

Unmarried America: How They Get News & Information



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Why This Report Matters: Unmarried women are a large and growing portion of the electorate and have the power to determine election outcomes.

- **Unmarried women make up more than a quarter of the U.S. population. There will be an estimated 55 million unmarried women eligible to vote in November 2012. That's an estimated 1.8 million more voting-eligible unmarried women compared to the 2010 cycle.**
- **The 2008 Presidential election was a strong demonstration of the power and potential of this vote. That year 59.8% of unmarried women turned out to vote. In 2010, only 38.3% of unmarried women voted. That translates into 11.4 million lost votes.**
- **The 2008 “surge” vote will not reappear in 2012 unless outreach and communications designed to give them a stake in the outcome of the election starts now.**
- **Identifying and using communications channels trusted by unmarried women is key to achieving this goal.**

Mobilizing Unmarried Women: What We Know

- **These women are busy, move much more than other voters, feel disconnected from politics, and are often put off by “political information.”**
- **The majority of unmarried women share the same set of progressive values. yet the need remains to help them connect the dots between the political and policy agendas promoted by candidates and organizations and their own daily lives.**
- **To reach them, register them, persuade them, and turn them out on Election Day will require new and different approaches that fit with the lives of busy and mobile unmarried women.**
- **Communicating with these unmarried women presents unique challenges.**

Key Takeaways - Talking to Unmarried Women

- **The key to reaching unmarried women is reaching out to them through non-political channels and where they live and interact. The information has to reach them where they are, be local, and directly apply to their daily lives even more so than for other groups of voters.**
- **They are not prone to seek out political information. They are not watching political television channels, listening to political talk radio or reading political blogs.**
- **Unmarried women get news and information from local TV news, online weather, health and entertainment sites and from talking with others. Eight in ten unmarried women have gotten news in the last month from talking with others.**
- **However, they view these discussions as interacting personally with their friends and family and not “exchanging” political information or news. That is an important distinction and is key to understanding how to relate to and communicate with them.**

Key Takeaways - Television

- **Local television remains a dominant sources of news for these unmarried women.**
- **Cable television is also an effective way to reach these women. Some of their favorite shows air on Lifetime, TLC, TBS, TNT, A&E, and the Food Network. MTV is important for the never married women.**
- **Unmarried women tend to express more trust in news they see on their preferred cable news stations compared to other sources – certainly more so than print media.**
- **They prefer seeing pictures and video. Seeing and hearing from people like them is more powerful than reading information that can feel more distant.**
- **There is a strong age difference in news gathering: younger unmarried women are much more episodic while older unmarried women still tend to have the habit of seeking news at certain times.**

Key Takeaways - The Internet

- **Unmarried women are using the Internet and sending email.**
- **They tend to see the news on their customized home pages on the web.**
- **These women gravitate toward sites supplying weather, directions, and health information. They look for news they can use. Unmarried women also like entertainment news and websites.**
- **They say they have a tough time distinguishing what is true in the political information they see online, and often do not vote because they feel they are not able to get reliable information.**

Recommendations: What We Need to Know

- **The Opportunity to Build Trust:** Organizations need to better understand how to overcome the “trust deficit.” Already, the Voter Participation Center and other organizations are making strong strides in this regard by making the political seem nonpolitical and instead making policy-oriented information feel connected to the unmarried woman’s daily life in a powerful and meaningful way.
- **The Occasion to Overcome “Language Barriers”:** Language that sounds too political or does not have some other redeeming characteristic (comedy, family connections) feels disconnected from these women’s daily lives. The term “War on Women,” for example, is an inside-the-beltway term that has little resonance with unmarried women. Organizations need to better understand how to connect the personal to the political using language that does not turn away unmarried women.

Recommendations: What We Need To Know (cont'd)

- The Chance to Deepen Connections: Moving forward, organizations need to figure out how to make the “bigger” events that affect all of us seem specific and unique to unmarried women so they want to take action. Organizations need to learn how to speak to unmarried women in a way that connects the dots between their political action agenda and the way unmarried women take action to help others in their lives.
- The Moment to Link Their Concerns: Organizations need to learn how to best link what these women are experiencing in their daily lives with the political and policy solutions advocated by candidates, campaigns, and advocates. The message needs to be delivered in a way that results in feelings of hope and empowerment rather than making them just feel overwhelmed. In terms of the current political debate, for example, economic issues – often connected to health care – insurance coverage for contraception, cutting Medicaid, all have special resonance with unmarried women.

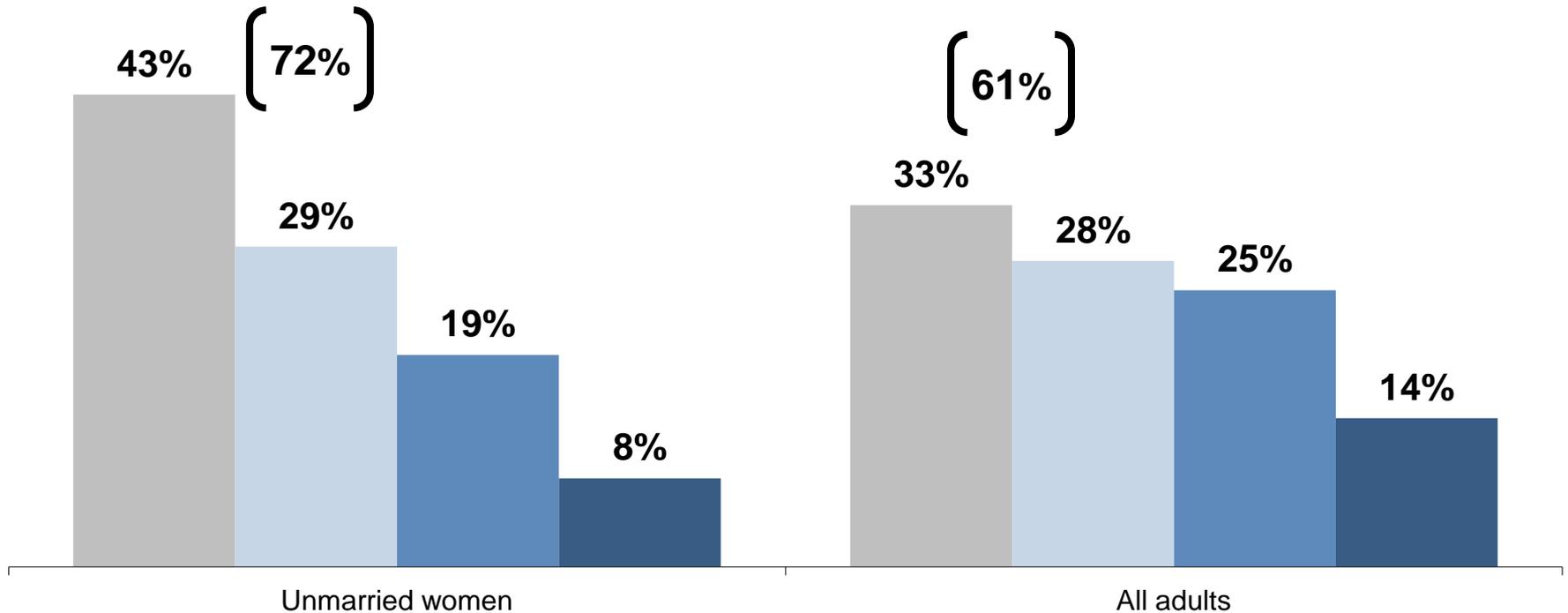
Interest Levels and Trust



Lower levels of interest are an issue with unmarried women. More than seven in ten express moderate to no interest in politics which is significantly higher than adults overall.

How interested are you in information about what's going on in government and politics?

