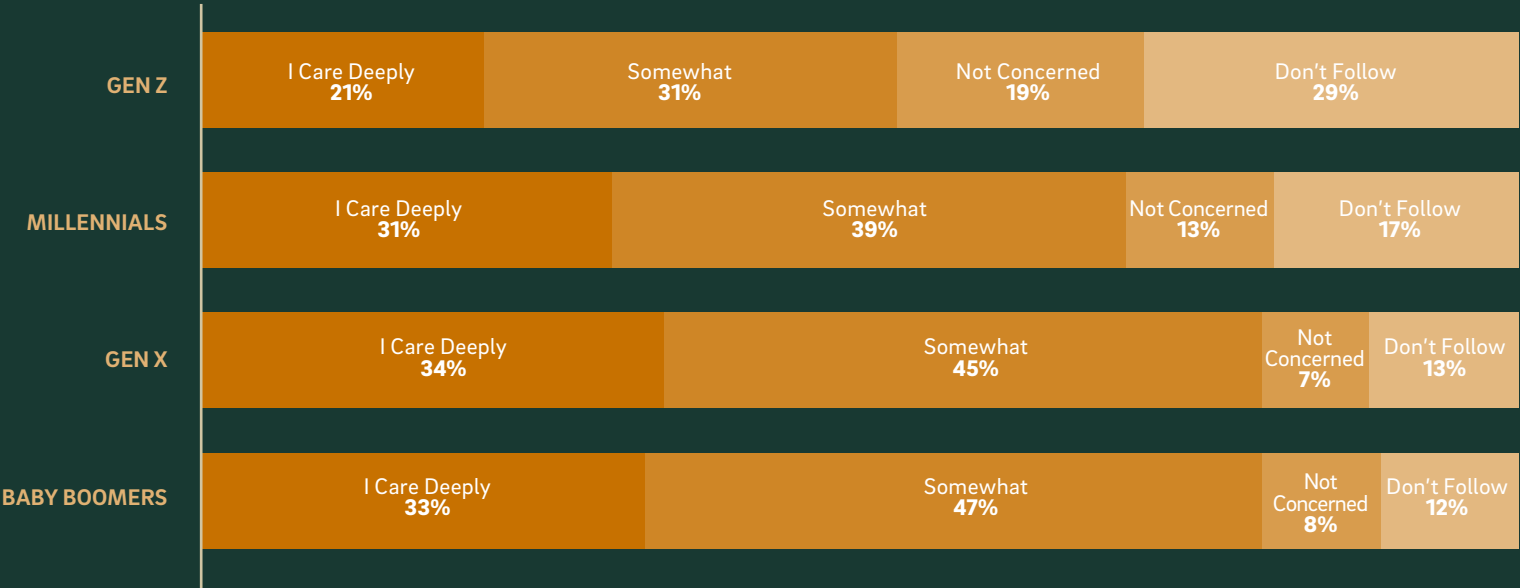
		A great deal	Somewhat	Not Much/At All
Newspapers and other periodicals	Gen Z	35%	30%	35%
	Millennials	39%	34%	27%
	Gen X	30%	37%	32%
	Baby Boomers	22%	38%	40%
Radio	Gen Z	36%	27%	37%
	Millennials	36%	36%	27%
	Gen X	29%	46%	25%
	Baby Boomers	19%	53%	27%
Podcasts	Gen Z	33%	30%	27%
	Millennials	30%	36%	34%
	Gen X	22%	38%	39%
	Baby Boomers	6%	40%	45%
Friends and neighbors	Gen Z	37%	30%	33%
	Millennials	39%	40%	21%
	Gen X	36%	42%	22%
	Baby Boomers	32%	49%	19%

Millennials and Gen X trust local news in the highest percentages. Baby Boomers possess the highest levels of distrust, regardless of the information source. Only one-third of Baby Boomers trust their friends and neighbors, less than all the other generations.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT NEWS HAPPENING IN AREAS OUTSIDE YOUR IMMEDIATE AREA?

GULF SOUTH

GENERATION X - CARE DEEPLY



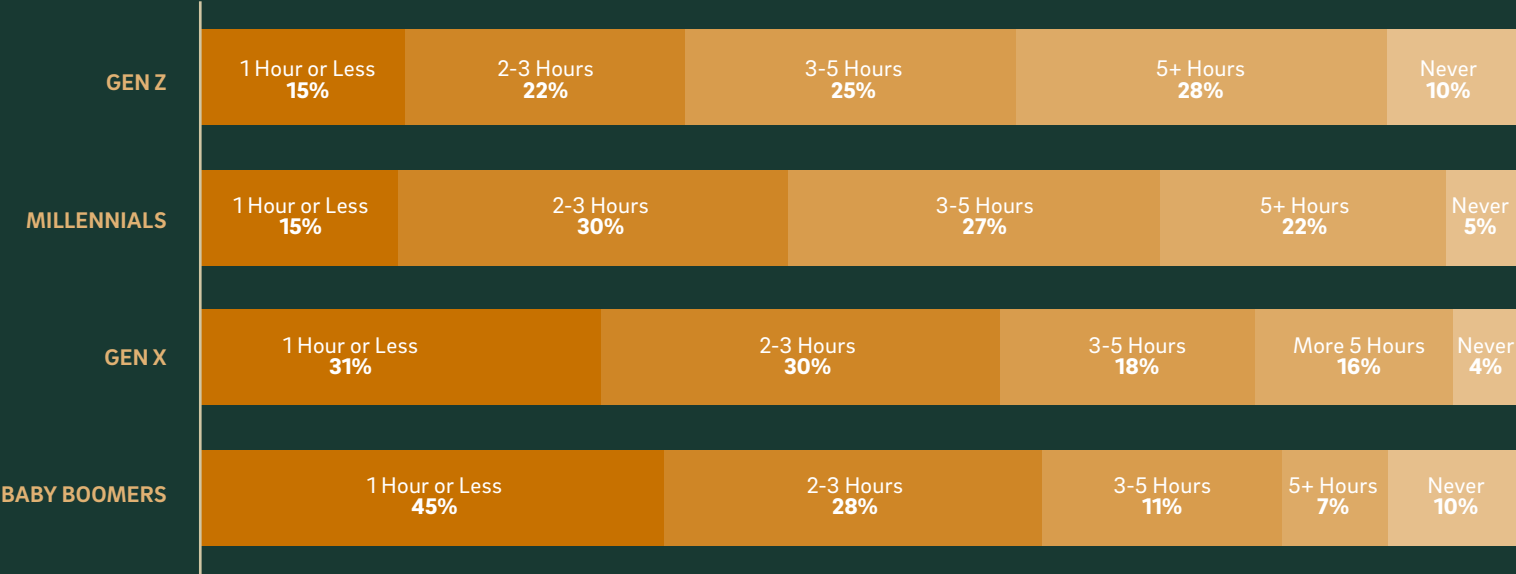
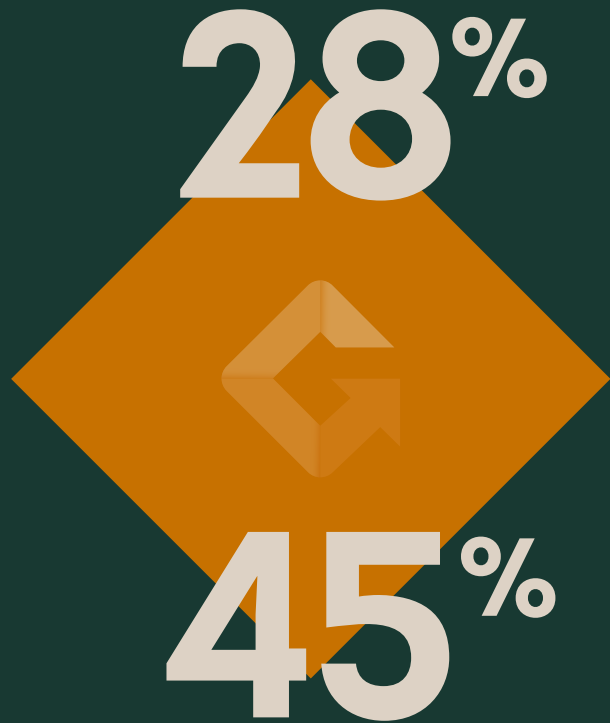
GENERATION Z - DON'T FOLLOW

Regardless of generation, the number of people caring deeply about news outside of their area has steadily declined among both national and Gulf South audiences. National audiences had an uptick in caring deeply in 2022, likely due to the war in Ukraine. But in 2023 and 2024, that percentage slipped to 38% and 36% respectively. In 2024, 80% of national respondents said they care deeply or somewhat about news outside their hometown. That is nine points higher than respondents in the Gulf South.

