

Mapping the digital visitor journey:

What drives online engagement with UK attractions report

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Introduction



The way visitors plan, book, and connect with attractions online is evolving faster than ever. For many, the digital experience now defines the overall visitor journey, helping to shape perceptions, influence decisions, and drive long-term loyalty. To better understand this journey, we asked a representative sample of 1,011 people from across the UK about their online booking experiences, what drives them to book, what encourages advance booking, the factors that influence their planning, and how they engage with attractions overall.

This report* explores the positive and negative drivers of the online ticket booking experience for UK visitor attractions, uncovering what delights users, what frustrates them, and what ultimately determines whether they click “Book Now.”

The research also looks beyond ticketing, examining the importance of other online communications, from how visitors plan trips and discover new experiences, to how they renew memberships and stay engaged year-round.

By analysing these interactions, the report provides actionable insights to help attractions improve conversion rates, strengthen digital engagement, and deliver seamless online experiences that match the magic of the visit itself.

*Insight generated by an online survey of a nationally representative sample 1,011 adults aged 18+ from the UK population. Survey conducted 5-9 September 2025.

Summary of key findings



63.5% of visitors say website usability makes or breaks their online booking experience.



Ease of navigation tops the list for website usability.



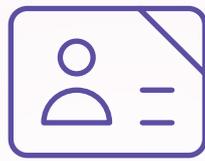
Offering discounts on admission is the factor most likely to encourage advance booking.



Pricing is the top complaint, cited by **25%** of visitors, due to hidden fees, high ticket prices, and unclear costs.



The cleanliness of an attraction is the most important factor influencing booking decisions.



Frequent visitors are more likely to renew memberships.



Visitors with children and younger age groups use weather apps most when planning their visits.

Building on this understanding, the findings reveal what drives a positive online experience and what can quickly turn it negative. Website usability is the standout factor, with **63.5%** of visitors citing it as the most important aspect of a great booking journey, led by ease of navigation (**55.7%**). Clear pricing is also critical, **25% of respondents** highlighted hidden fees or unclear costs as their biggest frustration. A smooth, fast checkout (**20.4%**) helps visitors feel confident and excited to book, while technical glitches, difficult navigation, or overly complicated steps can stop a booking in its tracks.

The research also highlights how visitors plan ahead. Discounts on admission are the strongest motivator to book in advance, followed by perks like free parking.

Family-friendly tools such as clear attraction details (**10.6%**) and weather updates are particularly important for parents and younger visitors. Repeat visitors are drawn to simple, rewarding membership experiences, encouraging long-term loyalty.

By combining these insights, attractions can identify quick wins and longer-term improvements to their digital journey, ensuring every online interaction reflects the same care, creativity, and magic that guests experience onsite.

The following section breaks down the key findings in detail, giving attractions practical knowledge to delight visitors even before they step through the doors. At the end, you'll also find a handy checklist to help you get started on enhancing your online booking experience today.

What attractions can take away today

YOUR CHECKLIST TO A GREAT ONLINE BOOKING EXPERIENCE:

- Prioritise website usability:** Clear menus, logical navigation, and mobile-friendly design make booking easy.
- Be upfront with pricing:** Show total costs clearly, including any fees, and highlight offers or discounts.
- Streamline checkout:** Reduce steps, offer multiple secure payment options, and minimise technical friction.
- Support families and planners:** Make essential info like opening hours, amenities, and weather guidance easy to find.
- Encourage repeat visits:** Promote membership or return-visit perks to engage your loyal audience.

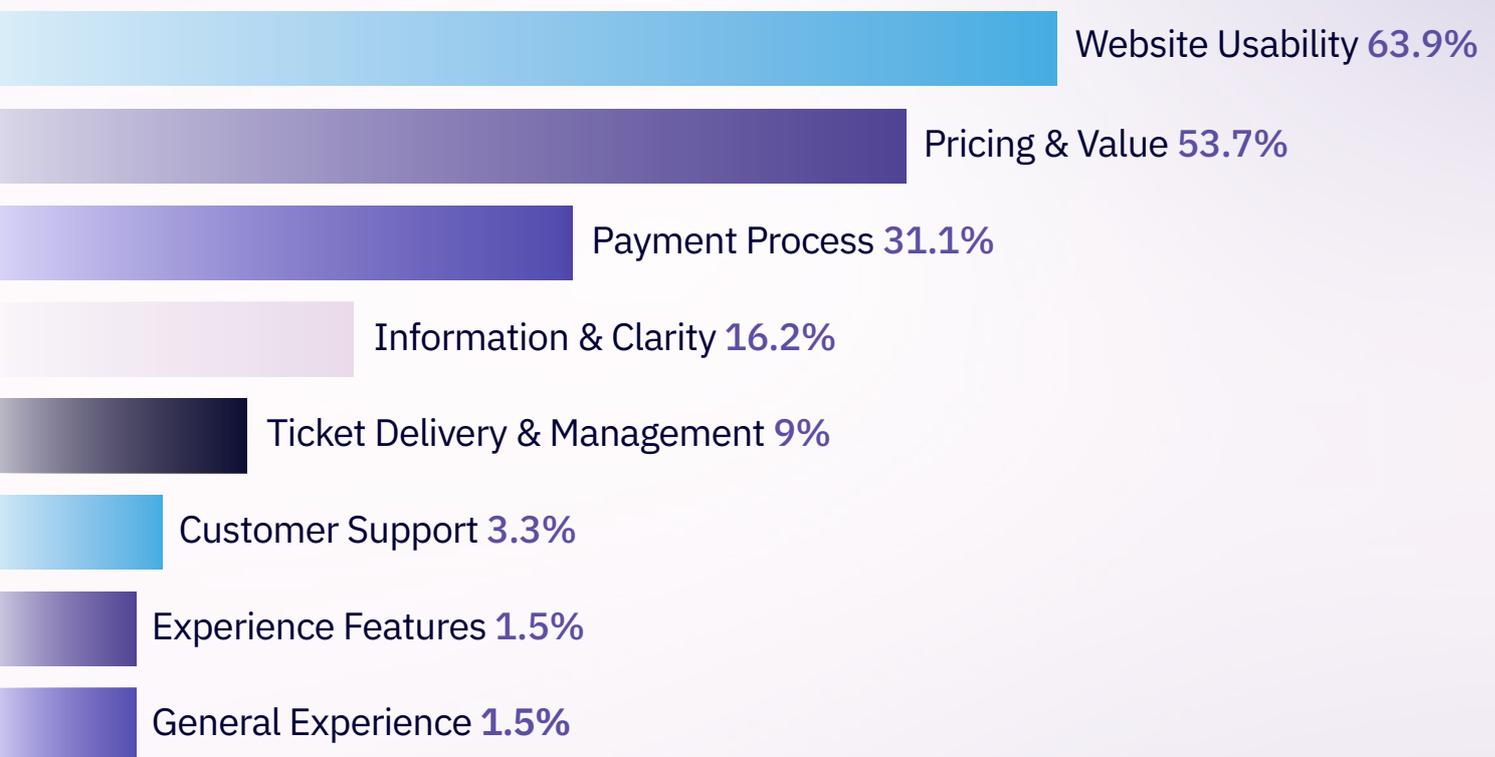
Delivering a smooth, transparent, and engaging online booking experience is more than just convenience, it directly impacts visitor satisfaction, encourages advance bookings, and builds long-term loyalty.