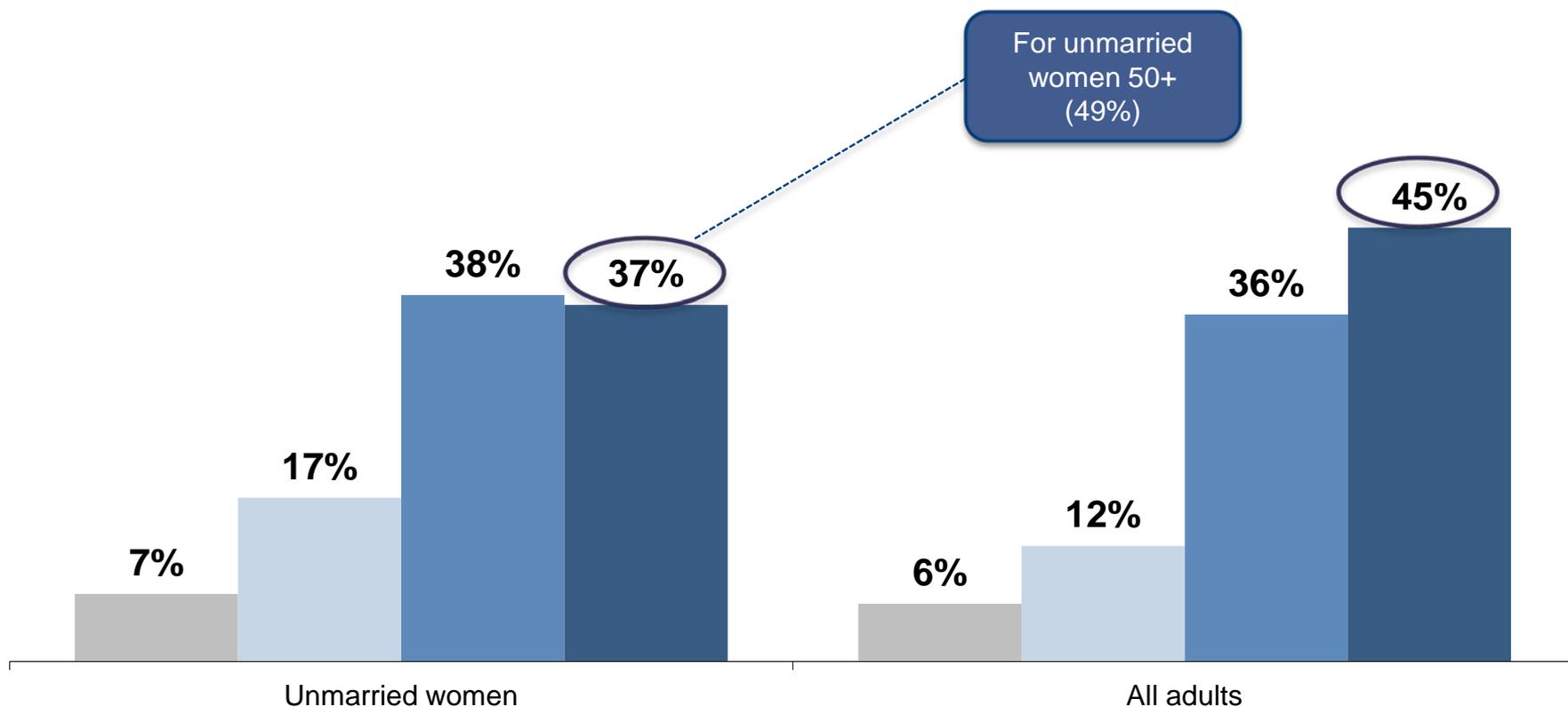
■ Slightly/not at all interested ■ Moderately interested ■ Very interested ■ Extremely interested



Only slightly more than a third of unmarried women say they enjoy keeping up with the news a lot.

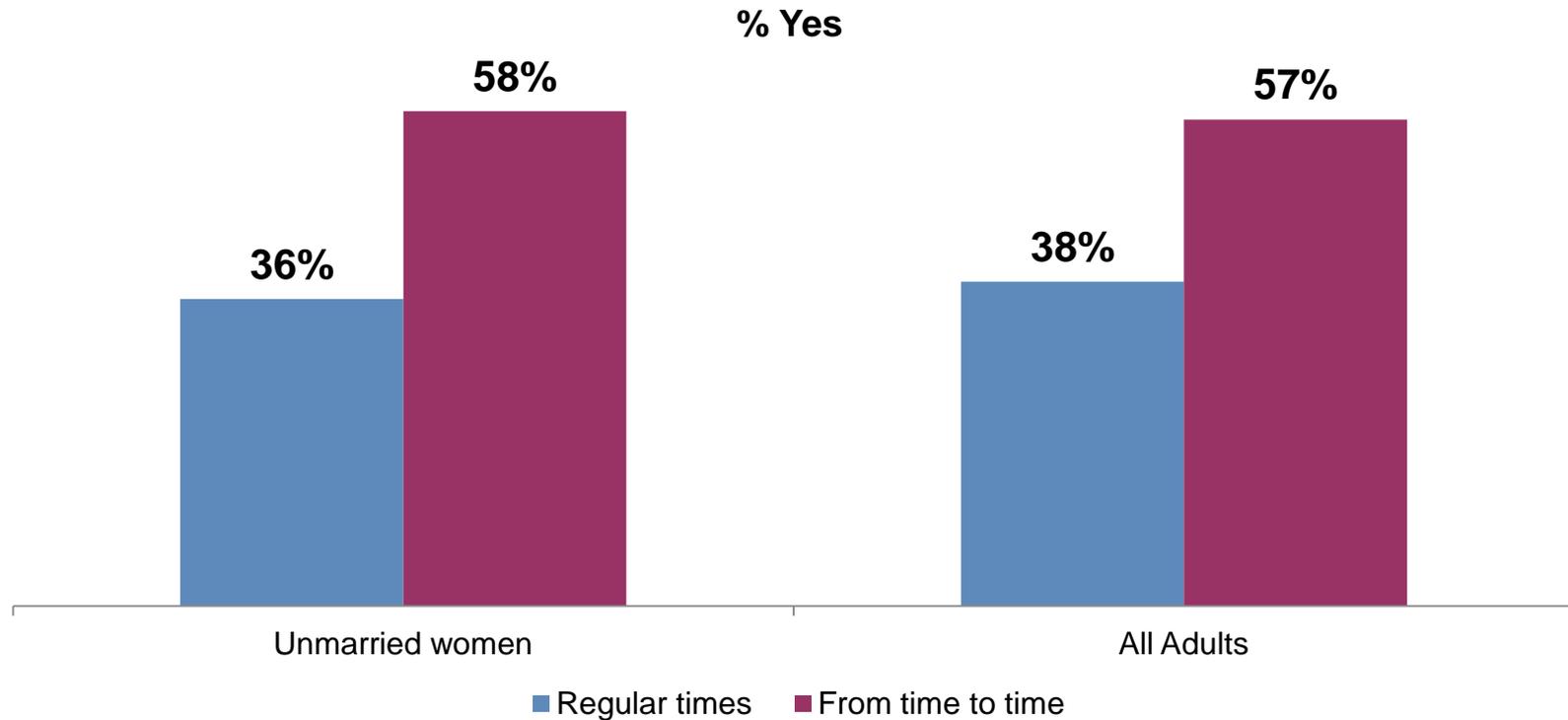
How much do you enjoy keeping up with the news – a lot, some, not much, or not at all?

■ Not at all ■ Not much ■ Some ■ A lot



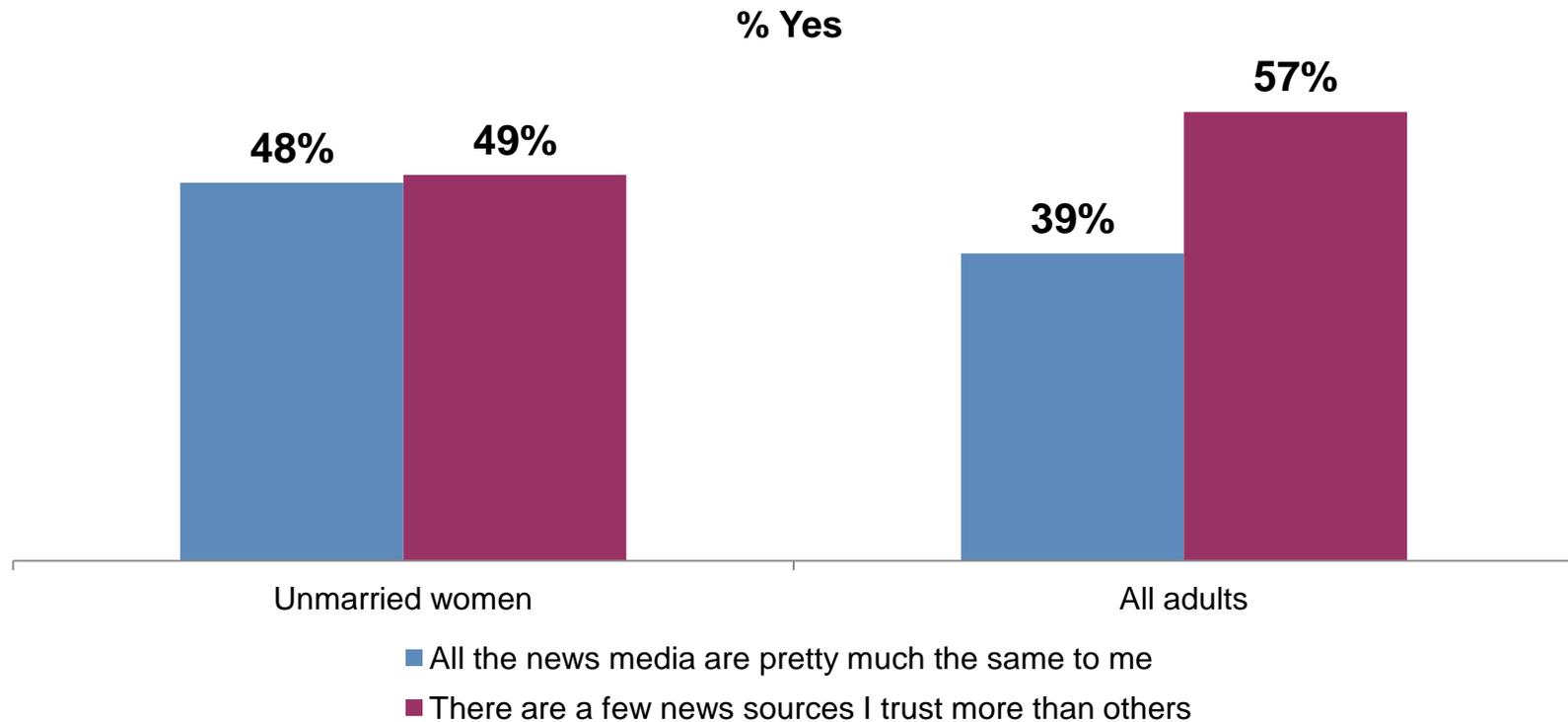
Unmarried women are like adults overall in their news gathering. A solid majority (58%) say they check in from time to time. So political information will only reach them from time to time.

