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IZEA INSIGHTS SPECIAL REPORT

2024 China Trust in Influencer Marketing

August 2024

We surveyed over 1,000 **China-based** consumers to help understand their sentiments around influencer marketing and see how those thoughts differ between age groups and sexes.

GOALS

- Offer valuable insights for our partners overseeing the promotion of products and services across digital platforms.

- Provide education and support to decision-makers who must stay updated on trends in social media and the Creator Economy for effective business operations.

- Assist all parties in understanding the evolving dynamics of social media preferences and influencer reach, guiding them on effective ways to engage with consumers.

SAMPLE POPULATION

CHINA SOCIAL MEDIA USERS

CHINA

GEOGRAPHY

5/30/24
TO
5/31/24

DATA GATHERED

1,005 Respondents

All respondents were required to have an internet connection and be a social media user in order to participate in the survey.

SEX

- Male: 51.8%
- Female: 48.2%

AGE

- 18-29: 19%
- 30-44: 28%
- 45-60+: 53%

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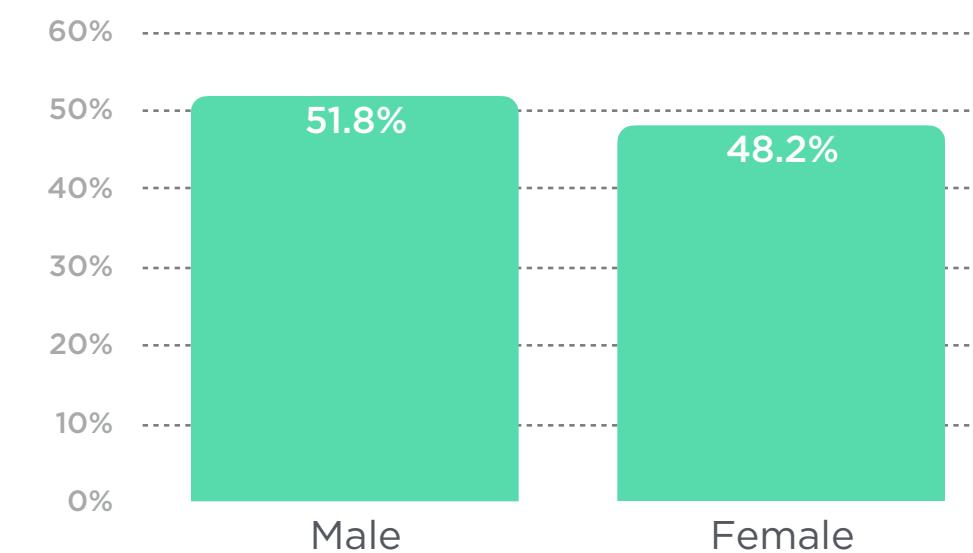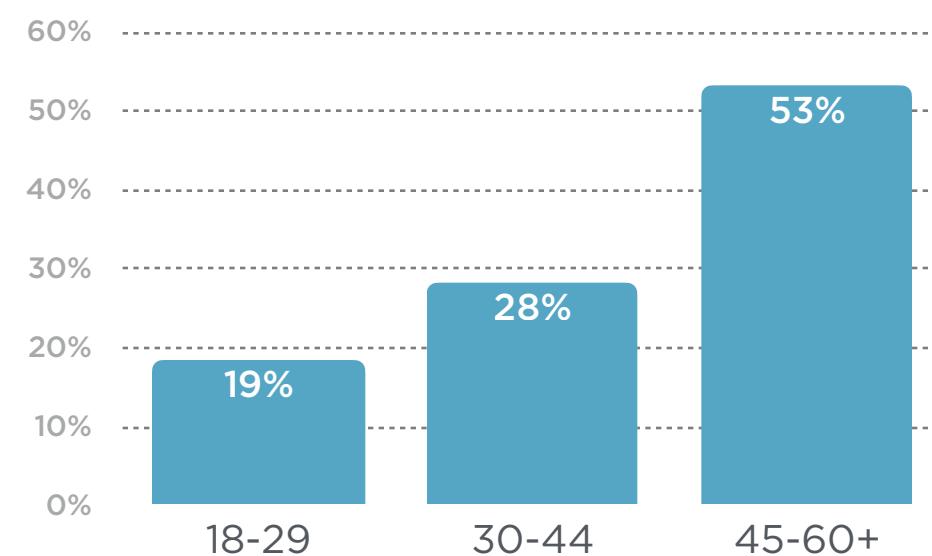
Our findings in this report reveal significant trends in influencer marketing and social media usage in China. **WeChat** and **Douyin** are the most widely used platforms, followed by Xiaohongshu and Weibo.

Trust in influencer recommendations is bolstered by **authenticity**, product use, and positive experiences with past recommendations, driving consumer behavior and purchase decisions.

Social shopping features are widely accepted among all age groups, and influencer advertising is more effective than traditional methods. These insights highlight the evolving landscape of digital marketing, emphasizing the importance of authentic and relatable content in **influencing consumer behavior**.

PLATFORM USAGE

Q: Which social media platforms do you regularly use?

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■ All Respondents ■ Influencers

	TIER 1				TIER 2				TIER 3	

TIER 1
- WeChat: 94% / 91%
- Douyin: 89% / 91%
- Xiaohongshu: 68% / 70%
- Weibo: 60% / 64%

TIER 2
- YouTube: 17% / 15%
- TikTok: 17% / 19%
- Facebook: 12% / 16%
- X: 9% / 13%

TIER 3
- Instagram: 8% / 11%
- LinkedIn: 4% / 6%
- Twitch: 3% / 3%
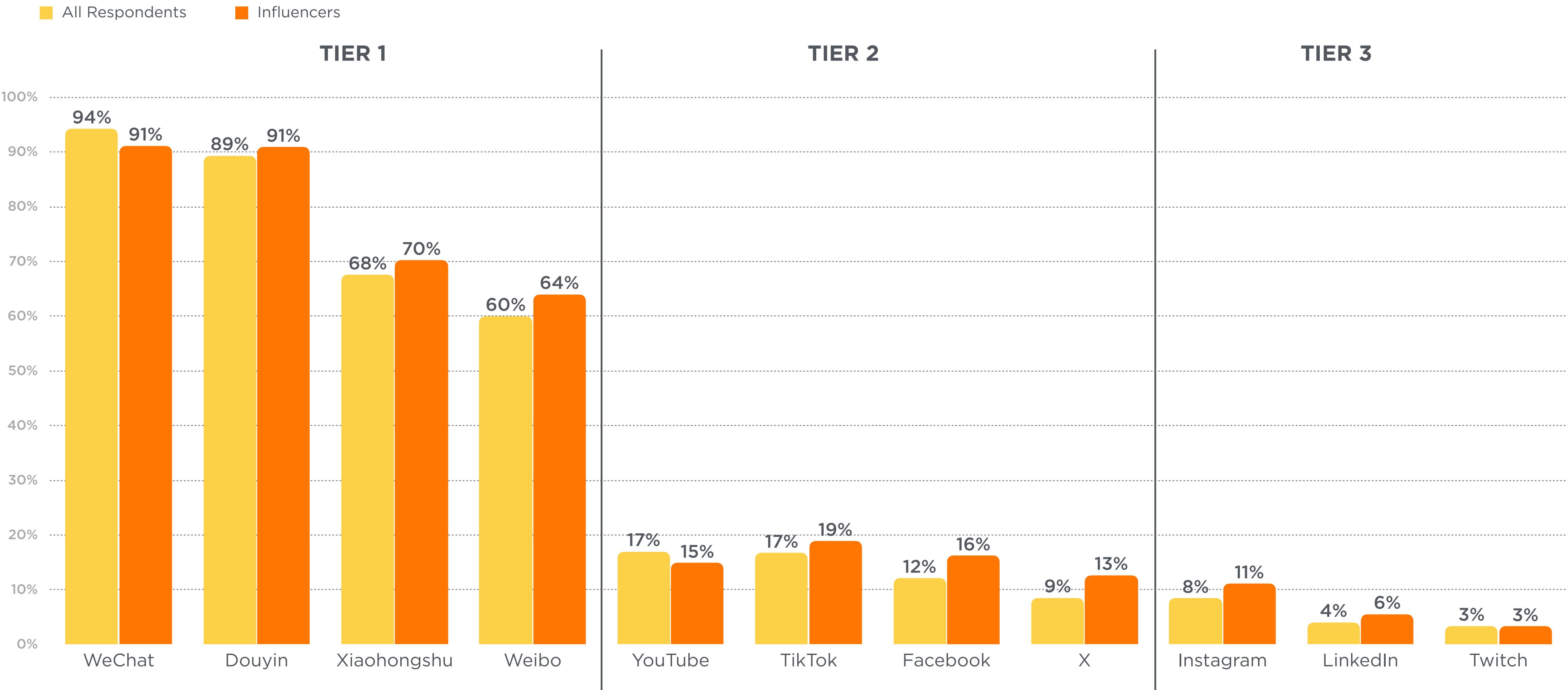
80%