By focusing on usability, clarity, and support for your visitors' planning needs, attractions can turn every digital interaction into a positive, memorable part of the overall experience.

Positive drivers of an online booking experience

This section of the report explores what encourages visitors to have a positive experience when booking tickets online for UK attractions. From ease of navigation to clear pricing and fast checkout, understanding these factors helps attractions optimise their digital offering.

By identifying the elements that make online booking simple, enjoyable, and trustworthy, attractions can improve visitor satisfaction, increase conversions, and build loyalty for future visits.



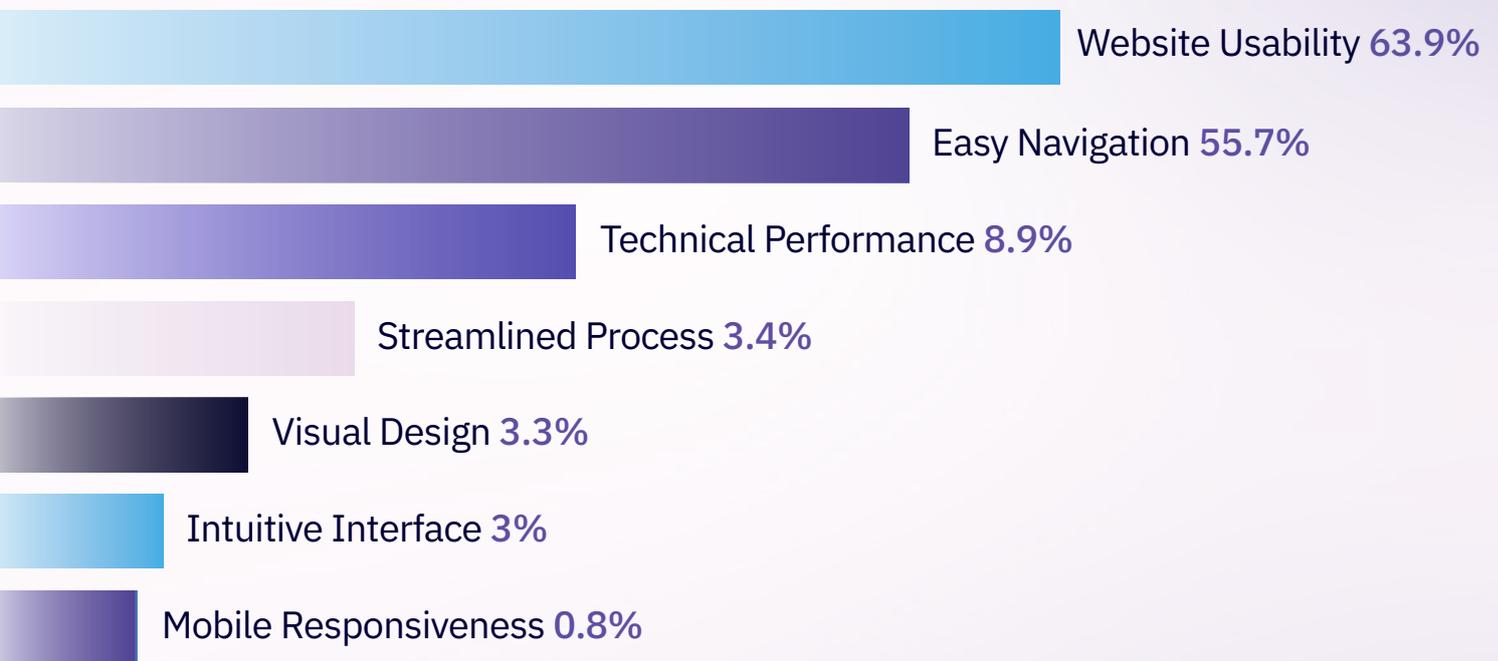
KEY TAKEAWAY

Website usability is the top driver of a positive online booking experience, with **63.5%** of visitors highlighting it as essential.

Website usability

KEY TAKEAWAY

Ease of navigation is the most important website feature, with **55.7%** of visitors valuing clear menus and logical pathways for a smooth experience.