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND ON SOCIAL MEDIA ON A TYPICAL DAY?

GULF SOUTH

GENERATION Z - 5 HOURS OR MORE



BABY BOOMERS - 1 HOUR OR LESS

40% of Gulf South residents spend three or more hours on social media per day, five points higher than national audiences. 53% of Gen Z in the Gulf South spends more than three hours a day on social media. They are the only generation that is above 50% in this amount of daily usage.

ARE YOU AN ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ONLINE COMMUNITIES?

 GULF SOUTH

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers
 REDDIT	22%	26%	19%	9%
 NCAA	13%	8%	4%	2%
 FACEBOOK	51%	77%	79%	73%
 TWITTER/X	34%	38%	27%	20%
 INSTAGRAM	48%	60%	46%	28%

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Baby Boomers
 LINKEDIN	18%	29%	21%	17%
 TIKTOK	48%	52%	46%	15%
 SNAPCHAT	46%	44%	30%	6%
 PINTEREST	31%	34%	29%	30%
 YOUTUBE	54%	67%	61%	43%

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT STATUS WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING VIDEO STREAMING PLATFORMS?

 GULF SOUTH

		I personally subscribe, share, or receive for free	Don't currently subscribe, but have in the past	Never subscribed
NETFLIX	Gen Z	62%	21%	16%
	Millennials	72%	19%	10%
	Gen X	58%	28%	15%
	Baby Boomers	45%	20%	34%
hulu	Gen Z	66%	16%	18%
	Millennials	63%	19%	18%
	Gen X	53%	18%	28%
	Baby Boomers	35%	16%	49%
amazon prime video	Gen Z	61%	21%	19%
	Millennials	69%	15%	16%
	Gen X	64%	17%	19%
	Baby Boomers	57%	9%	35%
max	Gen Z	52%	17%	31%
	Millennials	45%	19%	36%
	Gen X	36%	23%	41%
	Baby Boomers	20%	15%	65%
Paramount+	Gen Z	51%	15%	34%
	Millennials	51%	21%	29%
	Gen X	47%	19%	33%
	Baby Boomers	31%	13%	56%

		I personally subscribe, share, or receive for free	Don't currently subscribe, but have in the past	Never subscribed
Disney+	Gen Z	66%	17%	18%
	Millennials	61%	16%	22%
	Gen X	45%	17%	38%
	Baby Boomers	26%	15%	59%
apple tv+	Gen Z	50%	15%	36%
	Millennials	34%	20%	46%
	Gen X	26%	16%	58%
	Baby Boomers	11%	10%	78%
YouTubeTV	Gen Z	49%	21%	29%
	Millennials	48%	13%	39%
	Gen X	41%	14%	45%
	Baby Boomers	32%	7%	62%
peacock	Gen Z	50%	21%	29%
	Millennials	50%	17%	34%
	Gen X	49%	17%	35%
	Baby Boomers	30%	9%	60%
sling	Gen Z	36%	18%	47%
	Millennials	25%	21%	55%
	Gen X	22%	18%	60%
	Baby Boomers	10%	10%	81%

In total, four streaming services are subscribed to by 50% or more of the both the Gulf South and national audiences – Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and Disney+. 63% of Gulf South residents either personally subscribe or share a subscription to Amazon Prime, making it the most popular streaming service in the region.

IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, HAVE YOU?

 GULF SOUTH

		YES	NO	UNSURE
BOUGHT A PRODUCT OR SERVICE AFTER SAMPLING IT	Gen Z	44%	40%	16%
	Millennials	56%	34%	10%
	Gen X	52%	39%	9%
	Baby Boomers	39%	51%	10%

ATTENDED A VIRTUAL EVENT	Gen Z	31%	50%	19%
	Millennials	40%	52%	8%
	Gen X	27%	68%	5%
	Baby Boomers	16%	79%	5%

USED A VIRTUAL REALITY (VR) OR AUGMENTED REALITY (AR) TECH	Gen Z	33%	49%	18%
	Millennials	36%	56%	7%
	Gen X	23%	71%	5%
	Baby Boomers	10%	84%	6%

		YES	NO	UNSURE
BOUGHT A PRODUCT OR SERVICE BASED ON AN INFLUENCER RECOMMENDATION	Gen Z	47%	36%	17%
	Millennials	45%	46%	9%
	Gen X	31%	61%	8%
	Baby Boomers	14%	80%	6%

BEEN PERSUADED TO GO TO AN EVENT OR VACATION BECAUSE OF A PODCAST, MOVIE, OR TELEVISION SHOW	Gen Z	36%	49%	15%
	Millennials	35%	56%	9%
	Gen X	20%	72%	8%
	Baby Boomers	8%	88%	4%

ARE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT TO YOU IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?

 GULF SOUTH

		VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	UNSURE
HARD WORK	Gen Z	52%	21%	17%	9%
	Millennials	70%	19%	5%	5%
	Gen X	66%	26%	4%	3%
	Baby Boomers	68%	23%	6%	3%
TOLERANCE FOR OTHERS	Gen Z	32%	30%	28%	10%
	Millennials	44%	36%	15%	6%
	Gen X	41%	42%	13%	3%
	Baby Boomers	52%	40%	7%	1%
FAMILY	Gen Z	58%	13%	20%	10%
	Millennials	78%	10%	8%	4%
	Gen X	80%	13%	5%	2%
	Baby Boomers	88%	7%	2%	2%
COMMUNITY	Gen Z	35%	33%	25%	7%
	Millennials	44%	37%	14%	5%
	Gen X	42%	40%	12%	5%
	Baby Boomers	39%	51%	9%	1%

		VERY IMPORTANT	SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	UNSURE
PATRIOTISM	Gen Z	25%	27%	35%	13%
	Millennials	36%	30%	25%	9%
	Gen X	44%	31%	17%	8%
	Baby Boomers	64%	25%	8%	2%
RELIGION	Gen Z	38%	22%	30%	11%
	Millennials	46%	27%	23%	5%
	Gen X	52%	22%	23%	3%
	Baby Boomers	64%	16%	19%	0%
HAVING CHILDREN	Gen Z	33%	23%	33%	11%
	Millennials	47%	20%	26%	8%
	Gen X	37%	21%	35%	6%
	Baby Boomers	32%	16%	48%	5%
MONEY	Gen Z	51%	21%	20%	7%
	Millennials	63%	22%	10%	4%
	Gen X	55%	34%	9%	2%
	Baby Boomers	47%	46%	5%	2%



TAPPING IN TO TRUST: HOW ARE WE FEELING?

**"Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships."
– Stephen Covey**

How we behave matters – and our overall feelings in 2024 are important. How do we feel about our lives at home and the state of our country? Are we worried about money, or should we be? And who do we trust most?

Trust is essential in relationships and society, which is the reason this question is a consistent fixture in the Gulf South Index: "How much, if at all, do you trust the information that comes from each of the following sources?" Unsurprisingly for both the Gulf South and nationally, local news networks remain the most trusted source of information (for the third year in a row).