OF RESPONDENTS

|

say they prefer content created by **social media influencers** over marketing professionals.

Q: Do you find content created by social media influencers to be more compelling than scripted advertising written by a marketing professional?

"Yes" by Age Group

"Yes" by Sex

Age	%
18-29	84%
30-44	89%
45-60+	73%

Sex	%
Male	79%
Female	81%
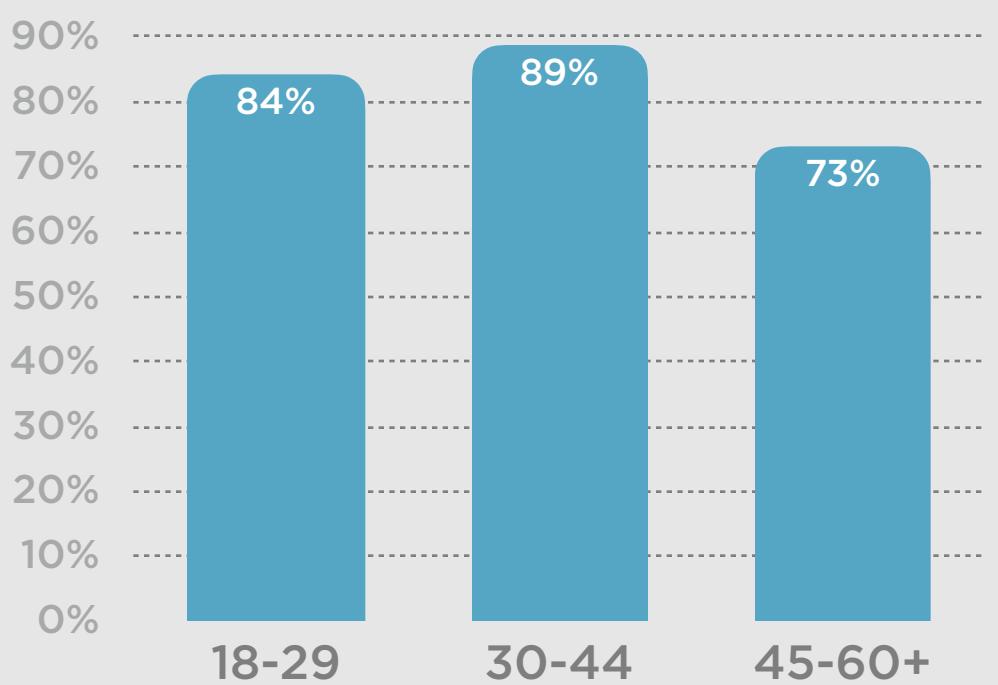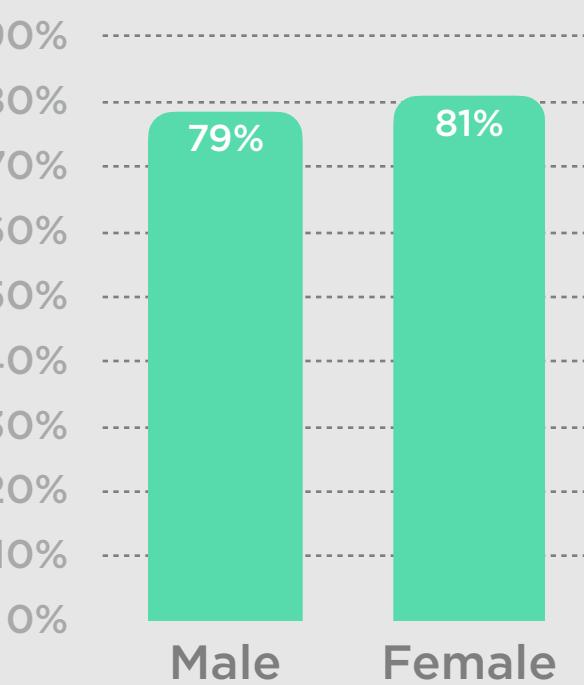
INFLUENCE DRIVES INFLUENCE

98%
OF INFLUENCERS

say they are the **primary shopper** in their household

96%
OF INFLUENCERS

say they have purchased a product after seeing it being used by **another influencer**

98%
OF INFLUENCERS

say they are likely to **search on social platforms** before making a purchase

Influencers spend an average of **7.7 HOURS A DAY** using social media platforms

ADVERTISING IMPACT ON PURCHASES

Q: Which of these is more likely to get you to try a new product?