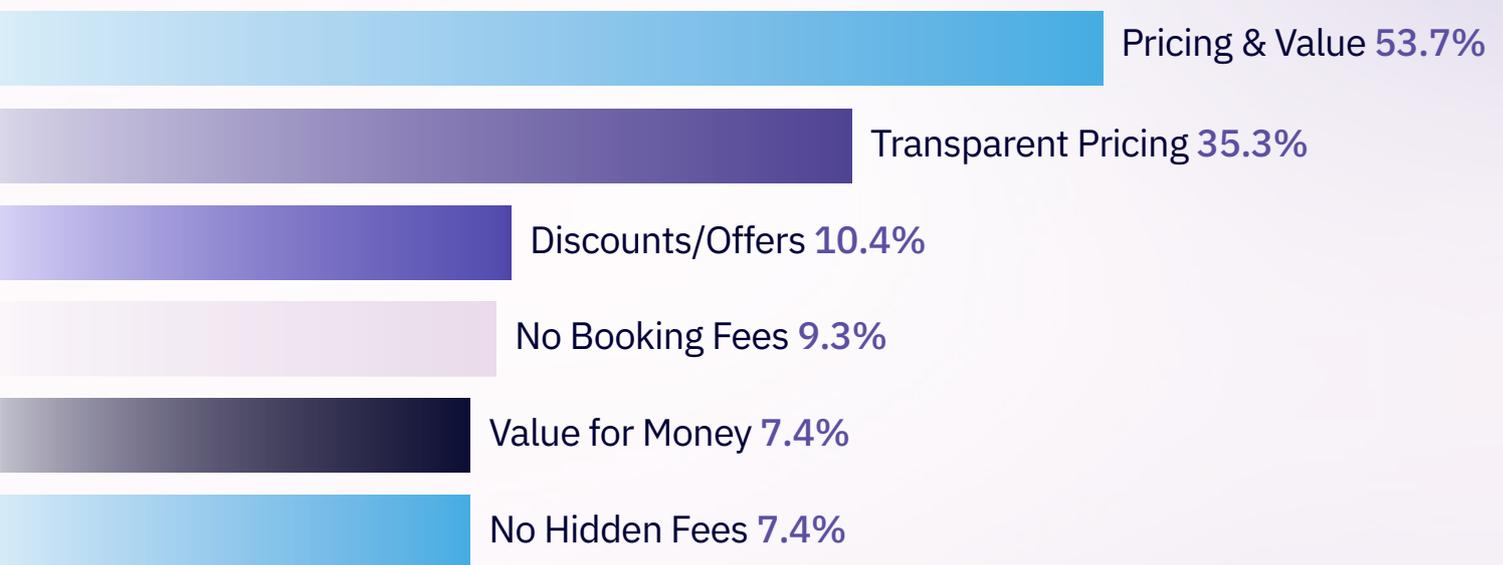
WHAT THEY SAY

- Easy and simple to book without asking a lot of questions
- Clear, providing all necessary information, easy to use
- Where the site is clean and runs well as a minimum

Pricing & value

KEY TAKEAWAY

Transparent pricing is essential, with **35.3%** of visitors valuing upfront costs, clear fees, and visible discounts or offers for a trustworthy booking experience.



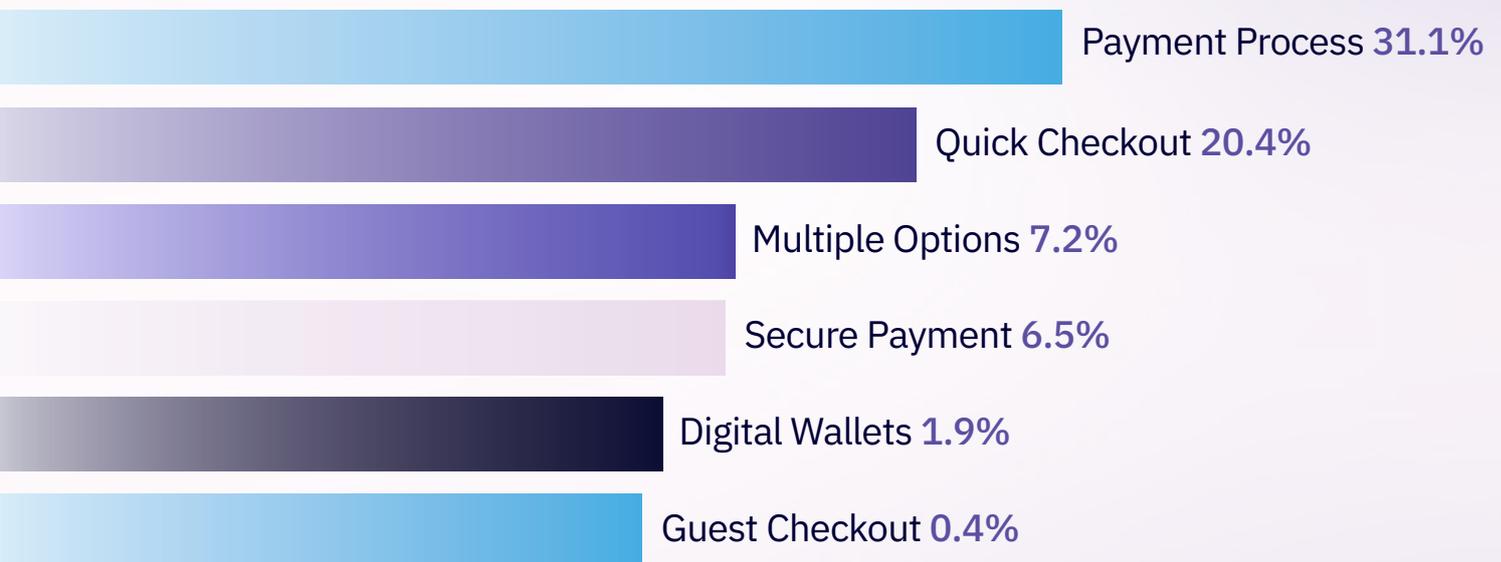
WHAT THEY SAY

- All information are stated out clearly, discounts and price comparisons are given too
- It is very clear in what the price should be with no hidden fees such as booking fees
- One that is straight forward, up front with prices and with potential discounts

Payment Process

KEY TAKEAWAY

Speed matters, with **20.4%** of visitors prioritising a quick checkout, alongside secure payment options like Apple Pay and Google Pay for a smooth transaction experience.