With nearly every media platform, there's a "trust range" that each platform falls into for the Gulf South and national audiences. People's trust in social media ranges between 24% and 34% from year to year in the Gulf South. Nationally, trust in social media ranges between 27% and 33%. With newspapers, Gulf South trust ranges between 33% and 36% year by year. For both the Gulf South and nationally, we found that in any given year between 29% and 34% of all respondents say they trust radio a great deal or quite a lot. 23% to 26% of respondents trust podcasts a great deal or quite a lot, and between 35% to 37% trust our friends and neighbors year to year. Some media platforms are also seeing a steady decline among national audiences when it comes to trust. Cable news networks have fallen from 32% in 2023 to 37% in 2024. Newspapers have fallen from 41% in 2022 to 37% in 2023 and now 35% in 2024.

When asked, "In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in YOUR STATE at this time," people do not seem satisfied. A majority of both the Gulf South and national audiences are somewhat/very dissatisfied with how things are going in their home states—but the Gulf South residents feel more dissatisfied at 55%, three points higher than our national audience at 52%.

As for satisfaction with the U.S. at this time, the survey found people are even more dissatisfied with the way things are going nationally than they are with their own state. This is true in the Gulf South and nationally. 67% of the Gulf South – two out of three people – and 62% of the national audience say they are somewhat/very dissatisfied with the way things are going nationally. Folks may not like how it's going in their state, but they really don't like what's happening nationally.

Unsurprisingly, when we asked, "What do you think is the most important issue facing the country," the response is "the economy" more than everything else. Other issues may generate headlines and real or perceived upset, but it ultimately comes down to dollars and cents. Especially in the Gulf South where the economy ranks as the number one issue and is the No. 1 issue by seven points over the national audiences. Immigration has seen the biggest increase in concern going from 6% in 2022 to 15% now in both national and Gulf South regions

IN GENERAL, ARE YOU SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING IN THE UNITED STATES AT THIS TIME?

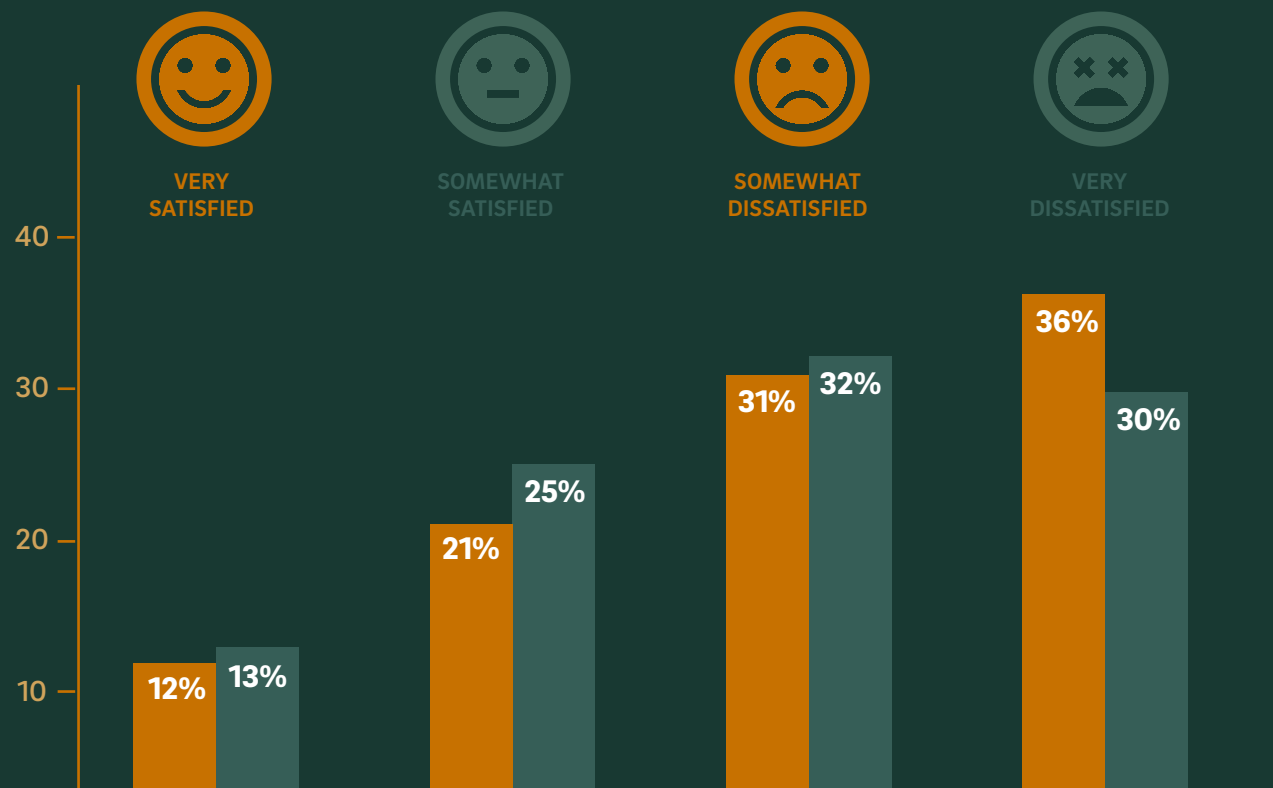
GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL

VERY SATISFIED - G.S. 2024

12%

36%

VERY DISSATISFIED - G.S. 2023



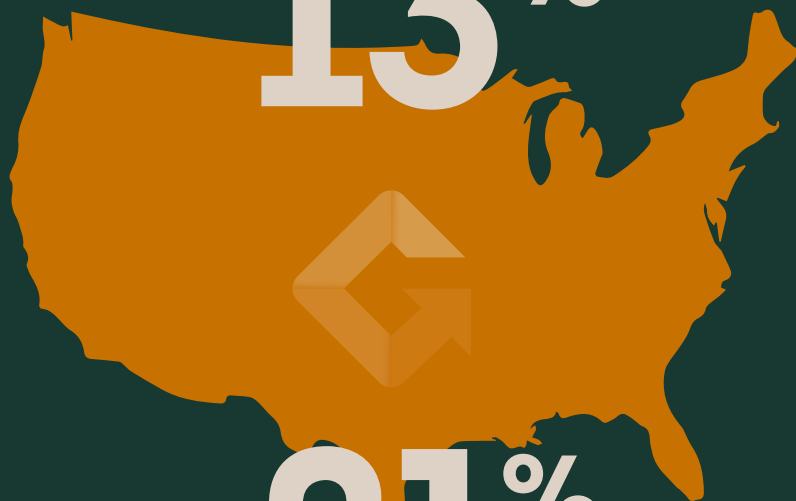
Folks may not like how it's going in their state, but they really don't like what's happening nationally. Two out of three people in the Gulf South and 62% of the national audience say they are somewhat or very dissatisfied with the way things are going nationally. Looking deeper, the older you are, the more you are not satisfied with the direction of the U.S.

IN GENERAL, ARE YOU SATISFIED OR DISSATISFIED WITH THE WAY THINGS ARE GOING IN YOUR STATE AT THIS TIME?

GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL

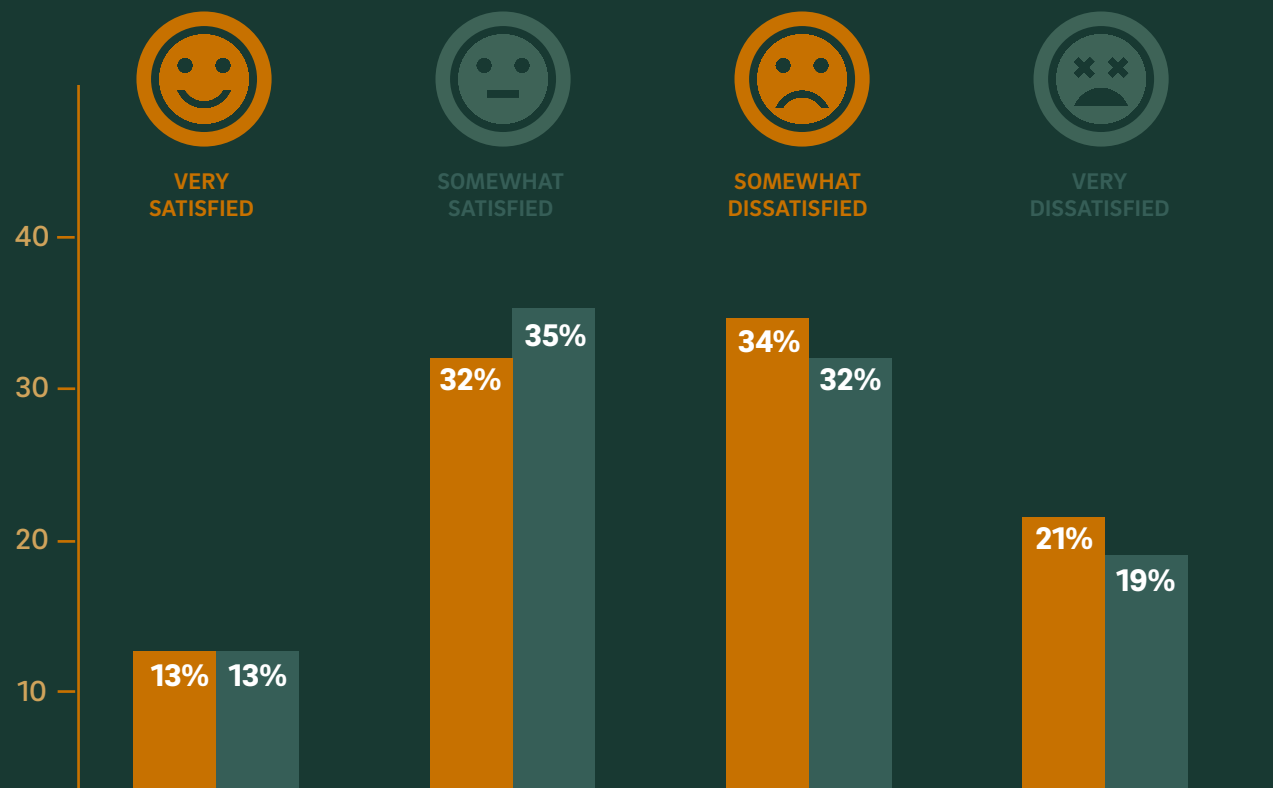
VERY SATISFIED - G.S. 2024

13%



21%

VERY DISSATISFIED - G.S. 2024



A majority of both the Gulf South and national audiences are somewhat/very dissatisfied with how things are going in their home states. The Gulf South feels more dissatisfied at 55%, four points higher than national. However, consistent with the idea of backyard optimism and people feeling better about things happening close to home, the levels of dissatisfaction in someone's state are less than their level of dissatisfaction with what's happening nationally.

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT NEWS HAPPENING IN AREAS OUTSIDE YOUR IMMEDIATE AREA?

GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL

CARE DEEPLY - G.S. 2024

30%

11%

NOT CONCERNED - G.S. 2024

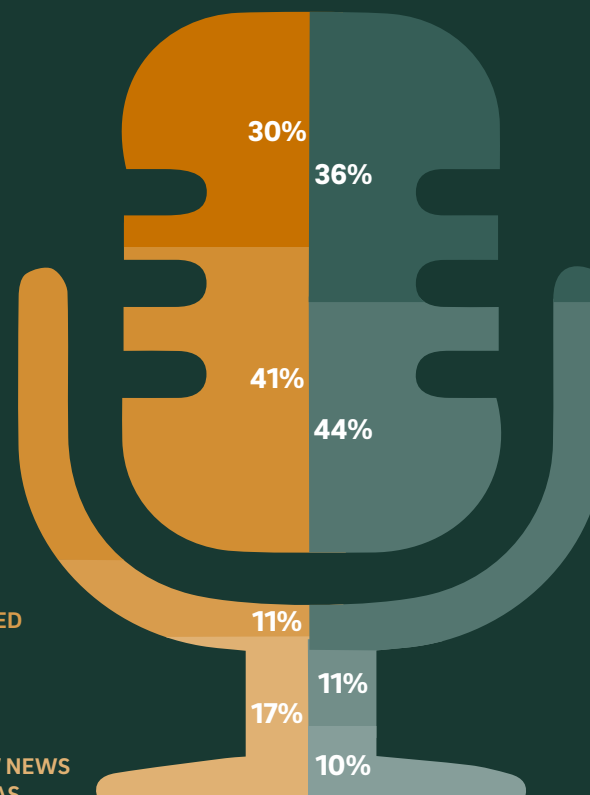
I CARE DEEPLY

SOMEWHAT

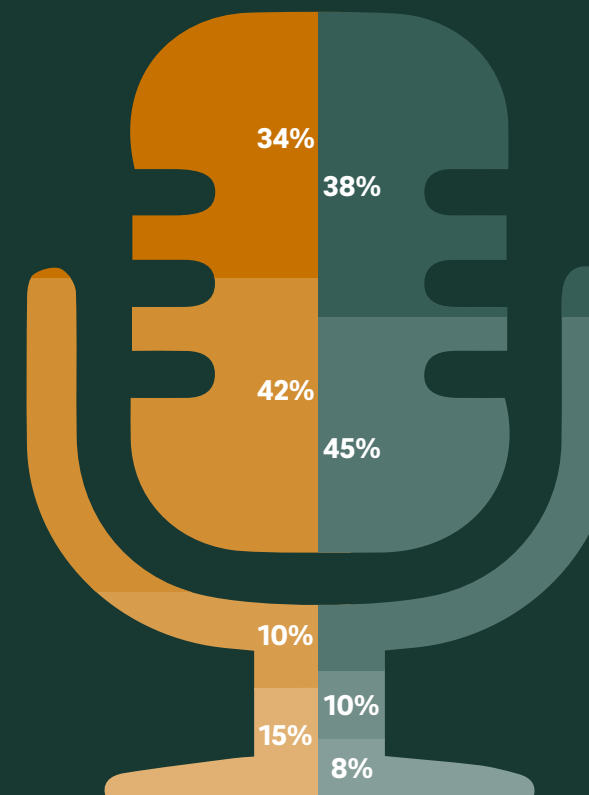
NOT CONCERNED

DON'T FOLLOW NEWS
IN OTHER AREAS

2024



2023

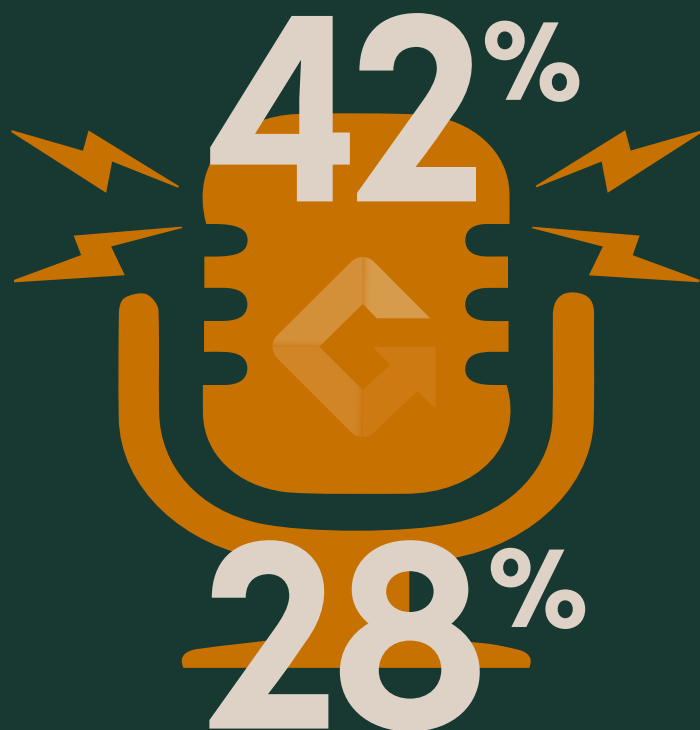


By generation, the older you are, the more you care about news beyond your immediate environment. Part of the reason may be that older generations have more life experience with larger events, such as Baby Boomers and the Vietnam War, Gen X and the Cold War, and Millennials and September 11. Another thought is that younger generations want to tune out the noise and daily bombardment of unrelenting news and headlines.