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- 18-29
- 30-44
- 45-60+

| | TIER 1 | TIER 2 | TIER 3 |

TIER 1 — Influencer Post: 18-29: 55%, 30-44: 50%, 45-60+: 51%

TIER 2 — Television Ad: 18-29: 21%, 30-44: 17%, 45-60+: 27%

TIER 2 — Paid Social Ad: 18-29: 12%, 30-44: 23%, 45-60+: 10%

TIER 3 — Magazine Ad: 18-29: 6%, 30-44: 5%, 45-60+: 8%

TIER 3 — Banner Ad: 18-29: 4%, 30-44: 4%, 45-60+: 3%

TIER 3 — Radio Ad: 18-29: 1%, 30-44: 0%, 45-60+: 1%
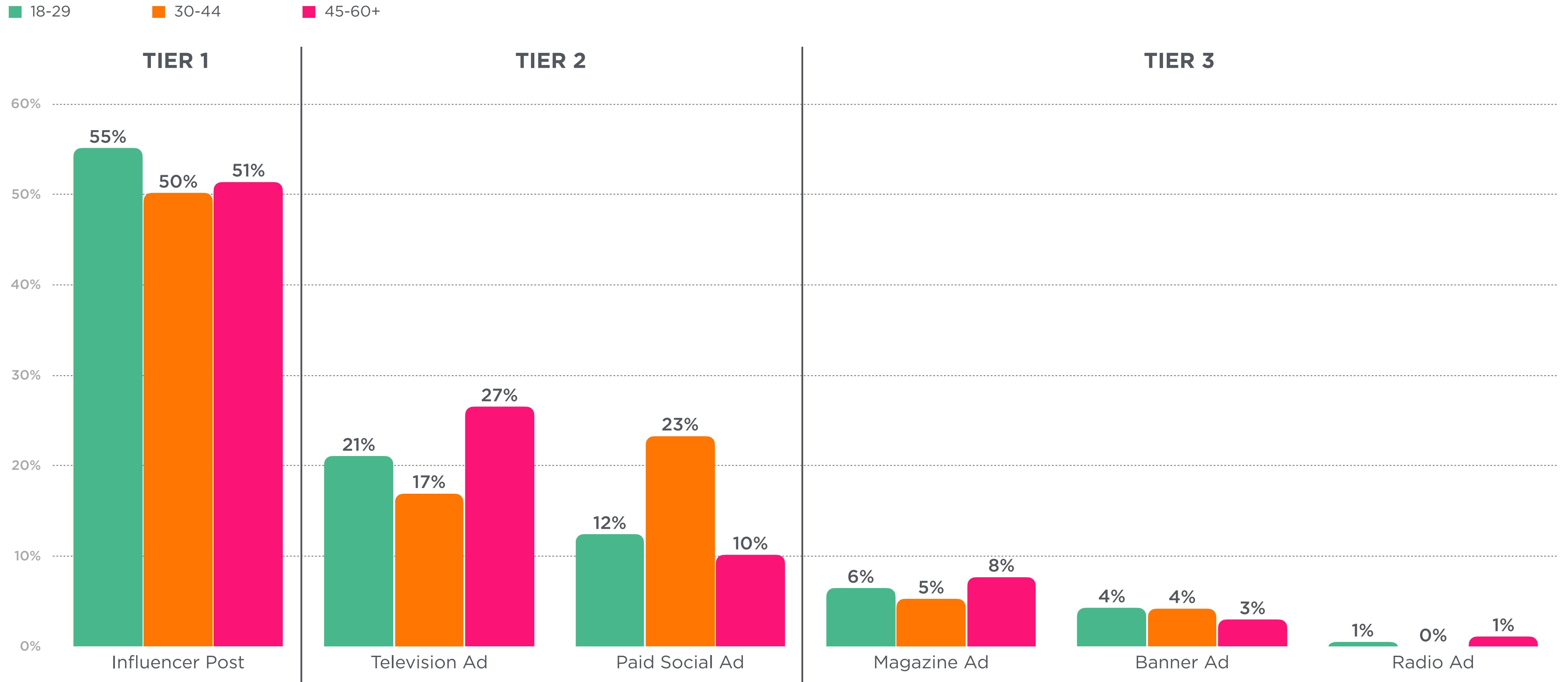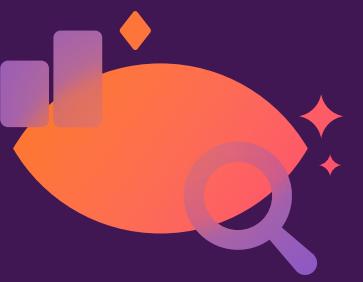
49%

OF RESPONDENTS

|

say they are more likely to trust a sponsored post from an **influencer** over an A-List celebrity.

Q: Are you more likely to trust a sponsored post from an A-List celebrity or a social media influencer?

"Influencer" by Age Group

54.6%	48.4%	48.8%
18-29	30-44	45-60+

60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

"Influencer" by Sex

52.5%	46.8%
Male	Female

60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
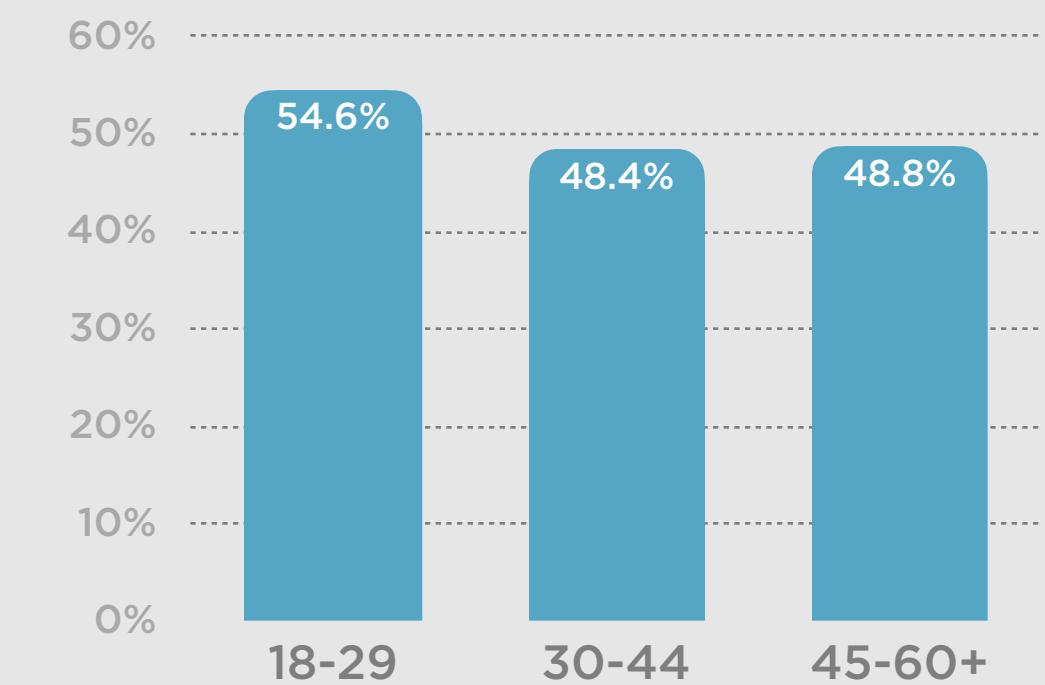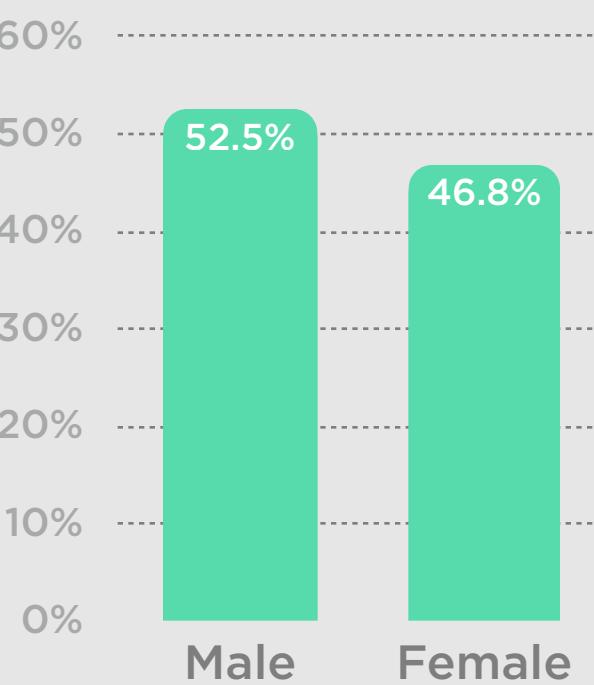
PRODUCT RESEARCH

Q: How do you typically research a product/service before making a big purchase?

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■ 18-29   ■ 30-44   ■ 45-60+

All respondents are more likely to **turn to social media** than family and friends before making a big purchase.