Are you more the kind of person who gets the news at regular times, or are you more the kind of person who checks in on the news from time to time?



Unmarried women are less likely to feel they can trust at least some sources of news.

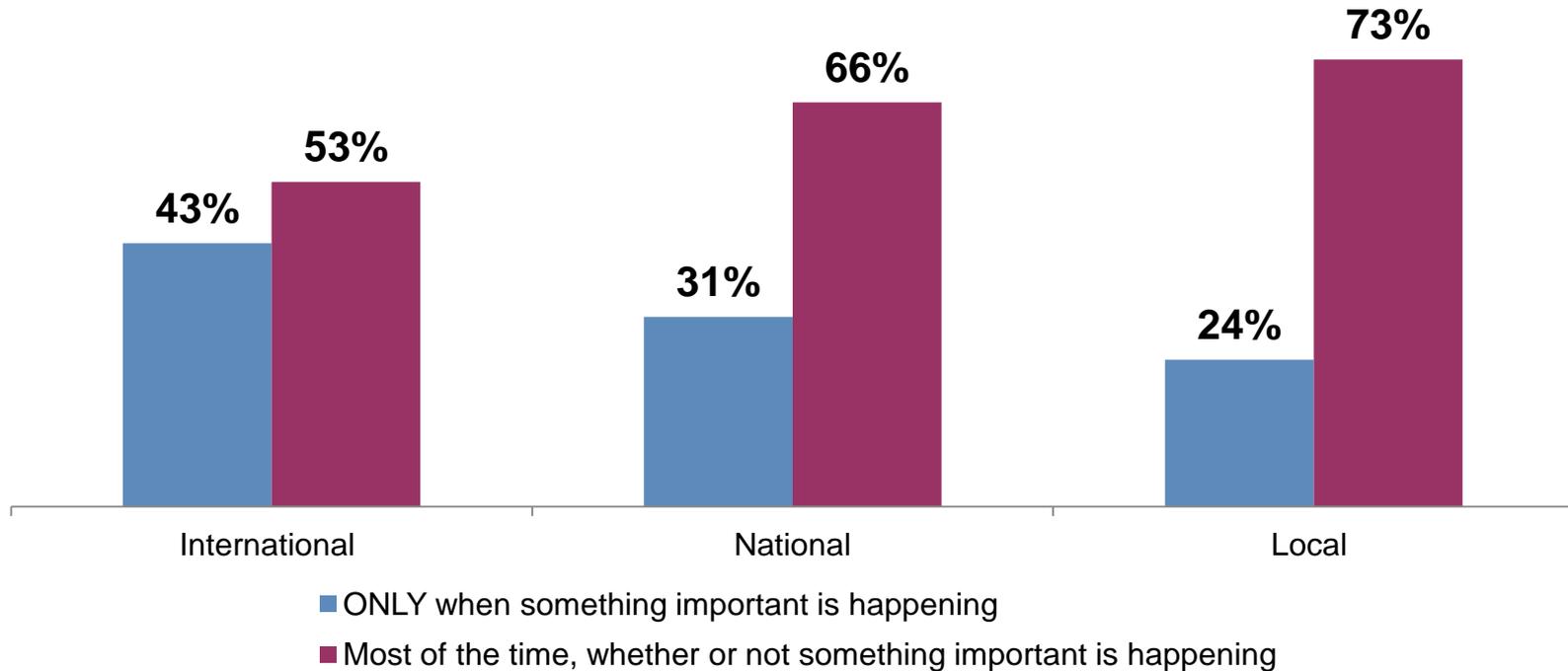
Which comes closer to describing your view of the news media...?



Unmarried women pay more attention to local news issues compared to national or international issues.

Which of the following two statements best describes you?
I follow [INSERT] news closely ONLY when something important is happening (OR) I follow [INSERT] news closely most of the time, whether or not something important is happening.