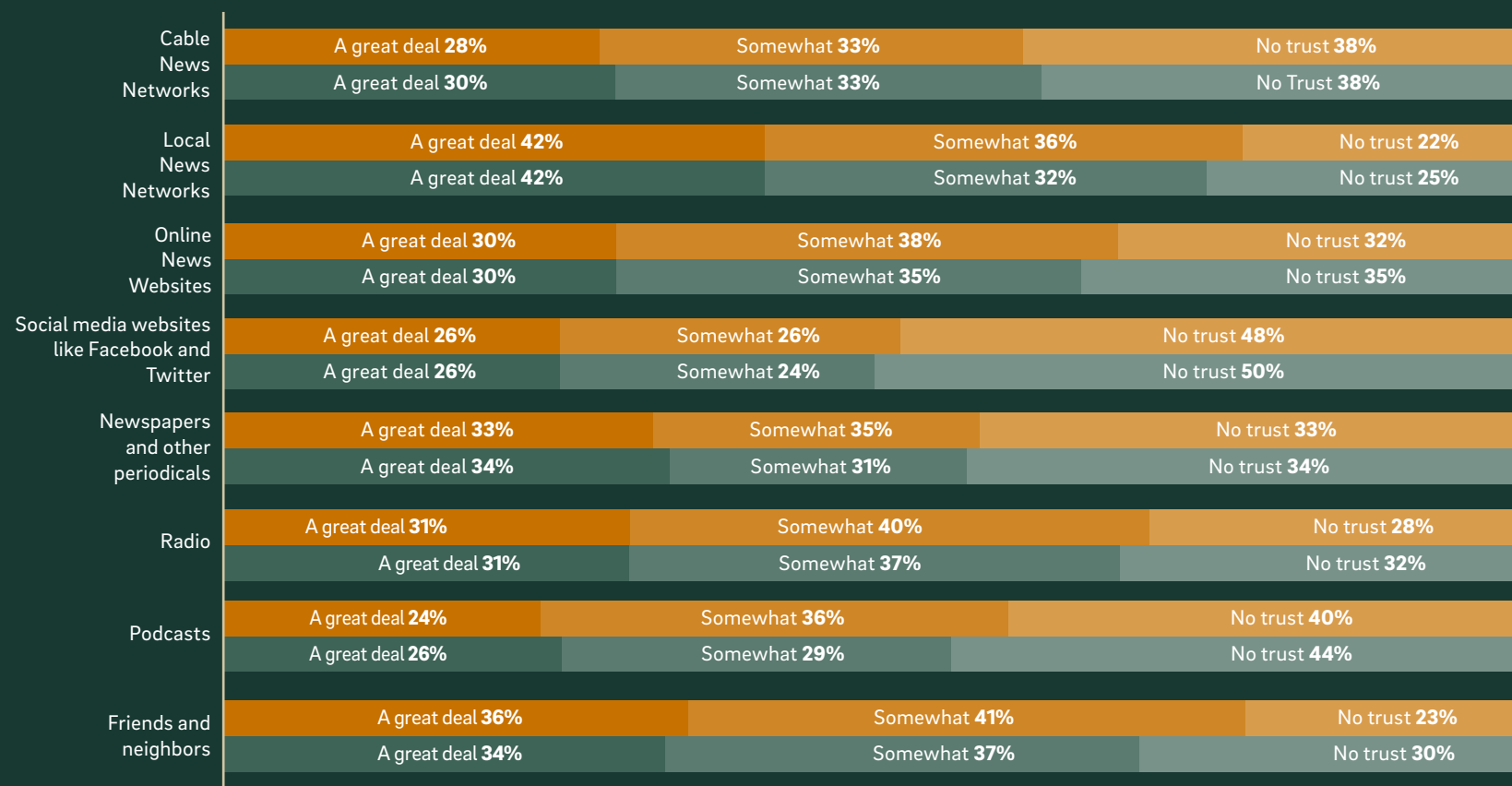
HOW MUCH, IF AT ALL, DO YOU TRUST THE INFORMATION THAT COMES FROM EACH OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCES?



LOCAL NEWS NETWORKS - G.S



CABLE NEWS NETWORKS - G.S



There's a "trust range" for nearly every platform for the Gulf South and national audiences. People's trust in social media ranges between 24% and 27% in the Gulf South from year to year. Nationally, the range is between 25% and 29%. With newspapers, Gulf South trust ranges between 33% and 35% each year.

APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND USING THE FOLLOWING DEVICES DURING A TYPICAL DAY?

GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL

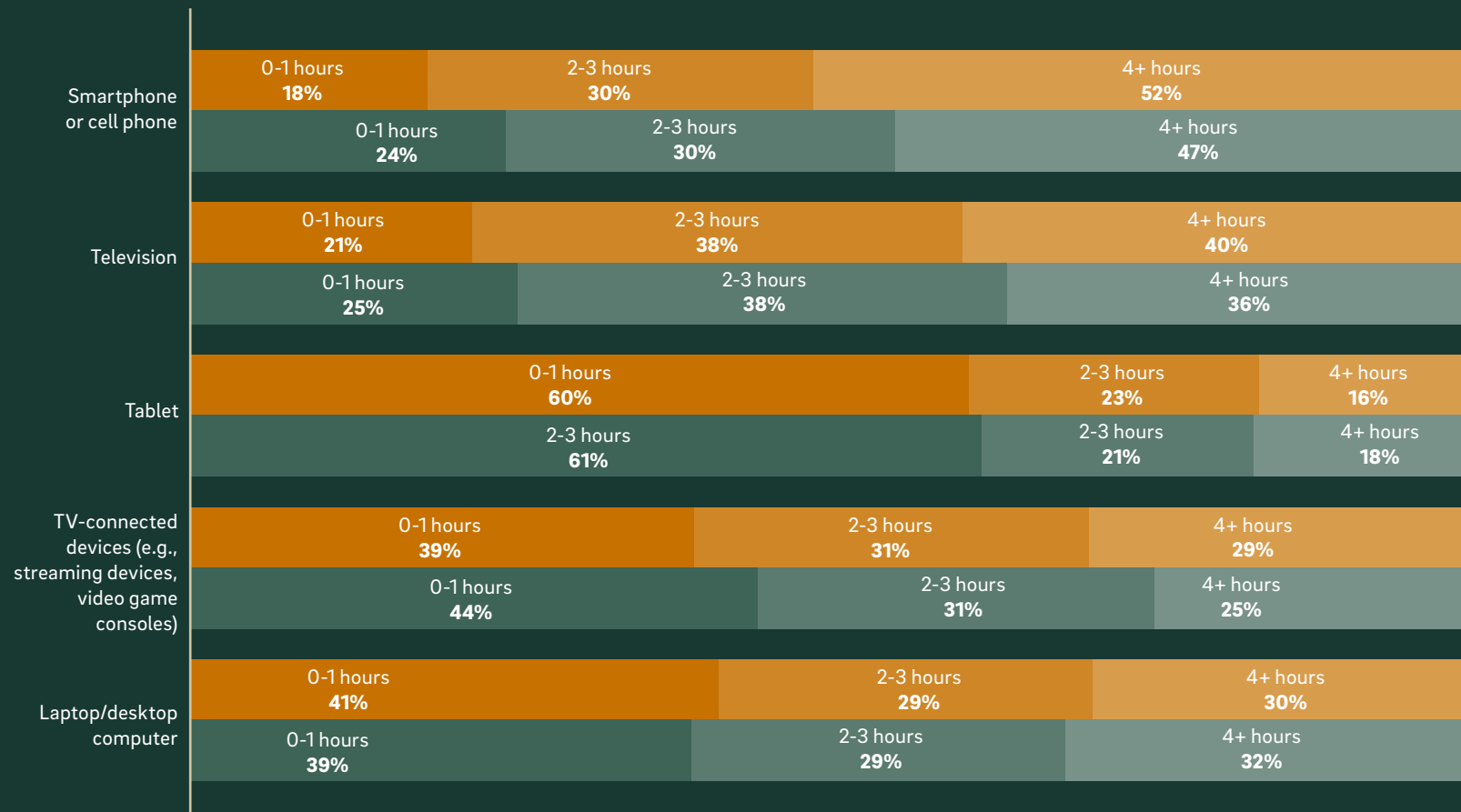
USE A SMART OR CELL PHONE
4+ HOURS - G.S.