Category	18-29	30-44	45-60+
Search Douyin	79%	80%	66%
Search WeChat	52%	50%	40%
Search Xiaohongshu	49%	52%	41%
Search Weibo	22%	27%	17%
Search YouTube	9%	11%	4%
Search Instagram	3%	6%	5%
Ask Family and Friends	10%	13%	14%

#1 18-29   #1 30-44   #1 45-60+
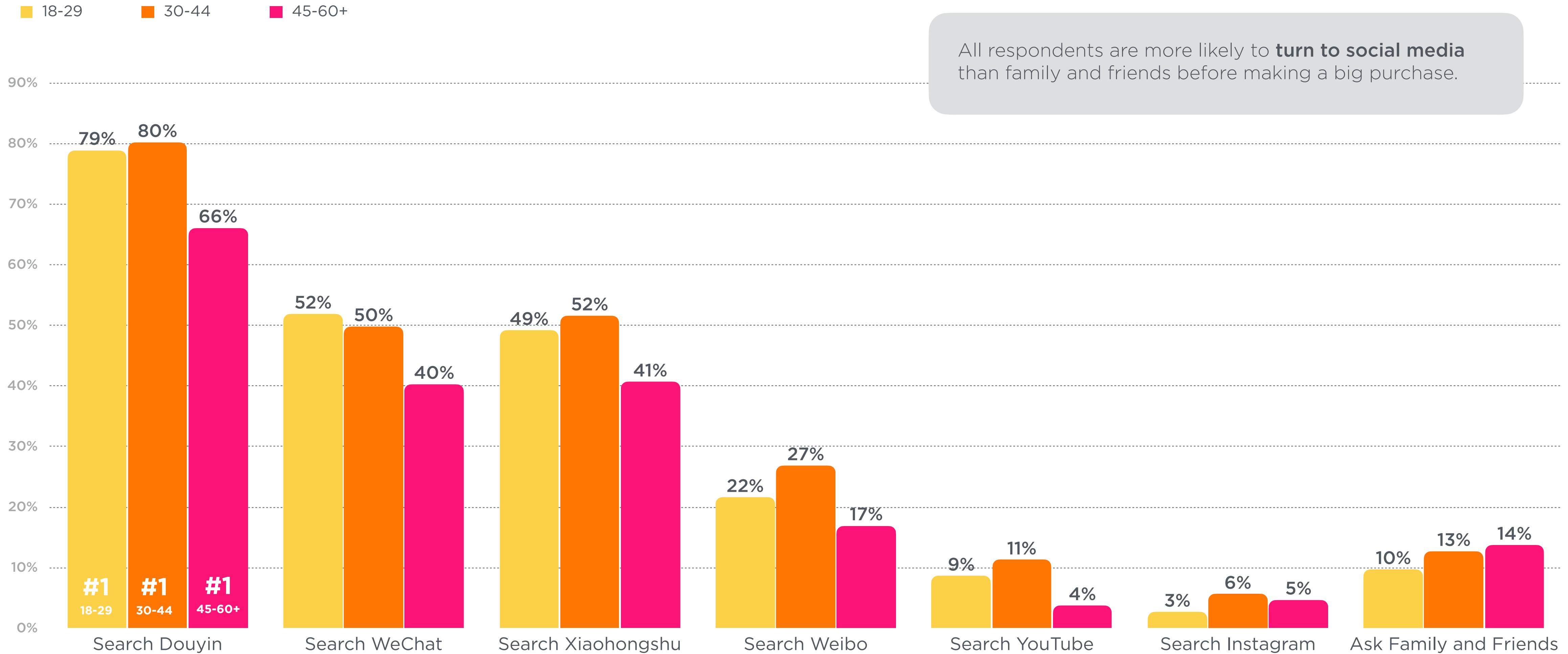
YOUNG CONSUMERS EMBRACE SOCIAL

79%
OF 18-TO-29-YEAR-OLDS

research purchase decisions on **Douyin** before making a product purchase

▶

87%
OF 18-TO-29-YEAR-OLDS

have purchased a product after seeing it being used by an **influencer**

▶

97%
OF 18-TO-29-YEAR-OLDS

have purchased a product directly through a **social media app** (e.g. Douyin Shop, etc.)

18-to-29-year-olds spend an average of **7 HOURS A DAY** using social media platforms

85%

OF RESPONDENTS

|

say they have **purchased a product** after seeing it being used by an influencer.

Q: Have you ever purchased a product after seeing it being used by an influencer?

"Yes" by Age Group
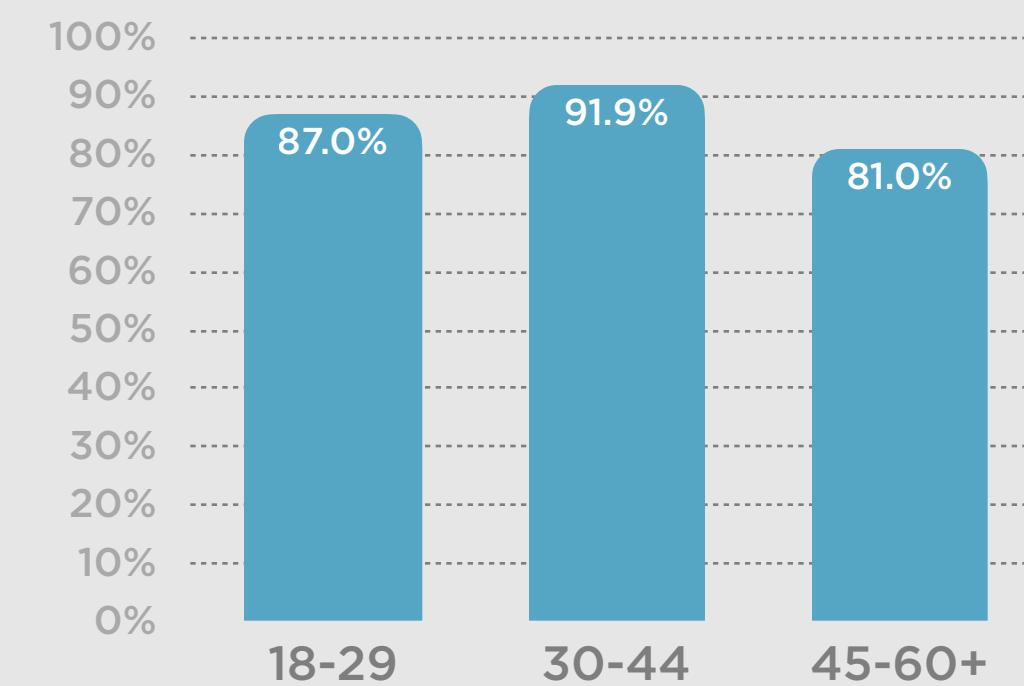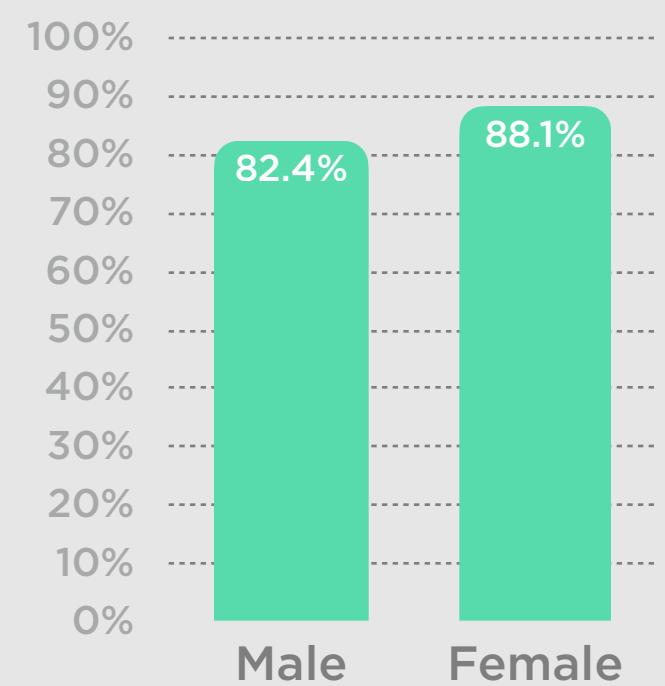
87.0%	91.9%	81.0%
18-29	30-44	45-60+

"Yes" by Sex

82.4%	88.1%
Male	Female

SOCIAL SHOPPING

Q: Have you ever purchased a product directly through a social media platform's shopping feature?

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Legend:
- 18-29
- 30-44
- 45-60+

92% of all respondents have purchased a product through a social media platform's shopping feature at least once.

Yes, multiple times
- 77%
- 83%
- 78%

Yes, but only once
- 20%
- 11%
- 12%

No, but I'm open to it
- 1%
- 4%
- 6%

SOCIAL SHOPPING

Q: Have you ever purchased a product directly through a social media platform's shopping feature?