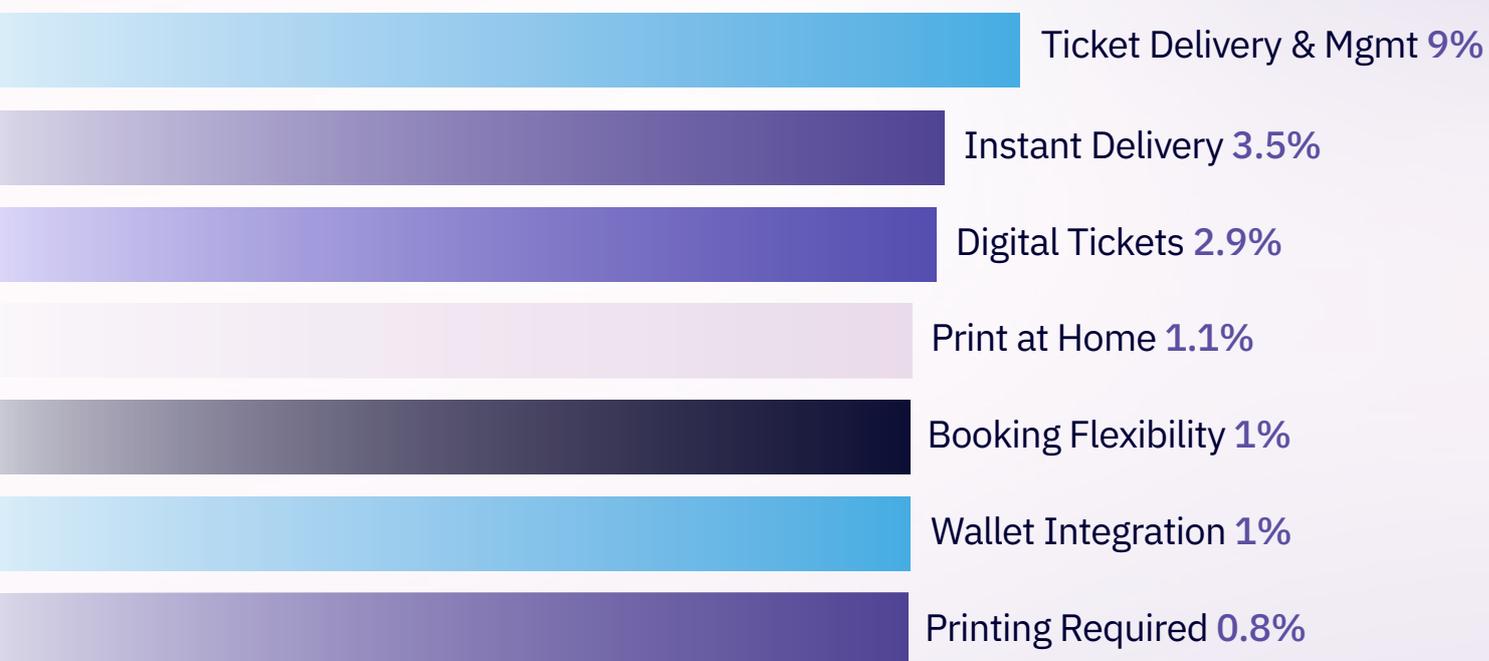
WHAT THEY SAY

- Buying ticket is easy, safe, and quick. Being able to receive quick e-mail confirmations, and paying with different payment methods is a good way to distinguish between a bad or a good ticket seller
- It's easy to pay - something like PayPal or Apple Pay where you don't have to manually put in card details. Also, discount codes. And charity worker discounts as I work for a charity

Ticket delivery

KEY TAKEAWAY

Instant access to information is important for a small group of visitors (**3.5%**), particularly details like opening hours, with ticket delivery options also valued by some.



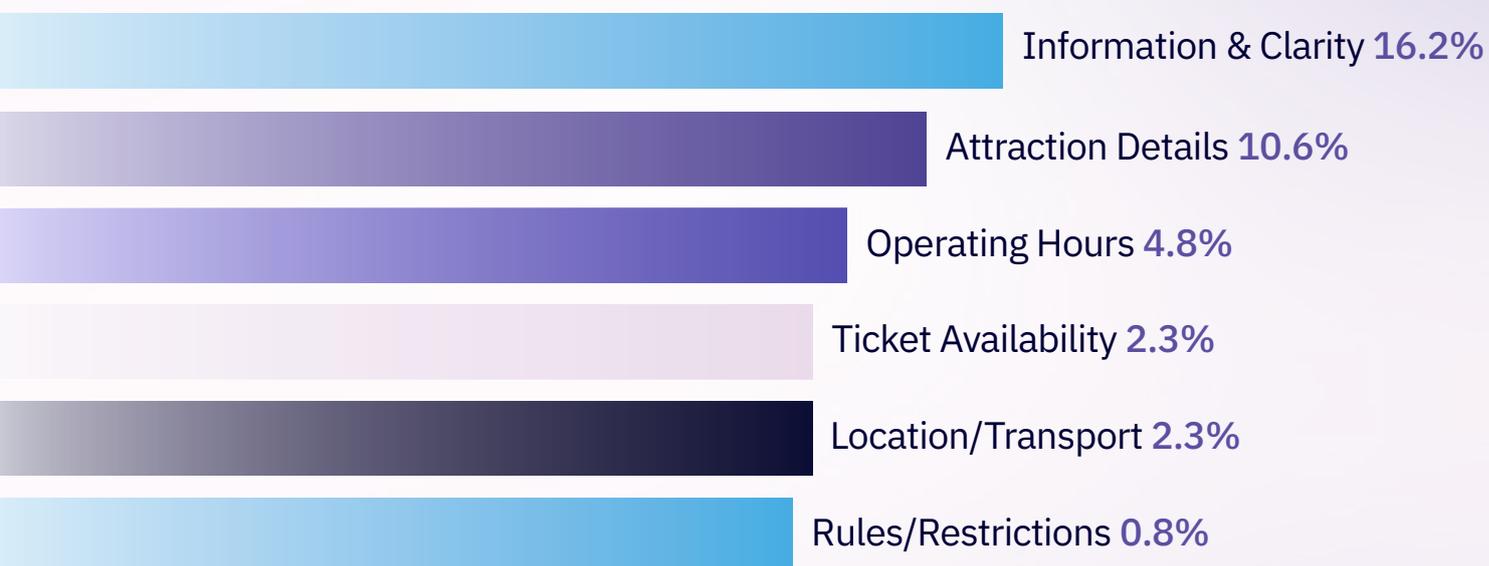
WHAT THEY SAY

- A nice seamless process with no hidden charges, the tickets are able to be downloaded straight to your phone with no fuss
- You get your tickets as an e ticket which makes life easier

Information & clarity

KEY TAKEAWAY

Attraction details matter to **10.6%** of visitors, who value easy access to information such as opening hours and essential site information.