52%



60%

USE TABLETS
LESS THAN 1 HOUR - G.S.



The Gulf South relies on devices a lot. We outpace national audiences in watching TV for more than four hours daily, using our cellphones for four hours or more daily, and using TV-connected devices like gaming consoles and streaming devices, for four or more hours a day.

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND ON SOCIAL MEDIA ON A TYPICAL DAY?

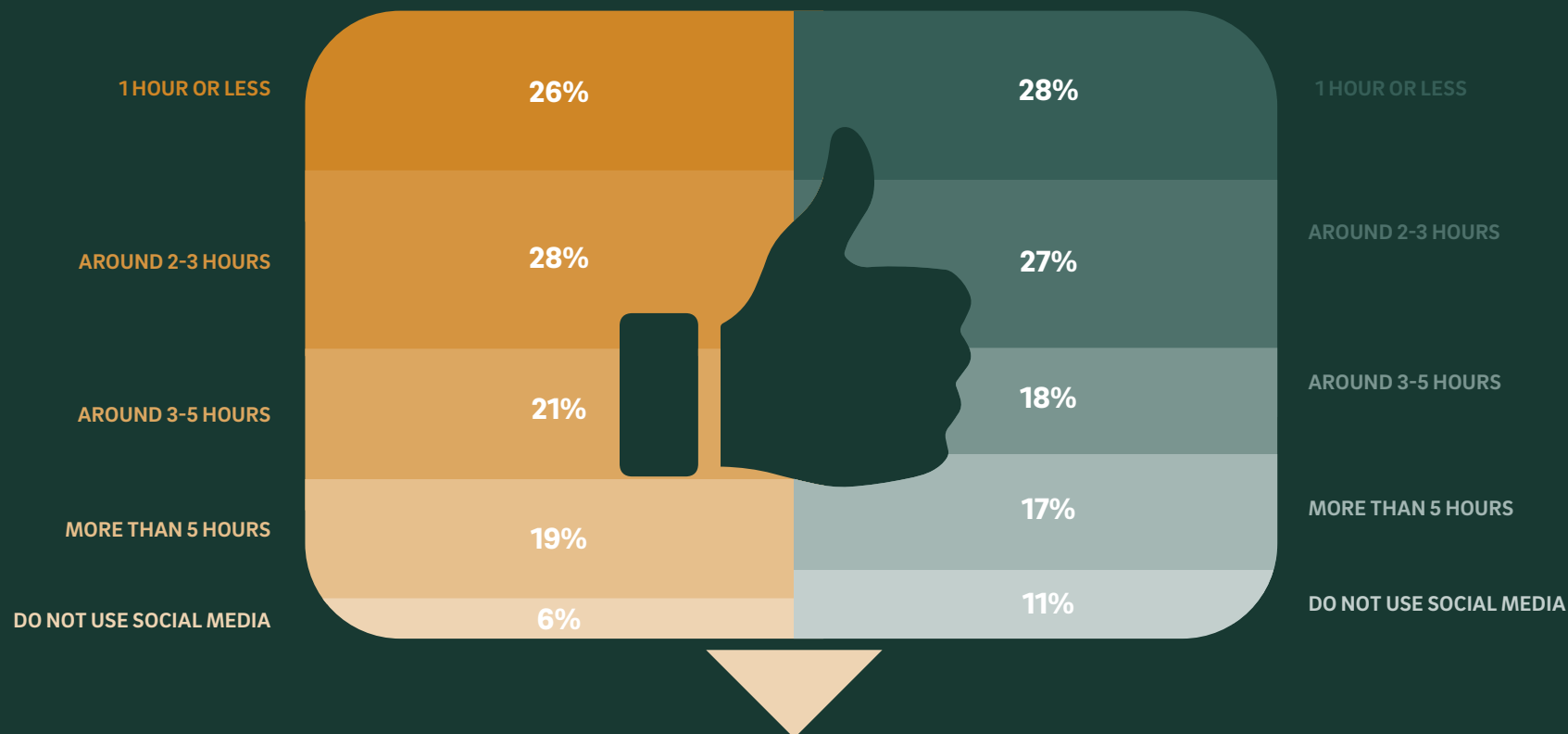


2-3 HOURS - G.S.

28%

28%

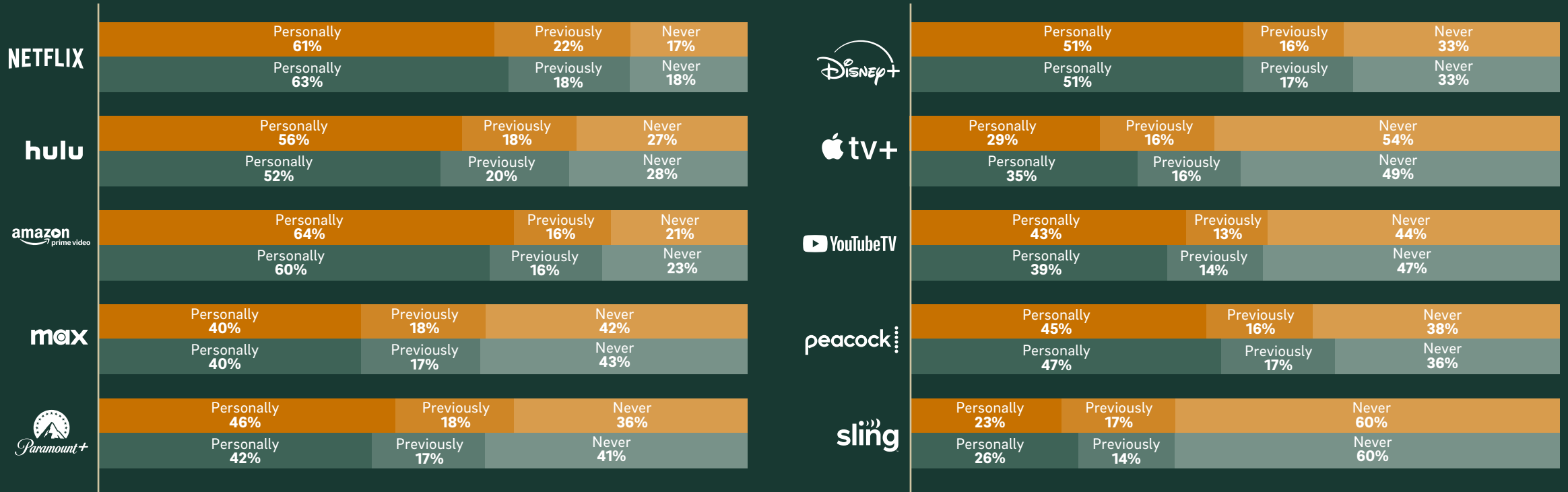
1 HOUR OR LESS - U.S.



52% of the Gulf South spends a quarter of their waking hours daily on their smartphone. That's more than four hours a day.

WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT STATUS WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING VIDEO STREAMING PLATFORMS?

GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL



Two out of three people in the Gulf South have Amazon Prime, making it the No. 1 streaming service here, while two out of three people nationally have Netflix, pushing it to the top of the national list. In total, four streaming services come in over 50% in the Gulf South AND nationally – Netflix, Amazon Prime, Hulu, and Disney+. Nationally, streaming Apple TV+ comes in six points higher in the Gulf South.