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■ 18-29 in China　■ 18-29 in the United States

Social shopping has **far greater** acceptance in China vs. the United States, particularly among 18-to-29-year-olds.

90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

77%

5.1X

15%

20%

33%

1%

19%

Yes, multiple times

Yes, but only once

No, but I'm open to it
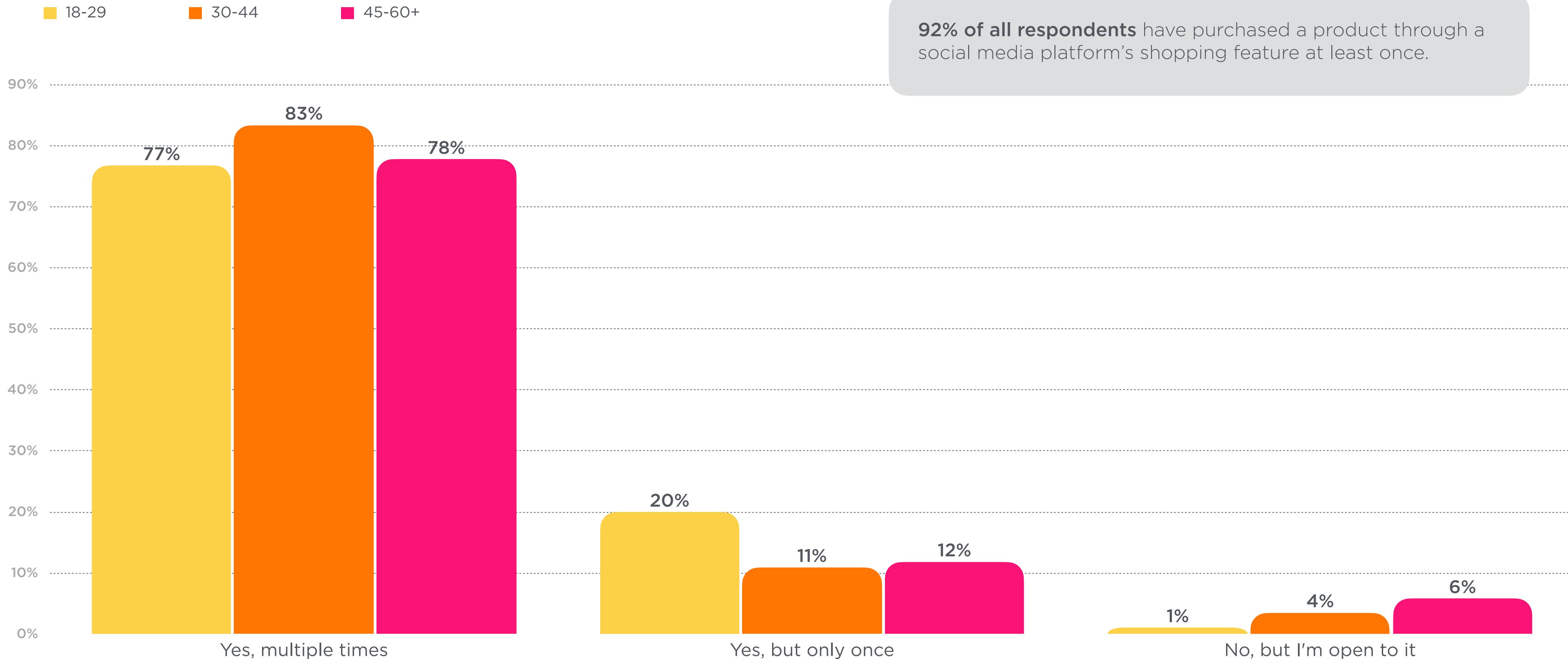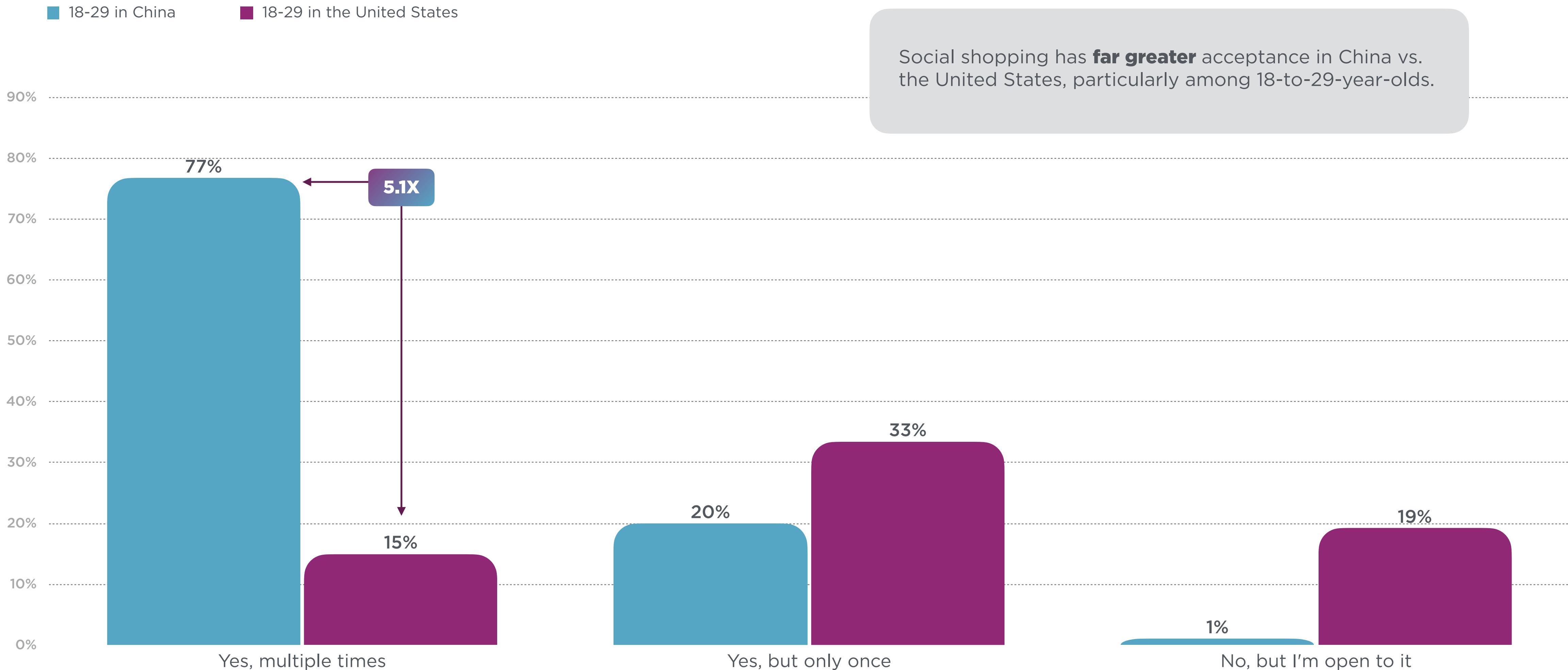
Source: IZEA Insights

INFLUENCER PLATFORM EFFECTIVENESS

Q: In your opinion, what is the best platform to promote a product through an influencer?

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Legend: 18-29, 30-44, 45-60+

Douyin is considered the best platform for influencer content among all respondents.