% Yes Among Unmarried Women

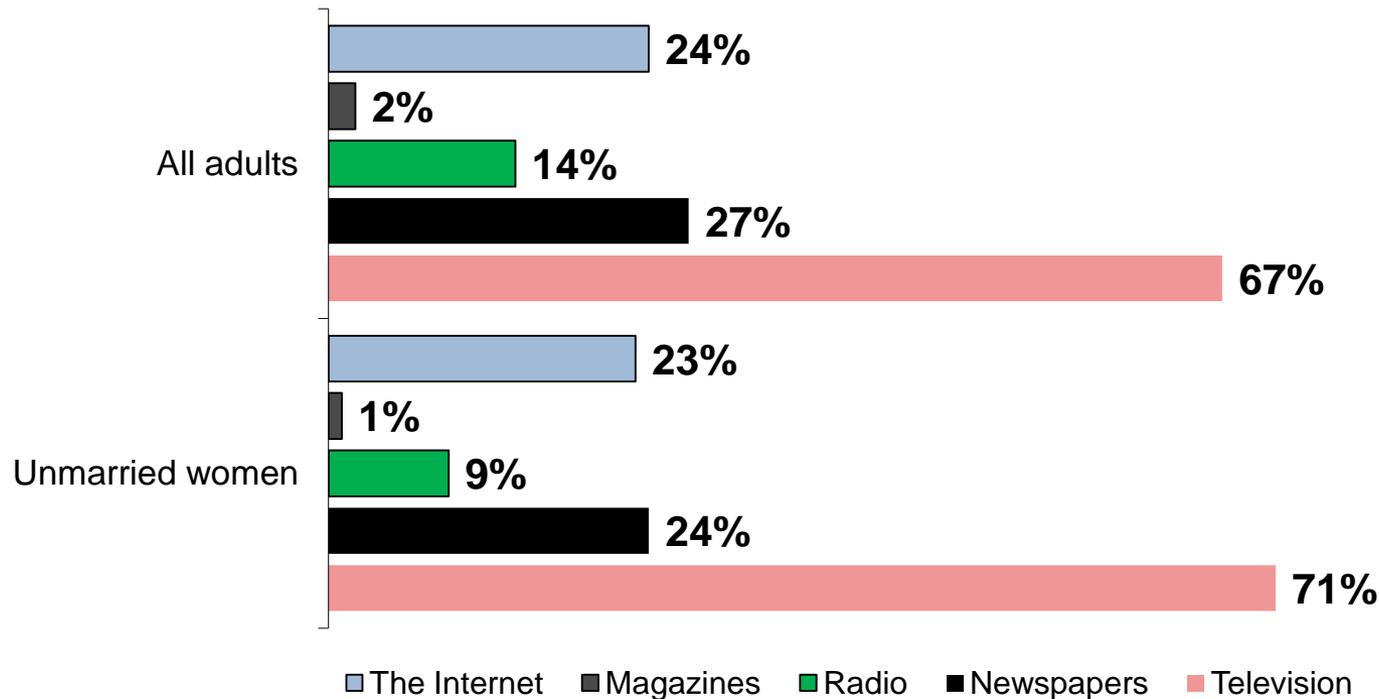


Sources for News and Information About Politics



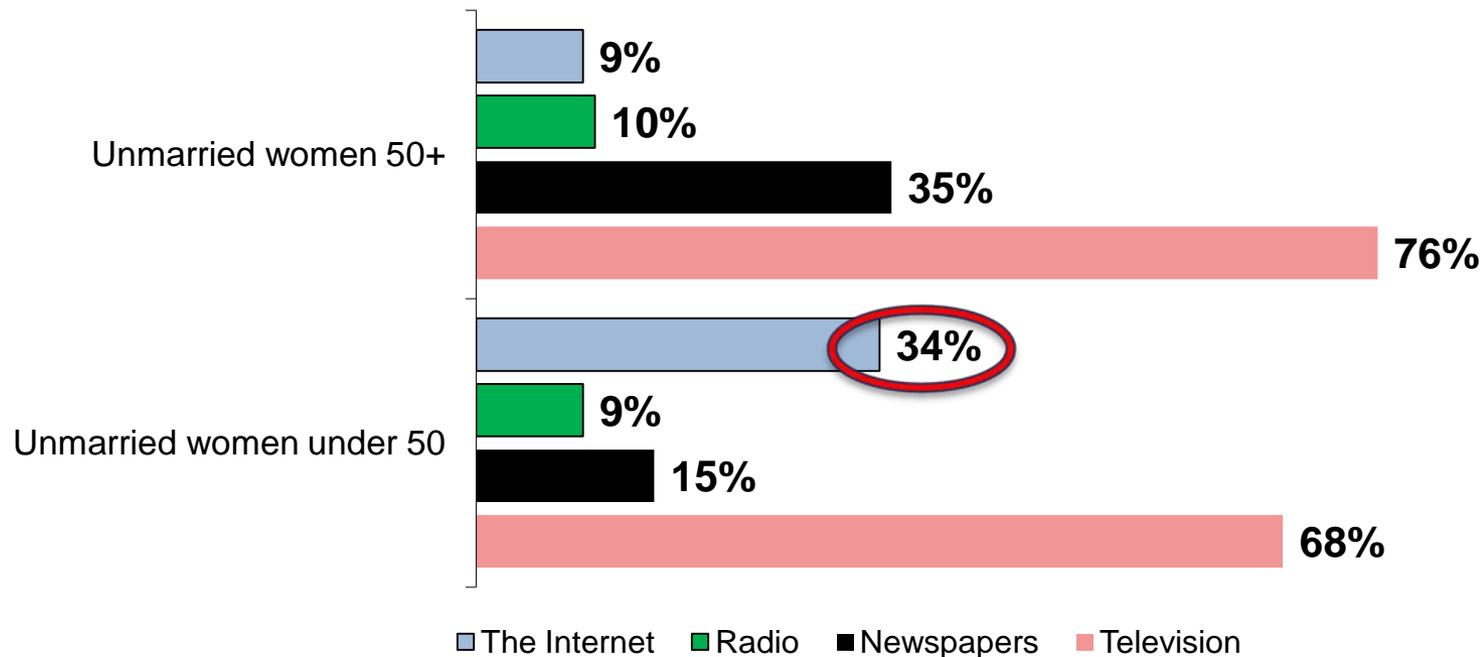
As for voters overall, television dominated how unmarried women received news about the 2010 election. Every other source was significantly less likely to be a source among these women.

Overall, how have you been getting most of your news about this year's campaigns and elections... from television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the Internet?



Younger women were much more likely to use the Internet to get news about the election compared to older women (34% vs. 9%). This strong age difference occurs throughout these data. Still, television dominates for all ages.

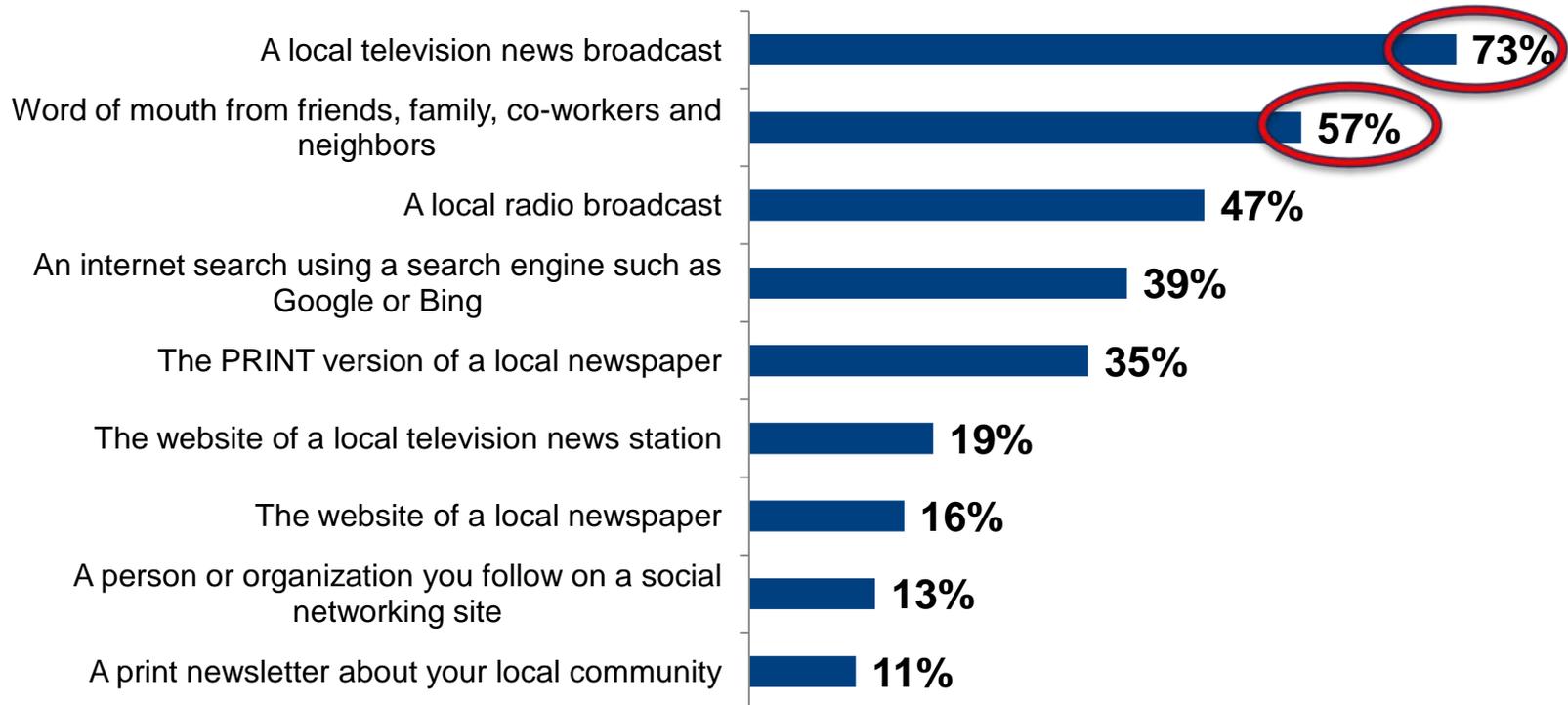
Overall, how have you been getting most of your news about this year's campaigns and elections... from television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the Internet?



Unmarried women turn to television for local information. They rely on talking with others as well.

How often do you get local information from...?