HAVE YOU USED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING AI SERVICES WITHIN THE LAST MONTH?

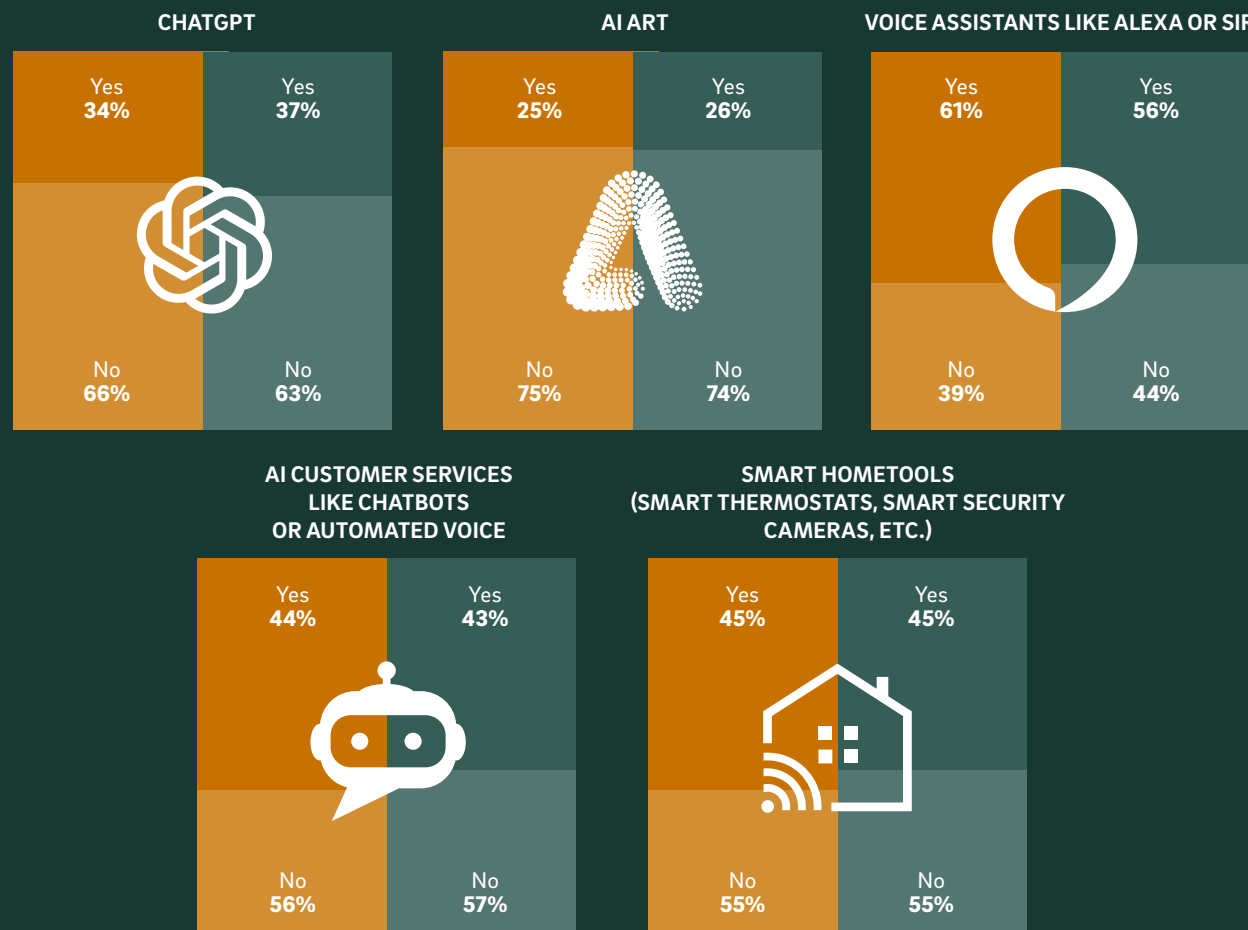


VOICE ASSISTANTS - G.S.

61%

45%

SMART HOMETOOLS - G.S.



Voice assistants are part of our lives now. The Gulf South even uses these features more than national audiences – 61% to 56%. AI is a young technology in format and use. The highest users of AI in the Gulf South are Millennials (43%) and Gen Z (42%).

WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE FACING THE COUNTRY TODAY?