5.8X

Platform	18-29	30-44	45-60+
Douyin	70%	74%	71%
WeChat	12%	10%	13%
Xiaohongshu	12%	5%	8%
Weibo	3%	3%	6%
YouTube	1%	4%	1%
TikTok	1%	2%	1%
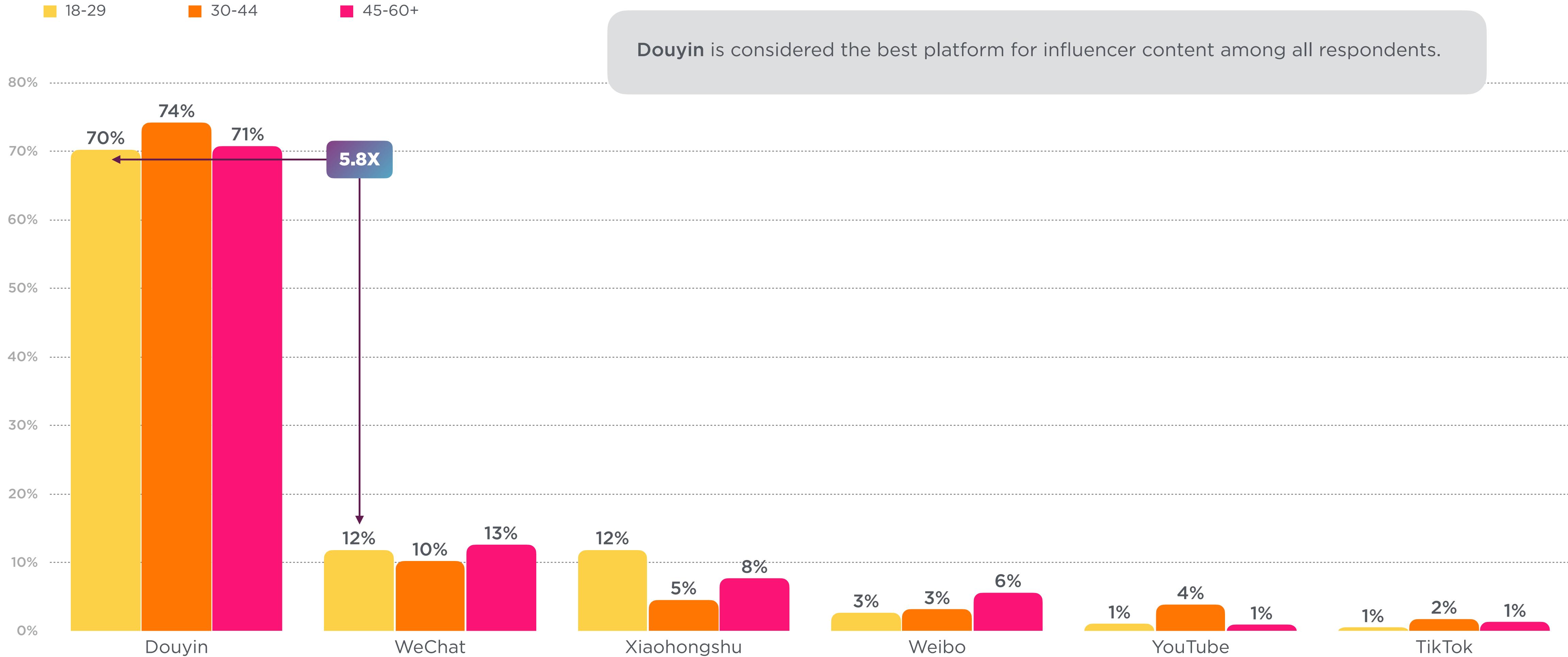
TRUST IN RECOMMENDATIONS

Q: What factors increase your trust in influencer product recommendations?

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Factor	Percentage
Authenticity — Authenticity of the influencer's content	72.5%
Product Use — The influencer showing how they use the product	48.7%
Past Recommendations — Positive experiences with past recommendations	45.5%
Transparency — Disclosure of the influencer's partnership with brands	43.9%
Category Expertise — The influencer's expertise in the product category	40.4%
Engagement — (e.g., responding to questions/comments)	31.9%

AI INFLUENCERS

Q: Do you follow any AI-generated or virtual influencers on social media platforms?

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30+ YEAR-OLDS

70%
YES

47%

5%

12%

14%

23%
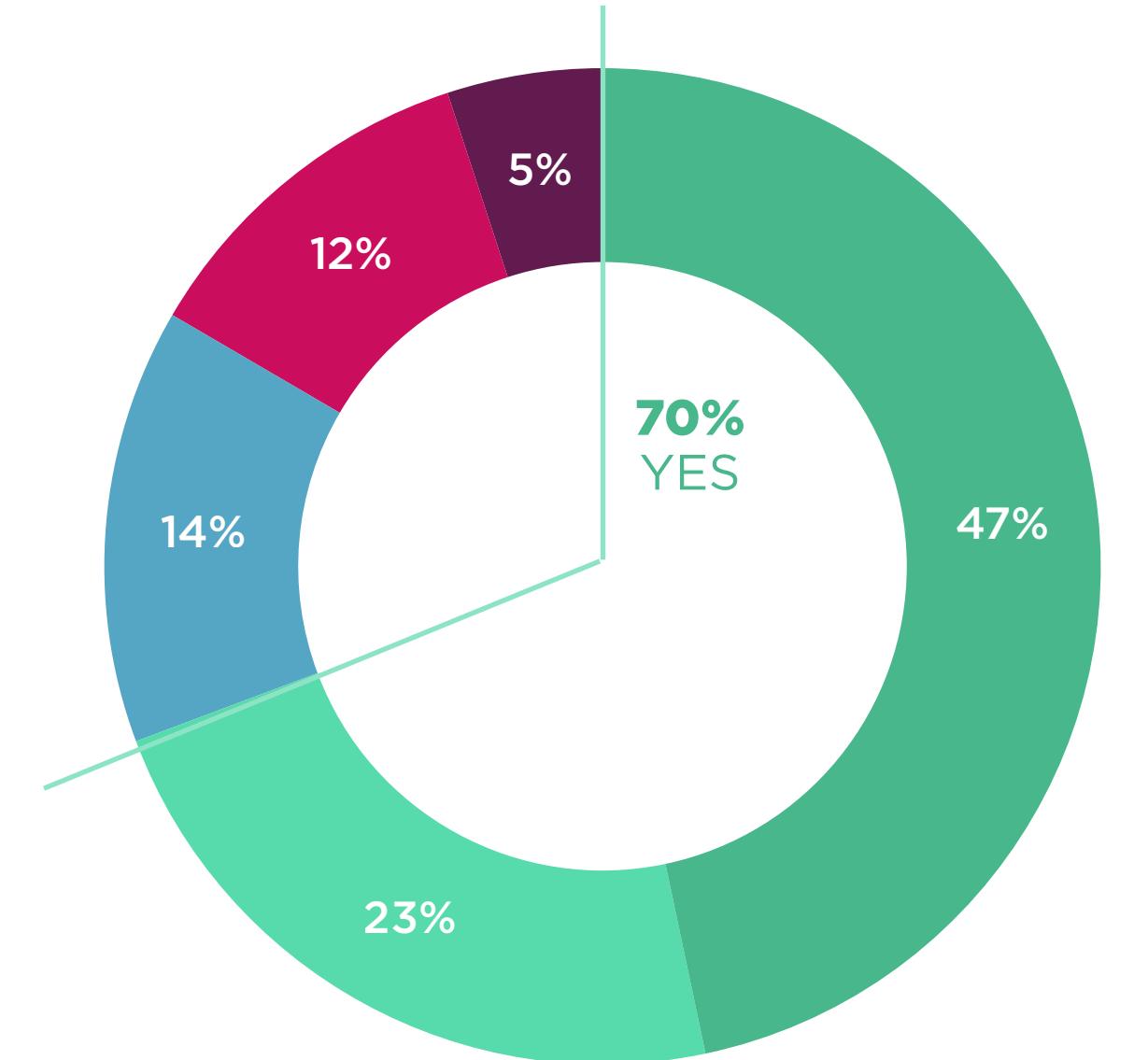
18-TO-29-YEAR-OLDS

80%
YES

44%

2%

6%

11%

36%

● **Yes,** I actively follow and engage with AI/virtual influencers.