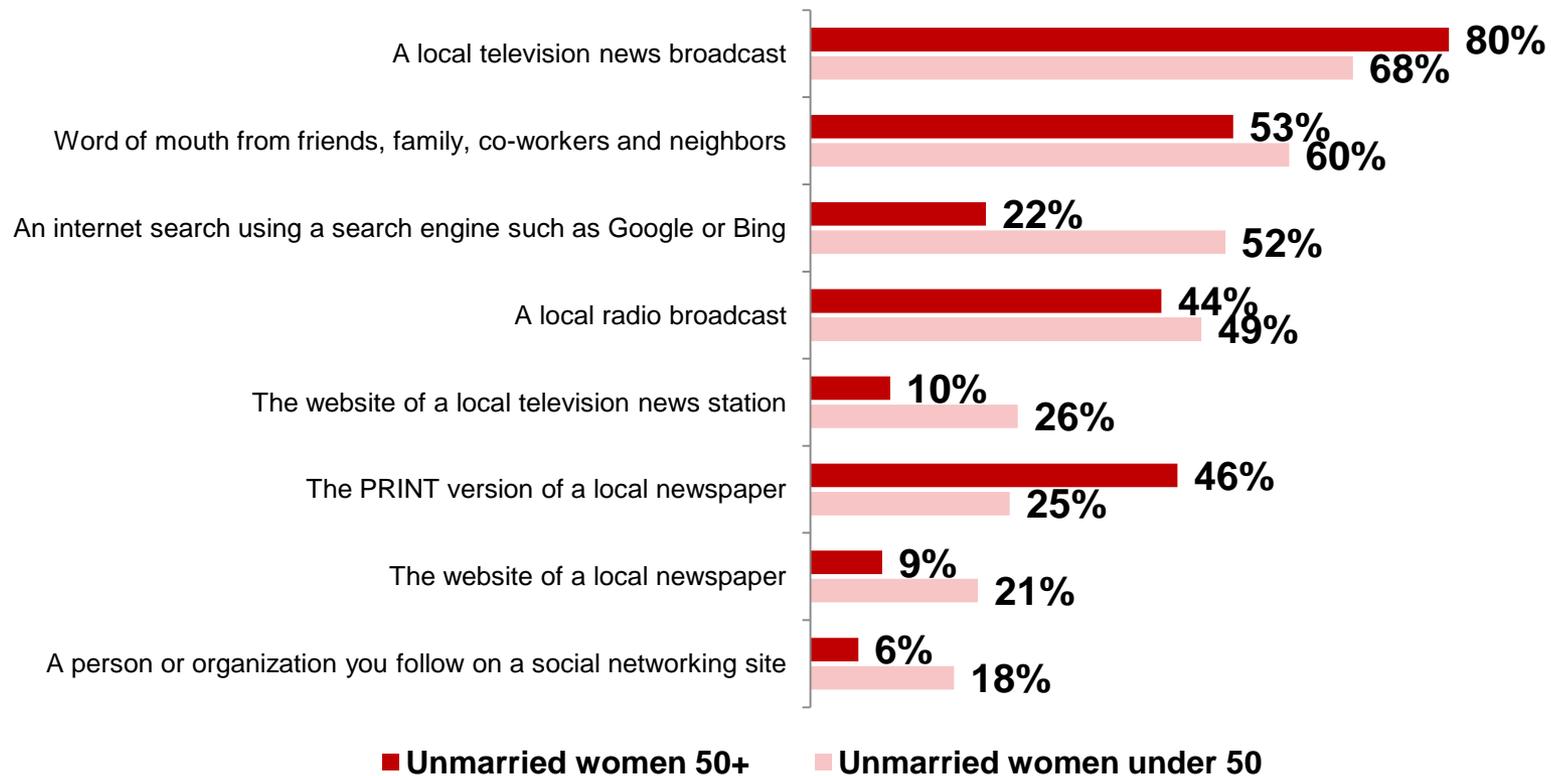
% Several Times a Week or More Among Unmarried Women



Younger unmarried women turn to the Internet much more than older unmarried women. Older women turn to local newspapers. The commonalities are television, word of mouth, and radio, with the first two dominating.

How often do you get local information from...

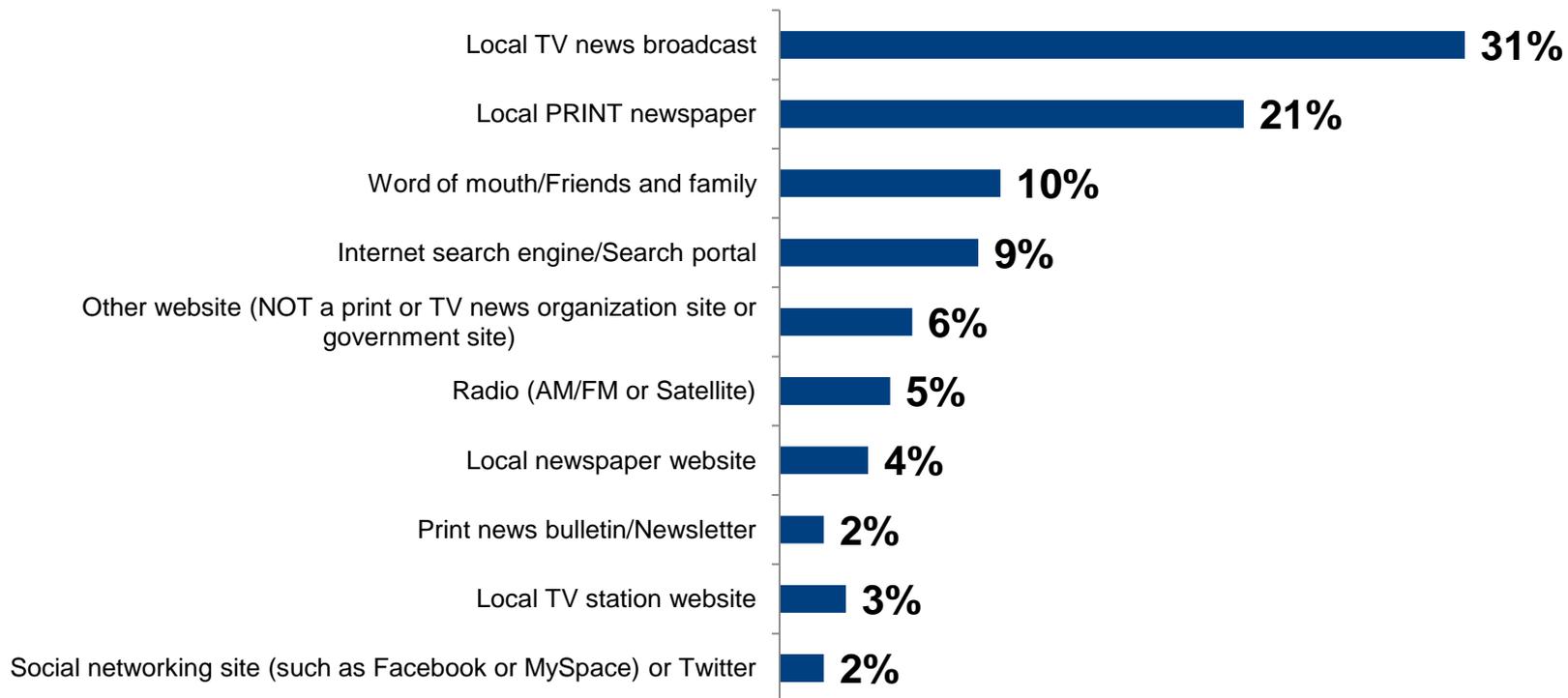
% Several Times a Week or More Among Unmarried Women



Looking specifically at how unmarried women get information on local politics, television and newspapers are the top choices.

What sources do you rely on MOST for information about -- Local politics, campaigns and elections?...*

% Among Unmarried Women

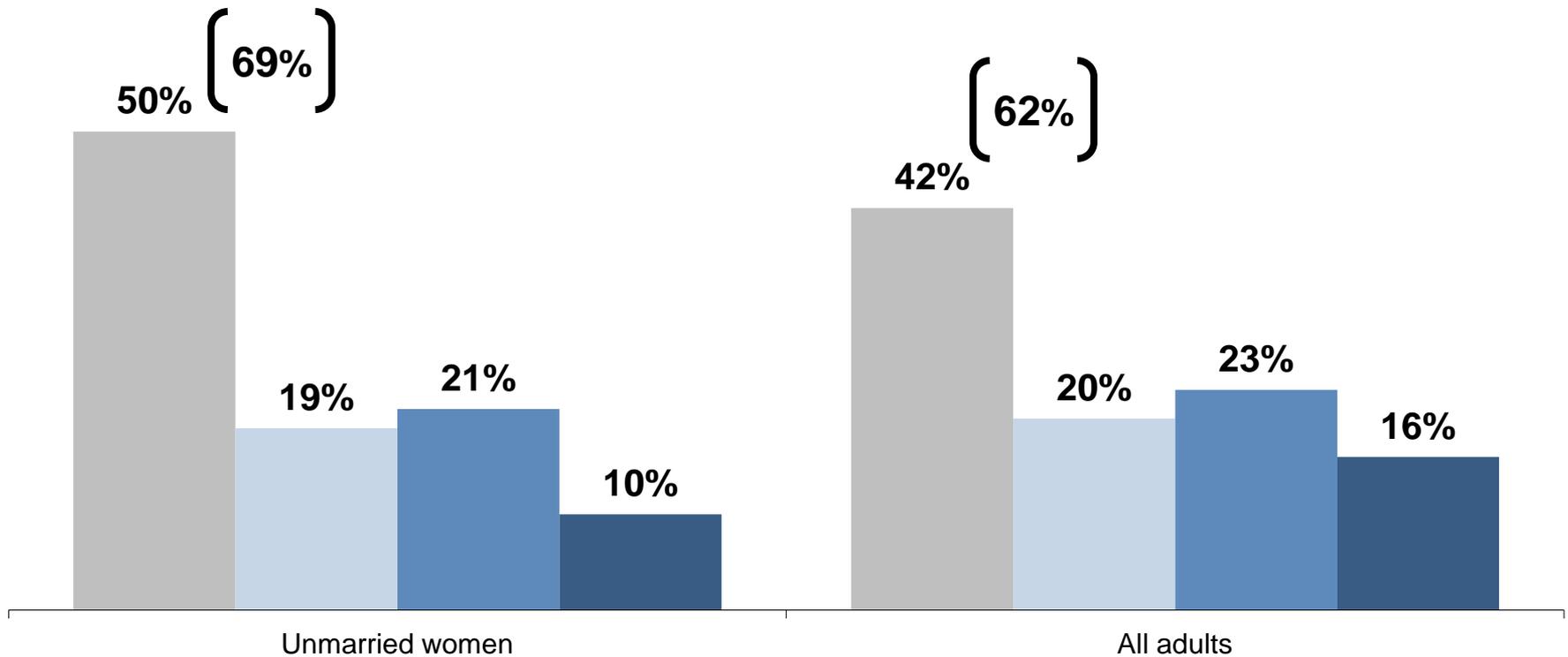


*Asked of those who said they had gotten information about local politics.