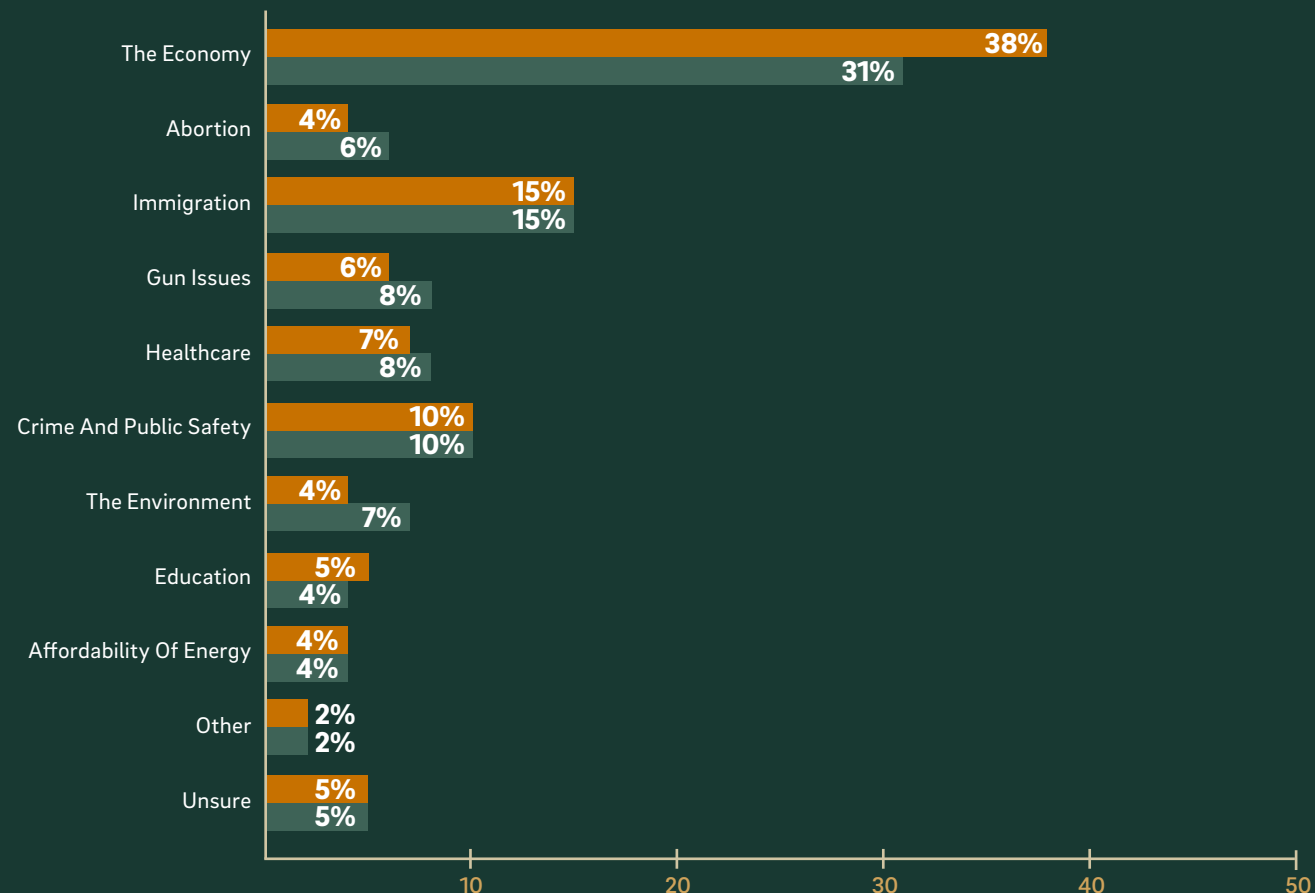
GULF SOUTH
NATIONAL

THE ECONOMY - G.S. 2024

38%

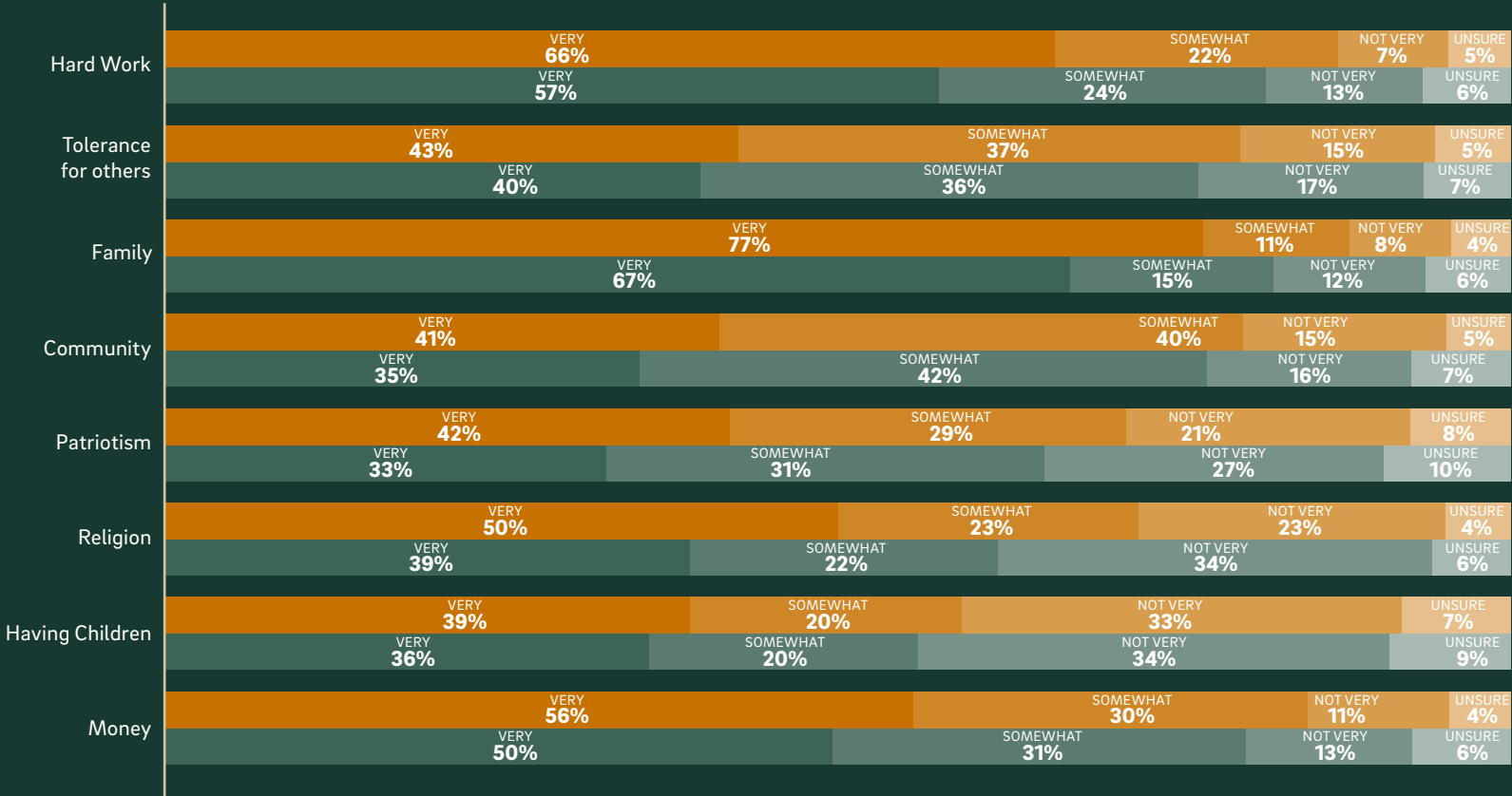
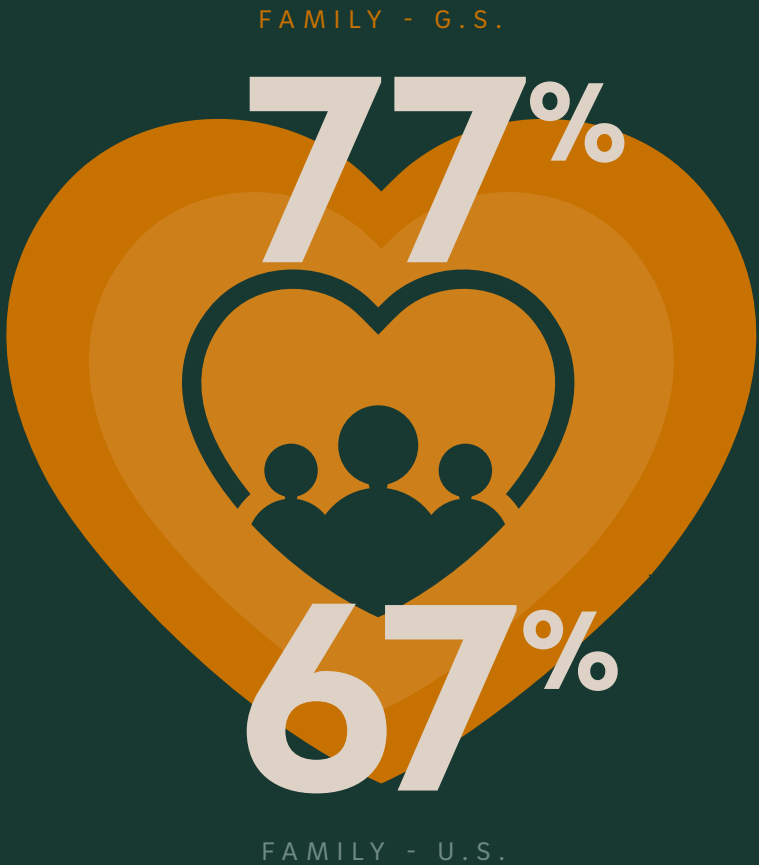


THE ECONOMY - U.S. 2024



Two things. 1) It's the economy and then everything else. That's even more true in the Gulf South, where the economy outpaces national audiences by seven points. 2) We have more in common than we may think we do. The economy is the No.1 issue for the Gulf South and nationally. Beyond that, how we feel about the remaining issues here and nationally match nearly exactly.

ARE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IMPORTANT TO YOU IN YOUR PERSONAL LIFE?



In the movie Jerry McGuire, in the midst of an argument, one of the main characters says to Jerry, "Jerry, you think we are fighting and I think we are finally talking!" There is a lot of noise about the divisions that exist based on where someone may live. Looking at the numbers, the values we hold in high regard are pretty consistent no matter where you come from.



HOW DO WE KNOW ALL OF THIS?

THE GULF SOUTH INDEX DELVES INTO hundreds of thousands of data points to shed light on what people in both the Gulf South region of the U.S. and around the country are thinking and how they are living their lives. What emerges is a picture showing how and why we make purchasing decisions, what we are buying, how we get our news and where we are spending our money.

The Index is a cooperative project between The Ehrhardt Group, a public relations, content, issues and crisis firm, and Causeway Solutions, a nationally recognized research and data analysis company. Both companies are based in the Gulf South and have years of experience conducting major research projects like this one. Causeway Solutions and The Ehrhardt Group conducted a series of online surveys, garnering 1,500 responses from adults throughout the Gulf South and country with a margin of error of 2.5%. Some survey questions allowed for respondents to select more than one response. Surveys were conducted between February 6-12, 2024.

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