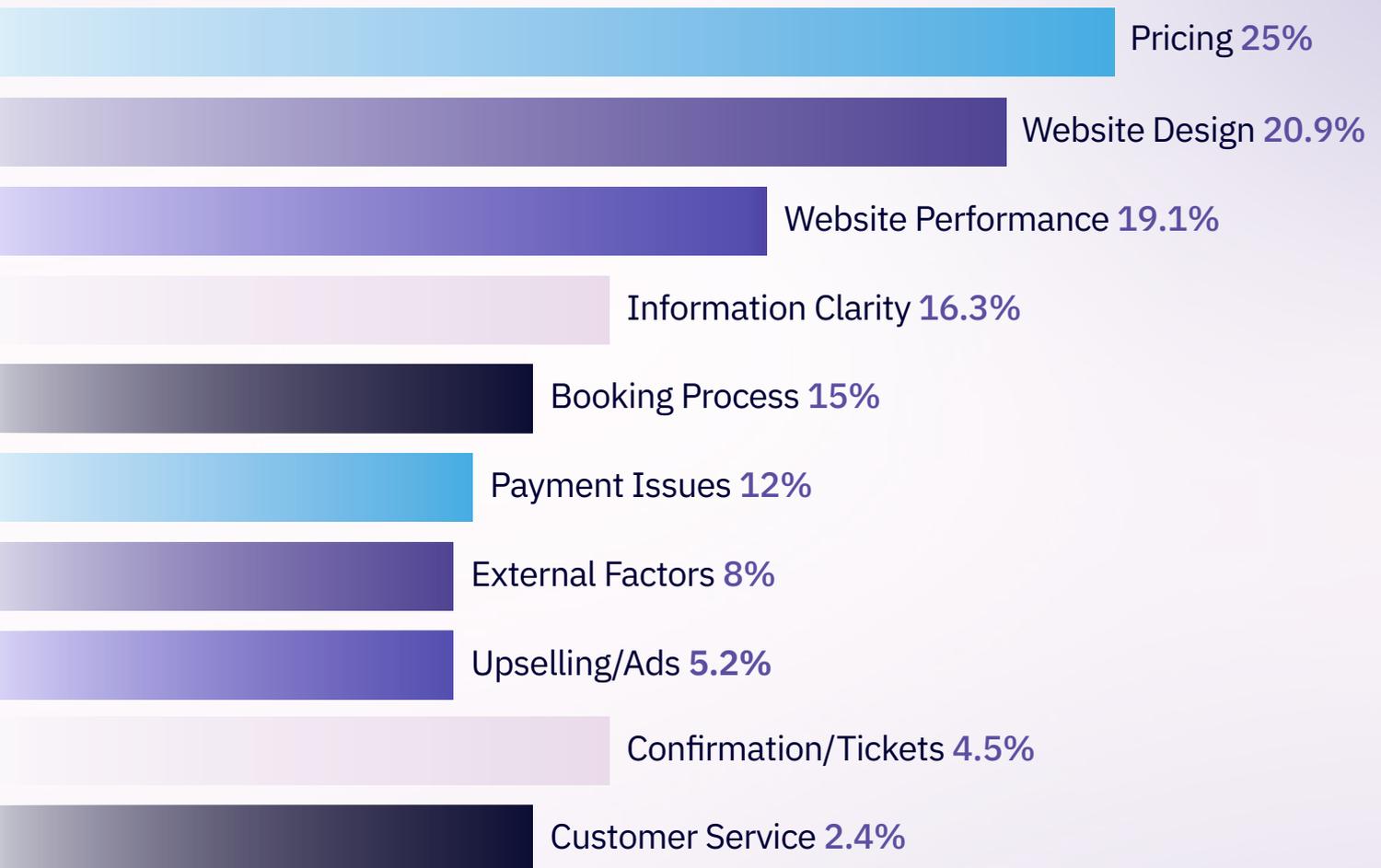


WHAT THEY SAY

- It is a simple transaction and provides good information on the attraction, both in terms of getting to the location, how the day would go and what extra activities there are around
- Gives all the details required e.g. how to get there, parking, cost, opening time

Negative drivers of an online booking experience

This section highlights the factors that frustrate visitors when booking online. Hidden fees, site glitches, difficult navigation, and complicated checkout processes can undermine the experience and reduce conversions, making it vital to address these pain points.



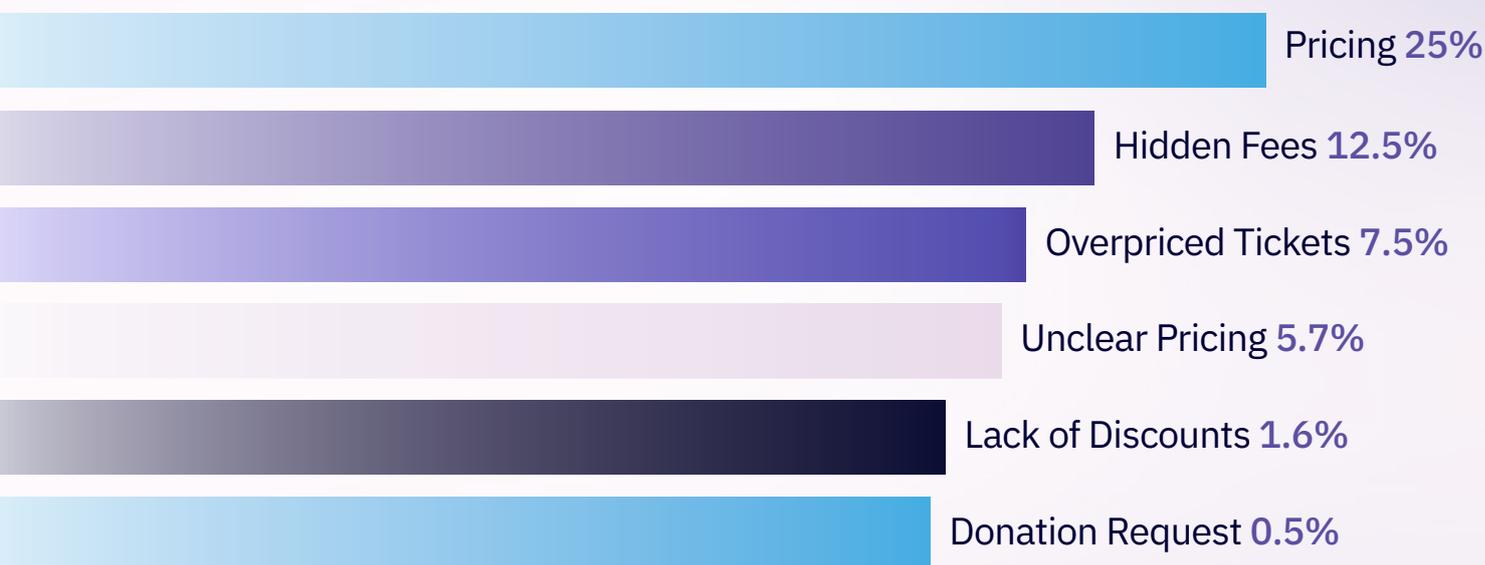
KEY TAKEAWAY

Pricing frustrations are the top driver of negative experiences (**25%**), followed by website design and performance issues.

Pricing

KEY TAKEAWAY

Hidden fees are the single biggest complaint for online ticket bookings, with **12.5%** of visitors citing undisclosed costs as a major frustration.