Most unmarried women are not listening to political radio shows.

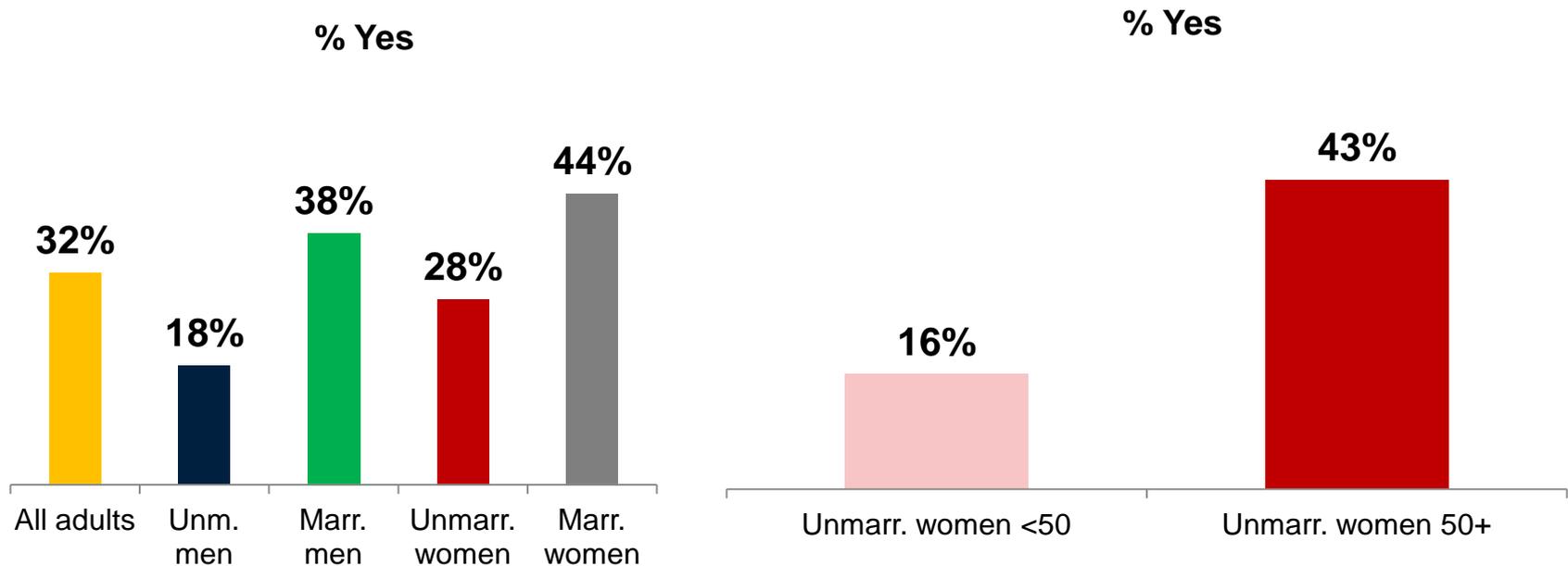
How often, if ever, do you listen to radio shows that invite listeners to call in to discuss current events, public issues and politics – regularly, sometimes, hardly ever or never?

■ Never ■ Hardly ever ■ Sometimes ■ Regularly



Daily newspapers are a more effective way of reaching older unmarried women than younger unmarried women. More than four in ten older unmarried women have a subscription to a daily newspaper.

Do you currently have a PAID subscription for delivery of a local print newspaper?



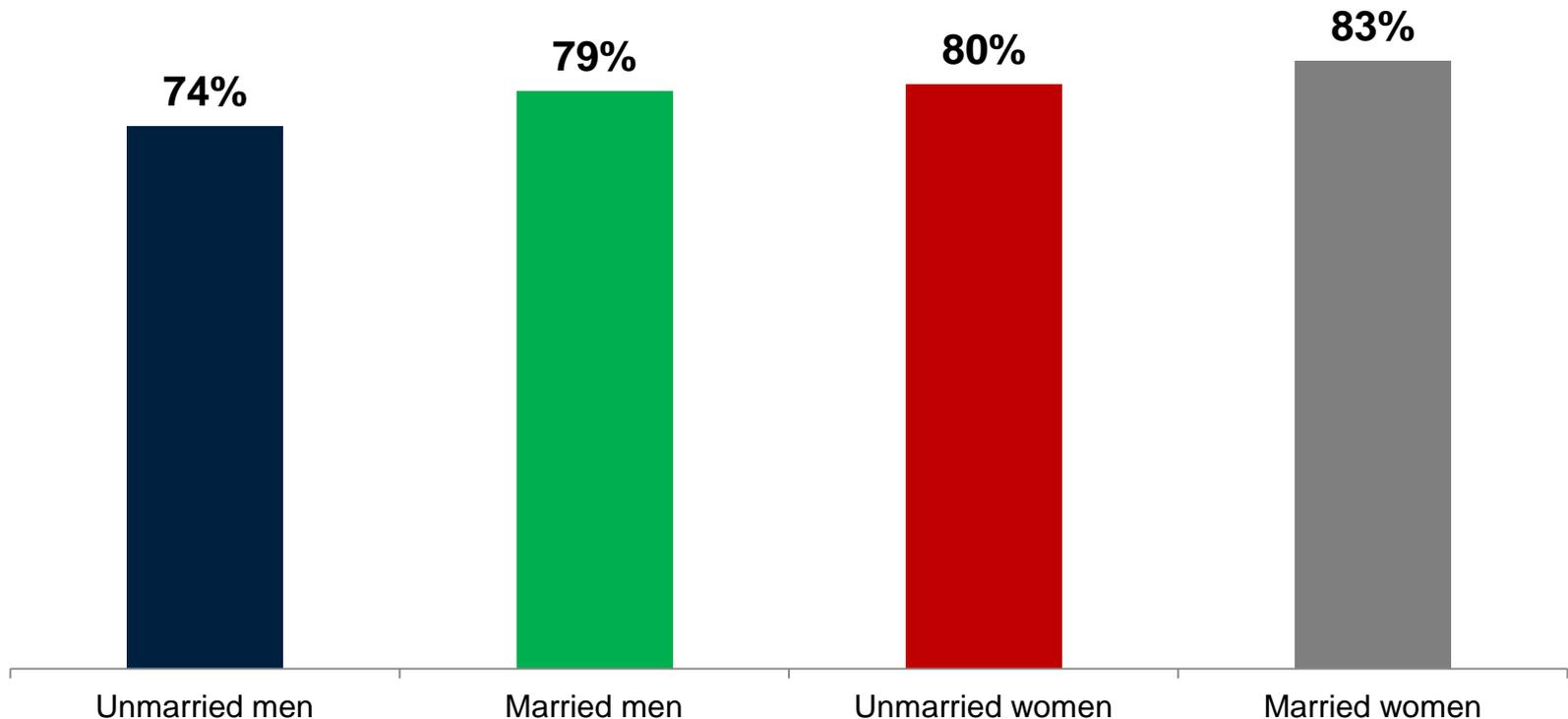
Talking Politics



One of the most effective ways to get information to women, including unmarried women, is to get a friend to deliver the news. Eight in ten unmarried women have gotten news in the last month from talking with others.