● **Yes,** I follow a few but don't actively engage with their content.

● No, but I'm aware of them and interested in following.

● No, I'm not interested in AI/virtual influencers.

● I wasn't aware of AI/virtual influencers until now.
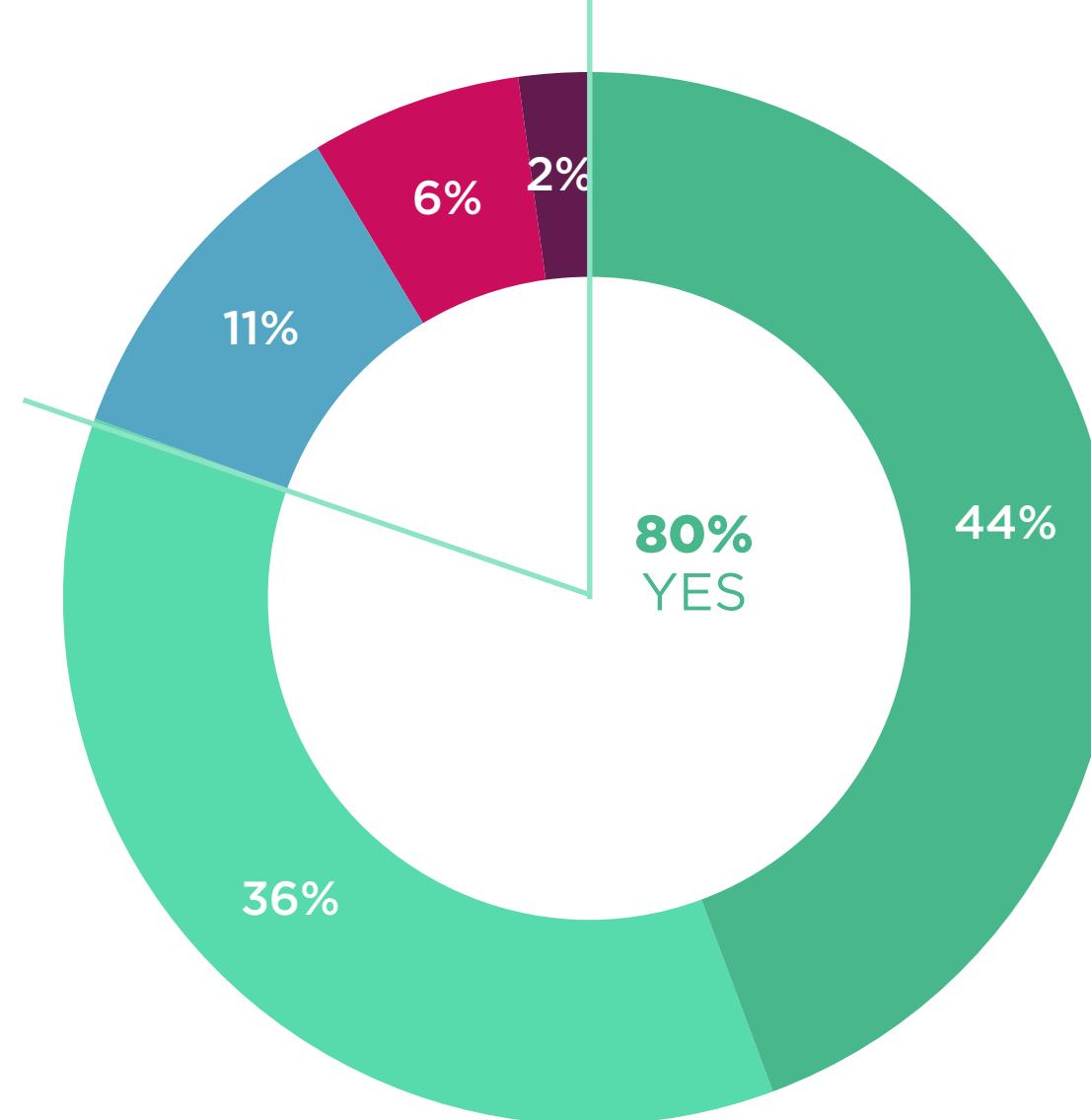
80%
of 18-to-29-year-olds follow an AI or virtual influencer.

70%
of 30+ year-olds follow an AI or virtual influencer.

AI INFLUENCERS CHINA VS U.S.

Q: Do you follow any AI-generated or virtual influencers on social media platforms?

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ALL RESPONDENTS - CHINA

71% YES

47%
25%
13%
11%
4%
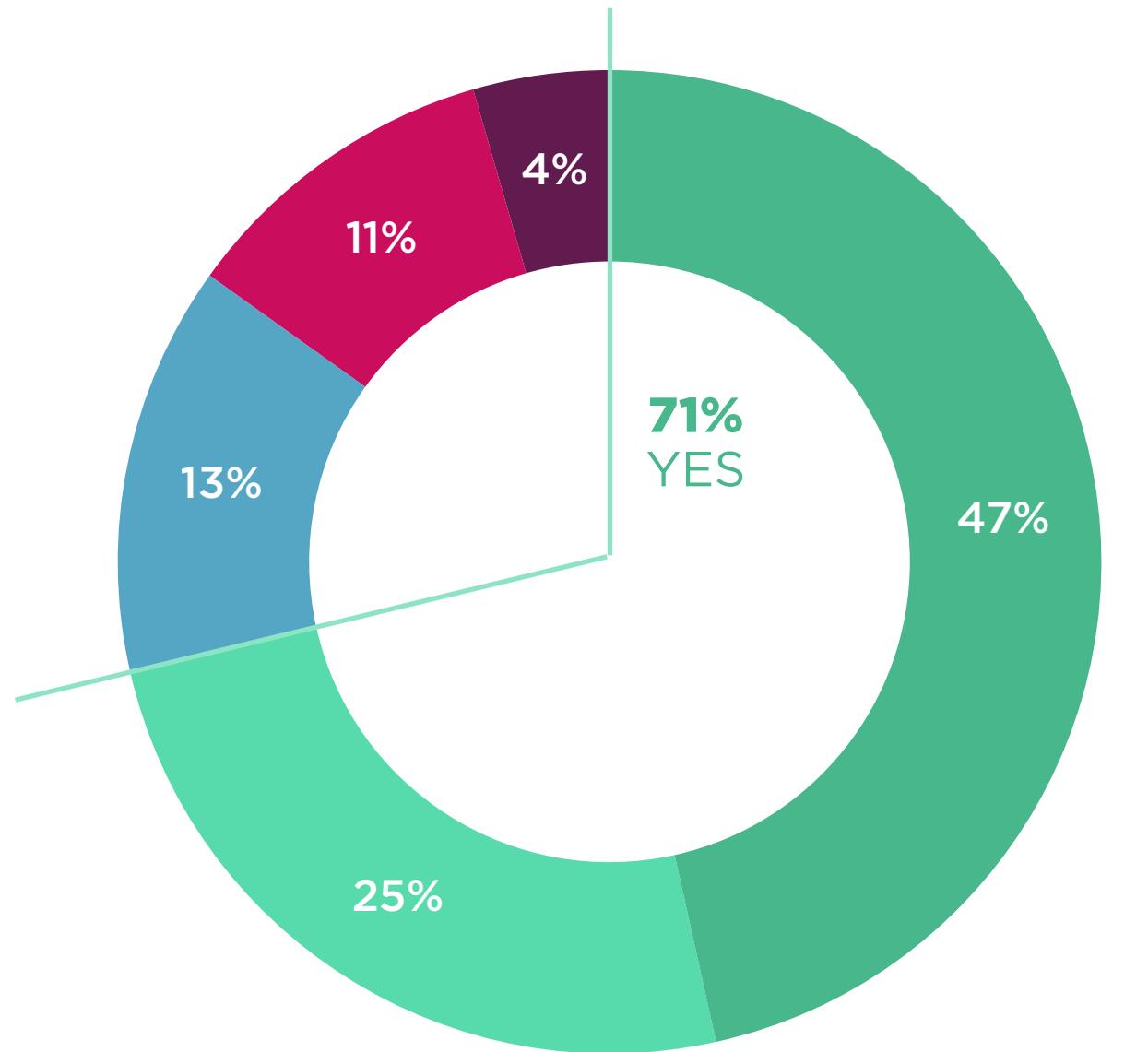
ALL RESPONDENTS - U.S.