WHAT THEY SAY

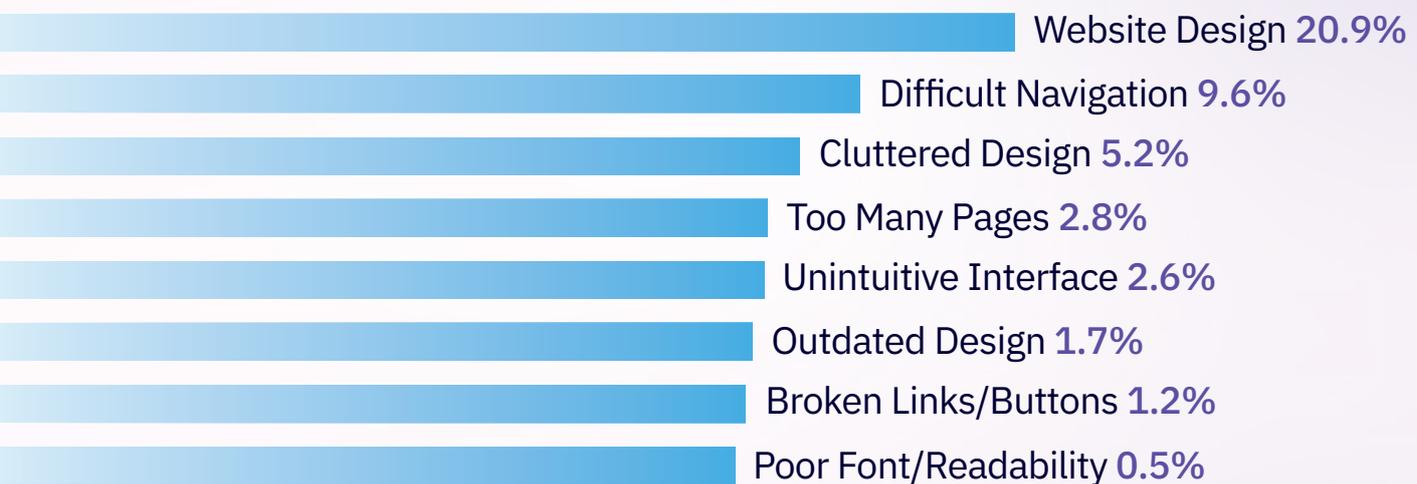
- Adding lots of extra fees at checkout, especially when it's not clear what they're for e.g. an expensive fee for having tickets automatically emailed to you
- Too many tiers of pricing that confuse me when purchasing
- I do remember one attempt to book somewhere which wanted to add on a large parking fee, and hadn't included the booking fee in the original price. We aborted the booking and didn't go!

Website design & performance

KEY TAKEAWAY

Website design matters, with **9.6%** of participants citing difficult navigation as a negative factor, while **12.5%** report that crashes or glitches in website

Website design



Website performance



WHAT THEY SAY

- A glitch at checkout meaning the ticket couldn't process
- Constant verification, slow loading, queues, sites crashing

Booking process & payment issues

KEY TAKEAWAY

A small but notable proportion of participants are frustrated by booking challenges, with **3.8%** citing complicated processes and **6.1%** reporting issues with payment failures.

Booking Process



Payment Issues



WHAT THEY SAY

- Poor experience is when I was not able to book online because the website was very busy and I was in a queue for a long time
- Booking a ticket, then getting to the end and the website wouldn't accept the card I was paying with

Other factors

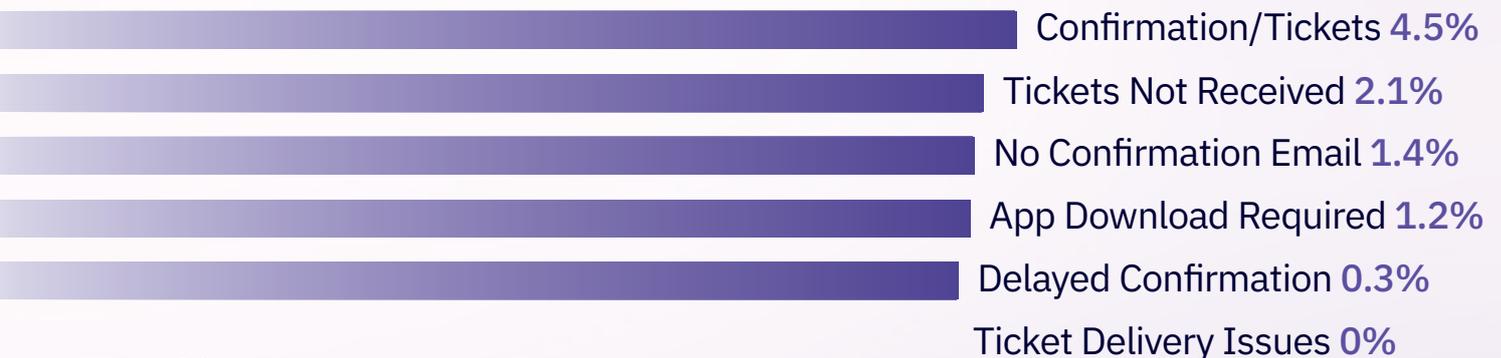
KEY TAKEAWAY

Minor frustrations include upselling ads (5.2%), missing ticket confirmations (2.1%), and difficulty contacting customer service (2.5%), highlighting areas for improvement in post-booking experience.

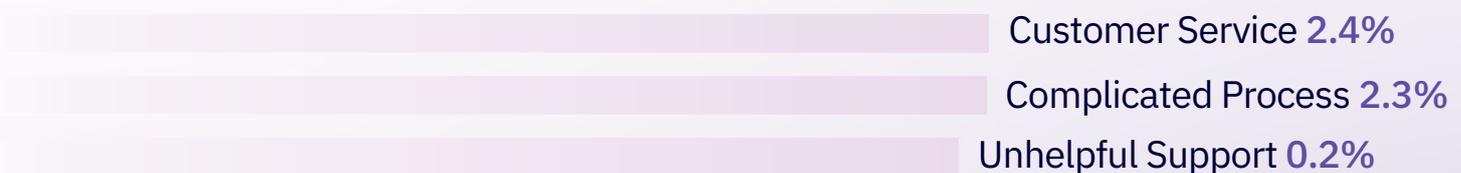
Booking Process



Booking Process



Booking Process



WHAT THEY SAY

- Automated booking service where you can't get to speak directly with a human being!!!!
- Multiple screens trying to upsell either upgrades, fast track, extra experiences etc that I don't need

We asked: What most encourages advanced online booking

In this section, we asked participants to think about the factors that encourage visitors to book tickets online in advance, from discounts to flexible date changes. The results show that reduced admission prices are the strongest motivator, followed by perks such as free parking.