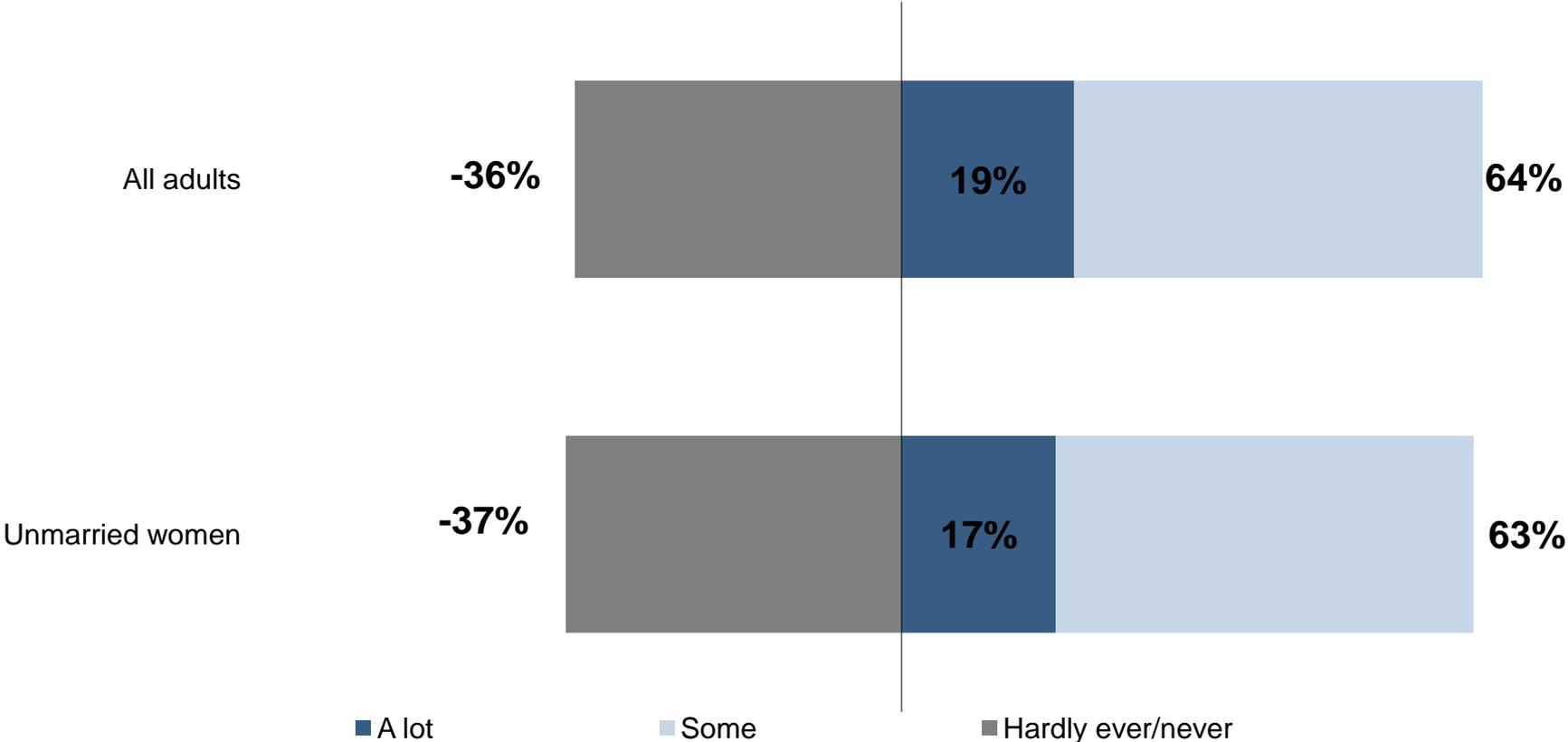
Within the last month have you gotten news through the following channel? [Talking with others]

% Yes

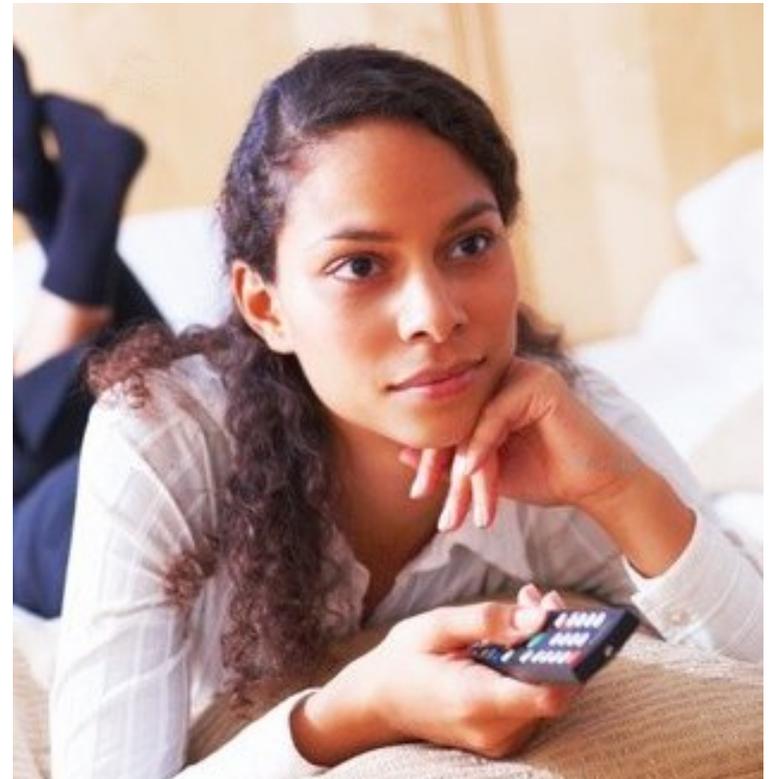


Similar to all adults, more than half of unmarried women say they talk about politics with friends at least sometimes.

How often does the subject of politics come up in conversations with friends – a lot, some, hardly ever or never?

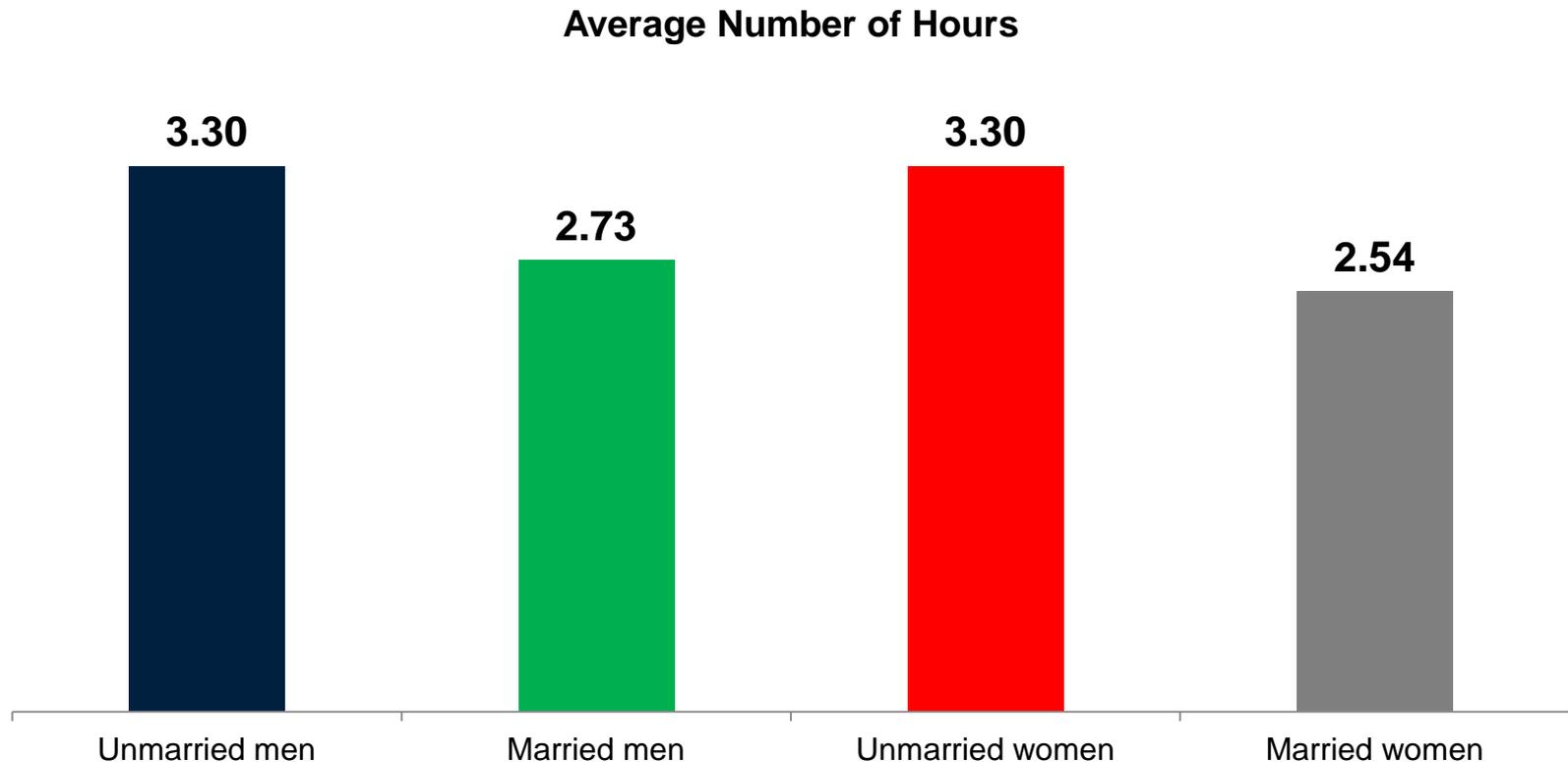


Television



Unmarried women report watching more than 3 hours of television per day. Only unmarried men watch as much television.