26% YES

12%
14%
16%
34%
24%

- ● **Yes,** I actively follow and engage with AI/virtual influencers.
- ● **Yes,** I follow a few but don't actively engage with their content.
- ● No, but I'm aware of them and interested in following.
- ● No, I'm not interested in AI/virtual influencers.
- ● I wasn't aware of AI/virtual influencers until now.
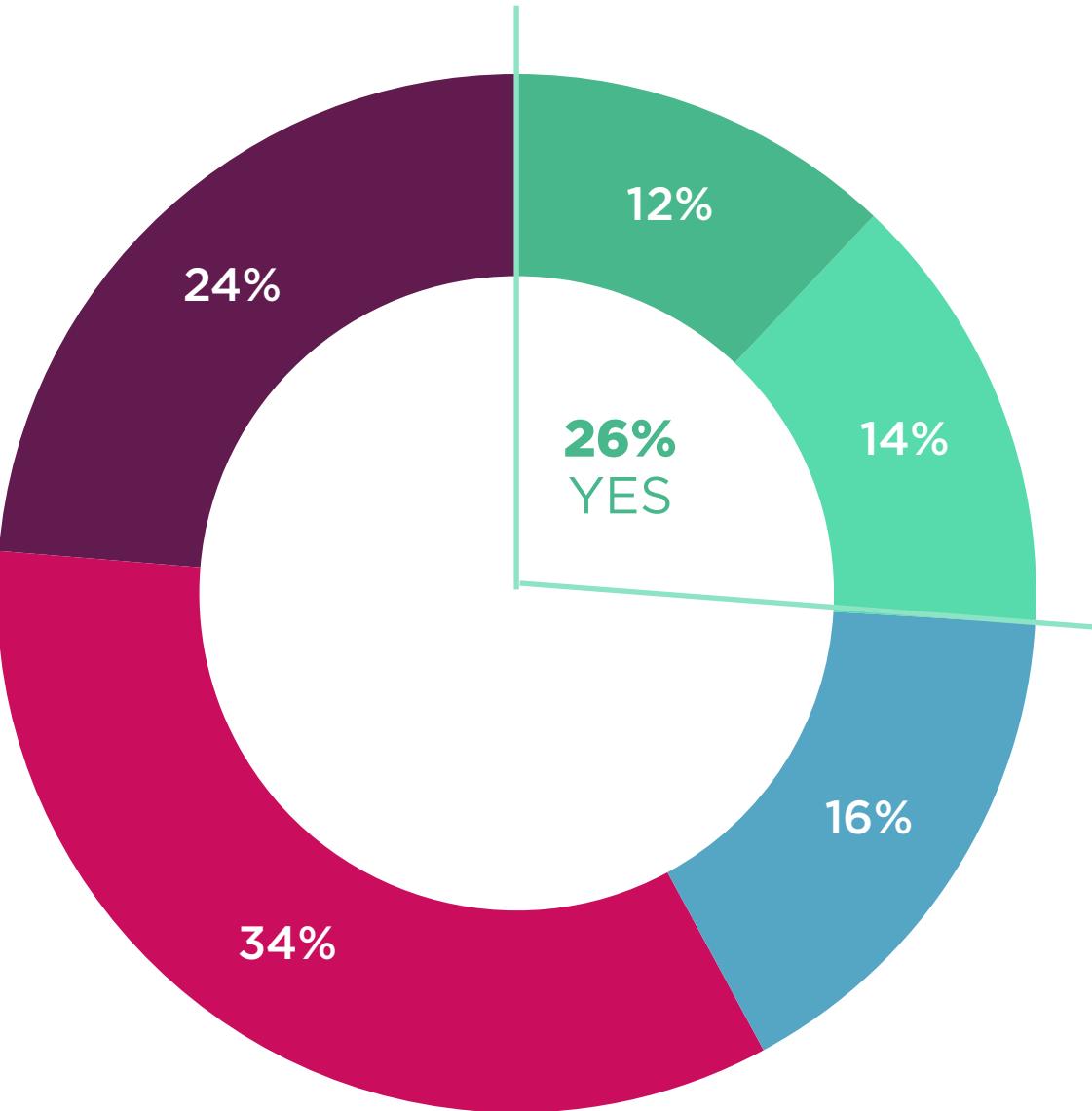
71%

of social media users in China follow AI influencers.

26%

of social media users in the United States follow AI influencers.

Platform Usage and Engagement

- **WeChat Dominance:** 94% of all respondents regularly use WeChat, making it the most widely used platform across demographics.

- **Douyin Popularity:** Douyin usage is a close second among all demographics at 89%.

- **Influencer Search Behavior:** 98% of influencers are likely to search on social platforms before making a purchase, indicating the critical role of social media in their decision-making process.

- **Daily Engagement:** Influencers spend an average of 7.7 hours a day on social media platforms, highlighting the extensive engagement time that can be leveraged by marketers.

- **Engagement with AI Influencers:** 71% of all respondents follow AI or virtual influencers, demonstrating the increasing acceptance and interest in AI-generated content.

Consumer Behavior and Preferences

- **Purchase Influence:** 85% of respondents have purchased a product after seeing it being used by an influencer, underscoring the power influencers have in driving sales.

- **Trust in Influencers:** 49% of respondents are more likely to trust a sponsored post from an influencer over an A-List celebrity.

- **Social Shopping Trends:** 92% of respondents have used social shopping features, showing a strong trend toward in-app purchases among all demographics.

- **Product Research Methods:** 79% of 18-to-29-year-olds turn to Douyin for product research before making a big purchase, making it a critical platform for reaching younger consumers.

- **Recommendation Preferences:** All respondents are more likely to turn to social media rather than family and friends before making a big purchase.

KEY TAKEAWAYS
Trust and Impact

Trust and Authenticity

- **Influencer Authenticity:** Authenticity in an influencer's content is the top factor in increasing trust in product recommendations, with 72.5% of respondents prioritizing it.

- **Product Use Demonstration**: 48.7% of respondents trust influencers who show how they use the product, highlighting the importance of practical demonstrations.

- **Past Recommendations:** Positive experiences with past recommendations increase trust for 45.5% of respondents, suggesting that track record matters.

- **Transparency:** 43.9% of respondents value the disclosure of the influencer's partnership with brands, indicating the importance of transparency.

- **Category Expertise:** 40.4% of respondents take into account the influencer's expertise in the product category.

- **Engagement:** 31.9% of respondents trust influencers who engage with their audience (e.g., responding to comments).

Advertising and Impact

- **Influencer Advertising Effectiveness:** 55% of 18-to-29-year-olds are more likely to try a new product based on an influencer post compared to other forms of advertising like television ads.

- **Television Ad Decline:** Only 21% of respondents ages 18 to 29 and 27% of those 45 and older are most influenced by television ads, indicating a decline in traditional advertising effectiveness among all age groups.

- **Radio Ad Effectiveness:** Radio ads are the least effective form of digital advertising, with no more than 1% of respondents being influenced by them.

- **Trust in Sponsored Posts:** 80% of respondents find influencer-created content more compelling than scripted advertising by marketing professionals.

- **Influencer Platform Effectiveness:** Douyin is considered the best platform for influencer content among all respondents.

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