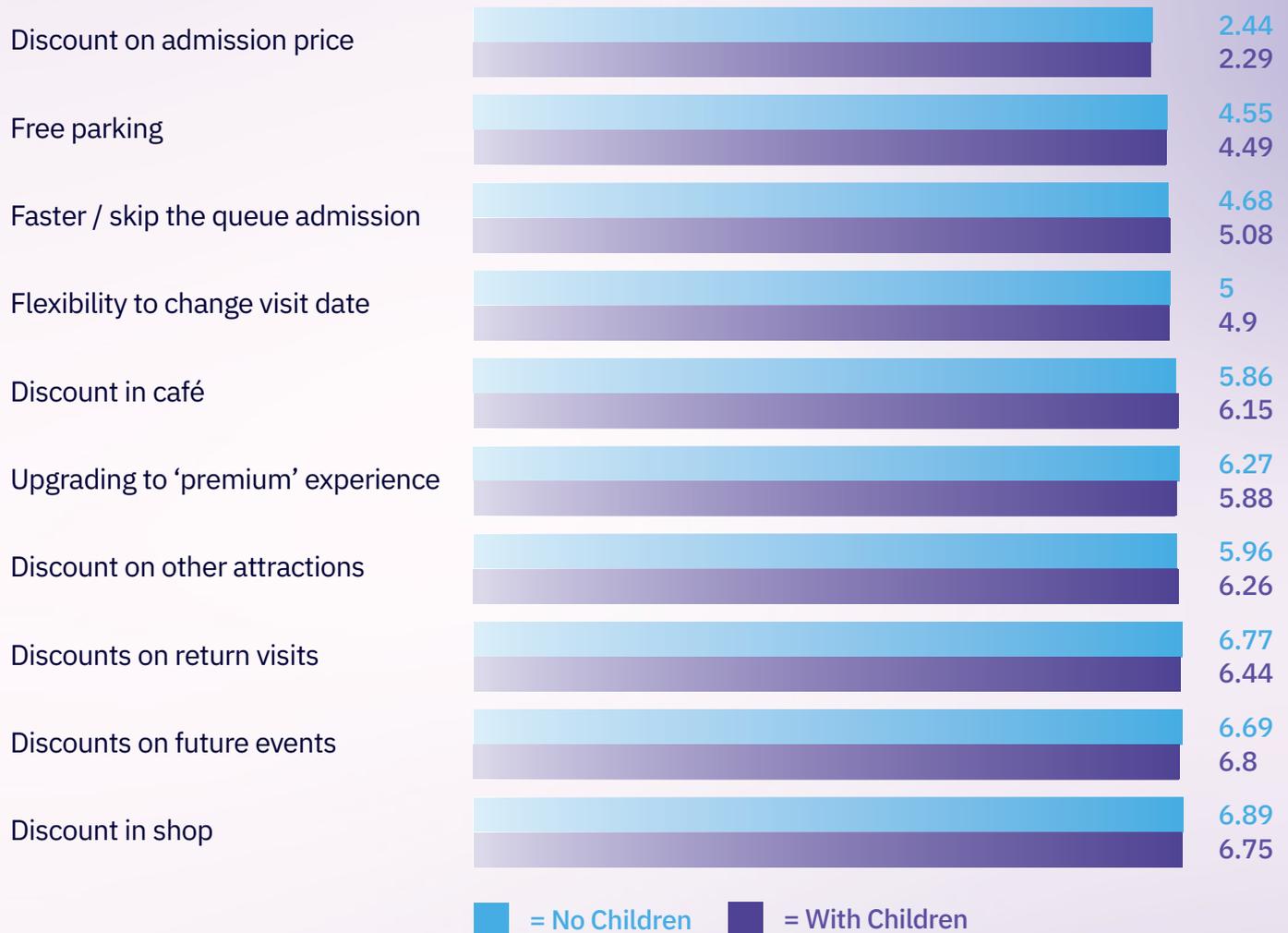
#1
Discount on admission price ranked most important.

Mean Ranking (out of 10)



We asked: What most encourages advanced online booking

Mean Ranking (out of 10)

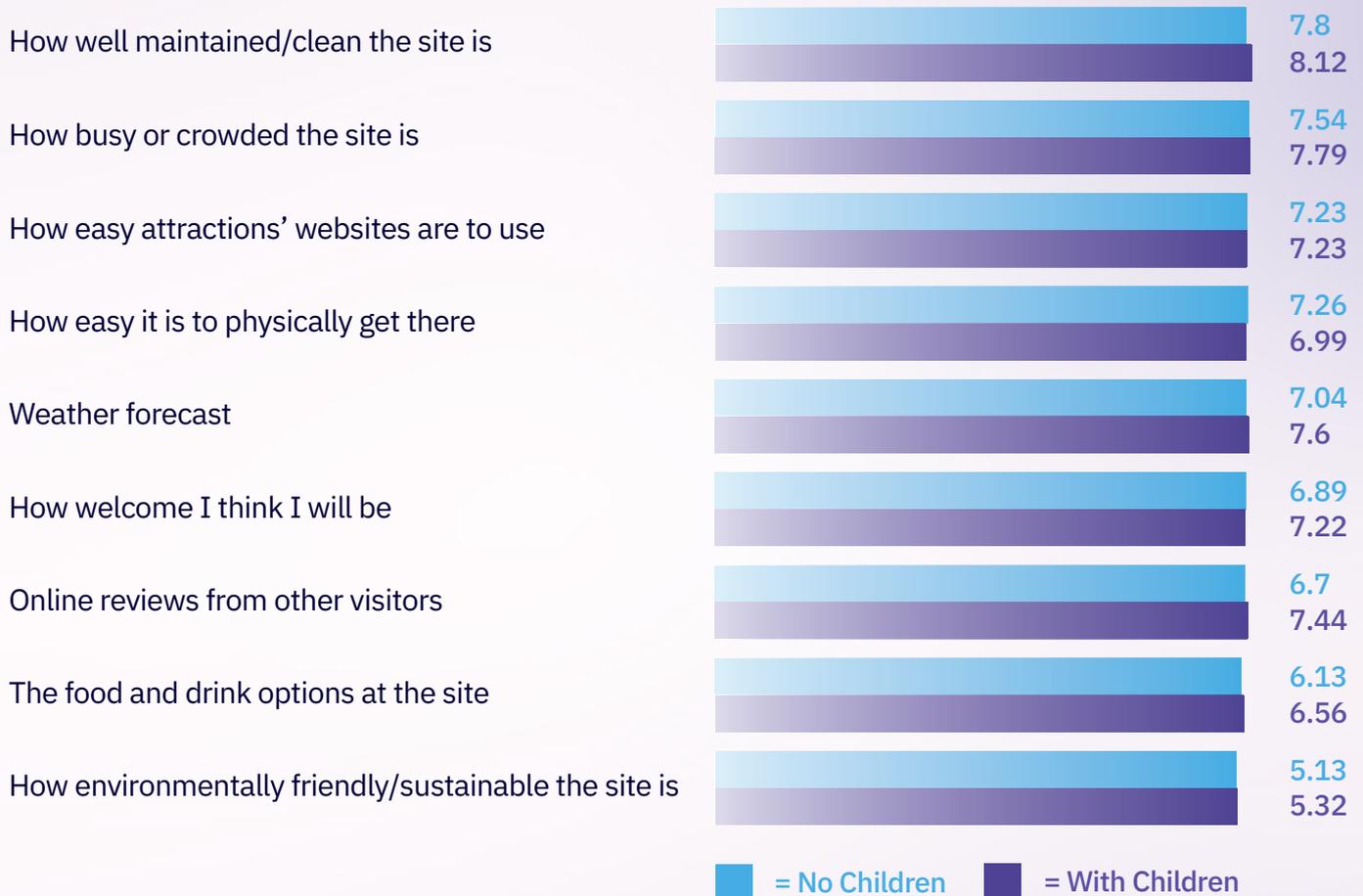


#1

Those who visit with children are more likely to be encouraged by admission price discounts and flexibility to change the visit date.

We asked: The importance of factors when planning trips to attractions

Mean Ranking (out of 10)



Visitors consider a range of factors when planning trips, from crowd levels and accessibility to food, drink, and on-site amenities.

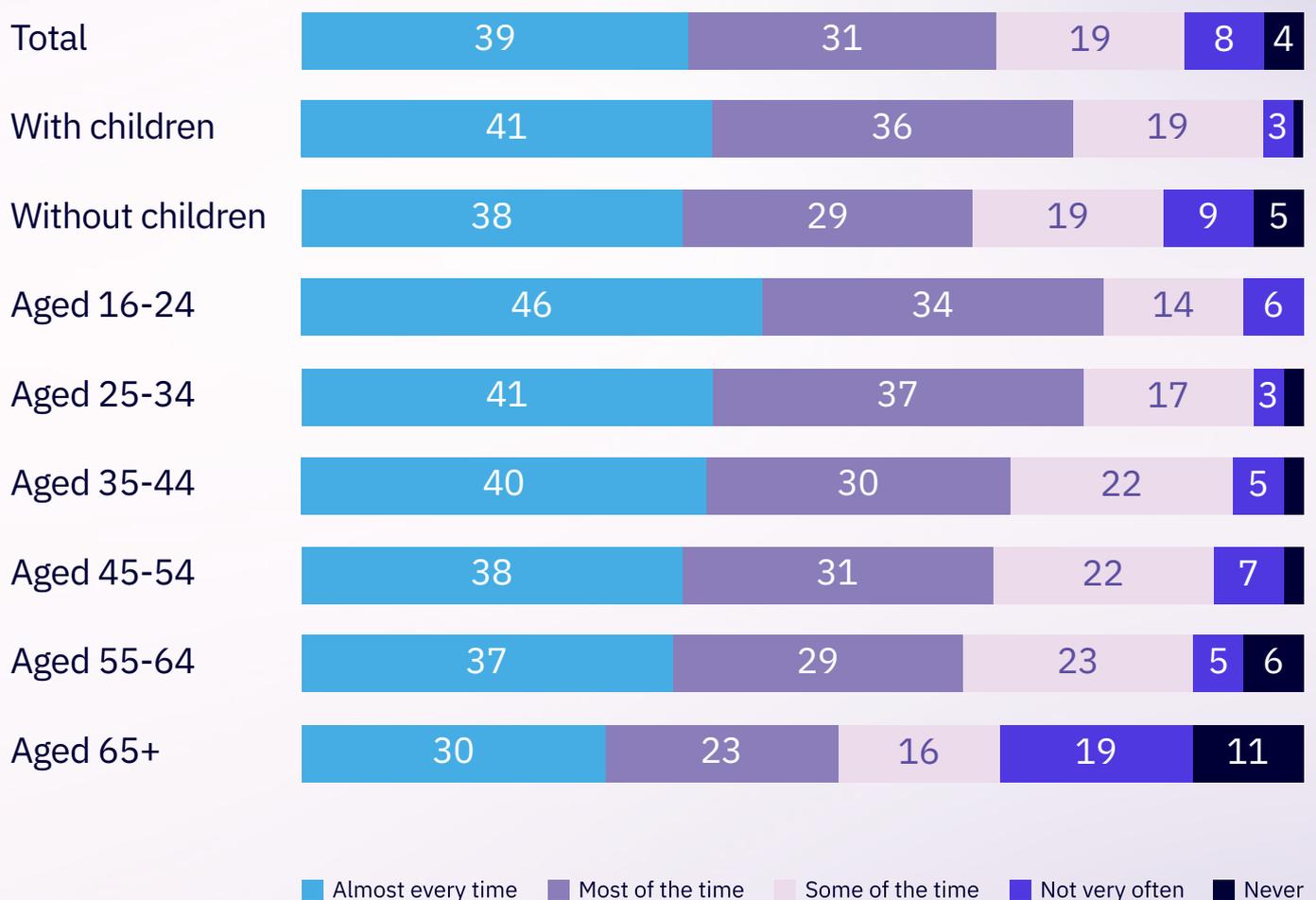
Understanding these priorities helps attractions design experiences that meet guest expectations and encourage visits.

#1
How well maintained and clean the environment is ranks most important - particularly with visitors with children.

We asked: How often do you use weather apps when planning trips to attractions? E.g BBC/MET Office

The Results:

visitors with children are more inclined to use weather apps when planning their visit. Additionally, younger age groups are more likely to rely on such apps, while those aged 65 and over are less likely to do so.



We asked: How important are each of the following in your decision to renew memberships

The Results:

How often visitors went to the attraction was most important followed by the range of benefits. Newsletters and other marketing were least important - however these scored higher with visitors with children.

Mean Ranking (out of 10)



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