On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch television?



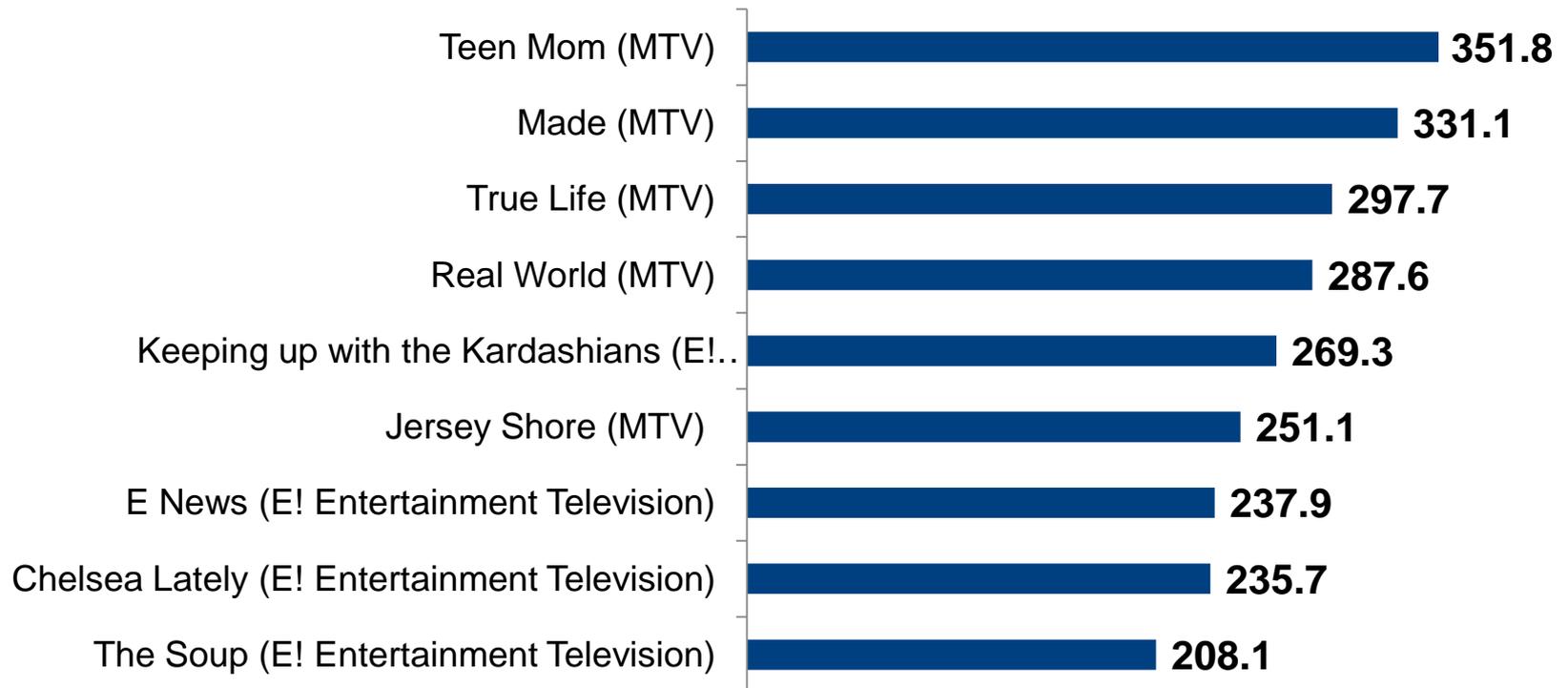
Cable television makes unmarried women a very targetable demographic group and in an affordable way. The cable channels they watch the most include: Lifetime, TLC, TNT, TBS, A&E, and the Food Network.

Watched in Last Seven Days	Index for wid/sep/div	Index for never married
Say Yes to the Dress (TLC)	109.4	250.8
Kate Plus 8 (TLC)	137.5	238.9
The New Adventures of Old Christine (Lifetime)	147.4	234.4
Project Runway (Lifetime)	134.3	228.3
Meet The Browns (TBS)	122.7	214.2
Hawthorne (TNT)	136.7	204.5
Drop Dead Diva (Lifetime)	148.1	203.2
Cake Boss (TLC)	102.3	184.6
Ace of Cakes (Food Network)	125.3	164.7
Army Wives (Lifetime)	165.6	161.1
The First 48 (A&E)	111.6	160.1
Iron Chef America (Food Network)	114.6	138.6
Criminal Minds (A&E)	124.9	133.4
Good Eats (Food Network)	104.5	109.8
The Closer (TNT)	149.1	107.1

How to read index: An unmarried woman (never married) is 61% more likely to have watched Army Wives in the last 7 days than the average adult.

Looking at never married women, MTV and the E! network stand out as powerful channels. They tend to attract a younger demographic with their programming and may be a good place for GOTV and registration efforts.

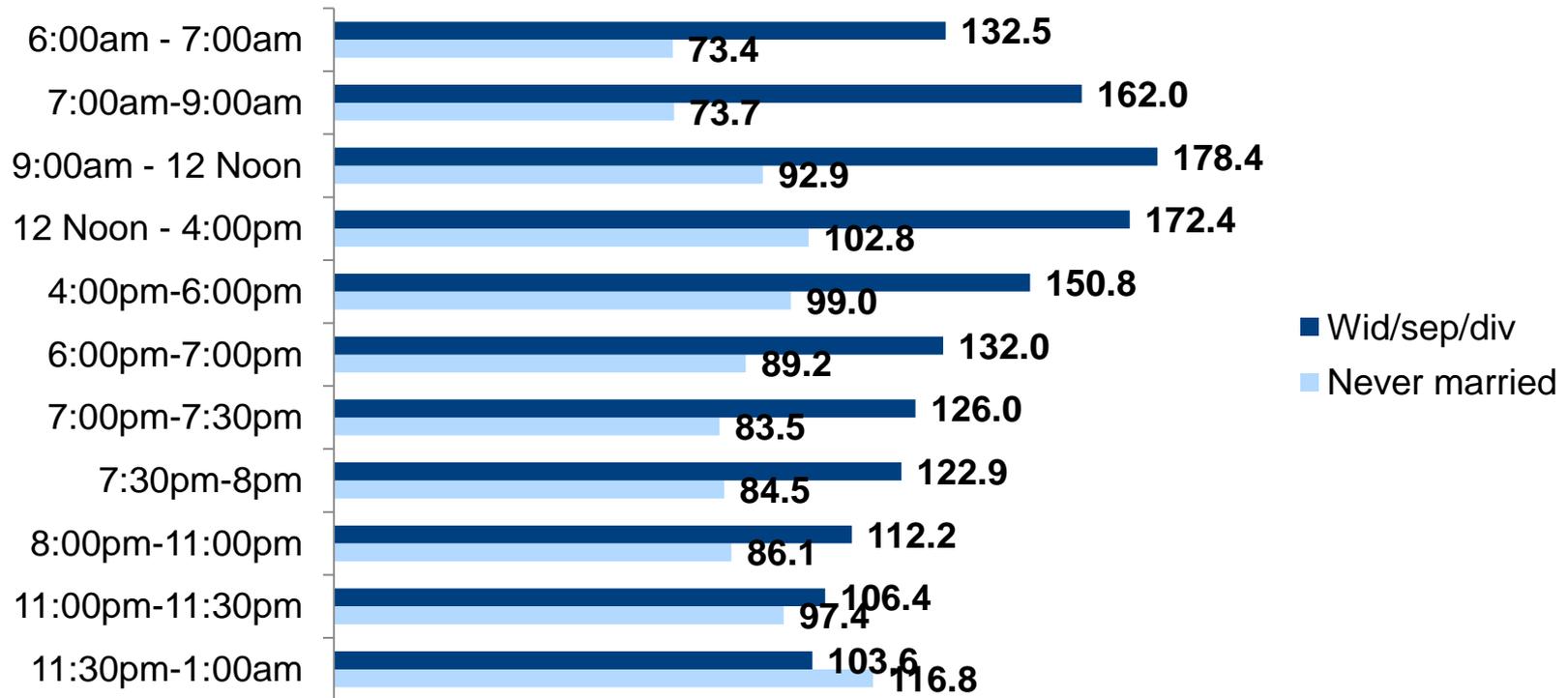
Watched in Last 7 days Among Never Married



How to read index: An unmarried woman (never married) is 169% more likely to have watched Keeping with the Kardashians in the last 7 days than the average adult.

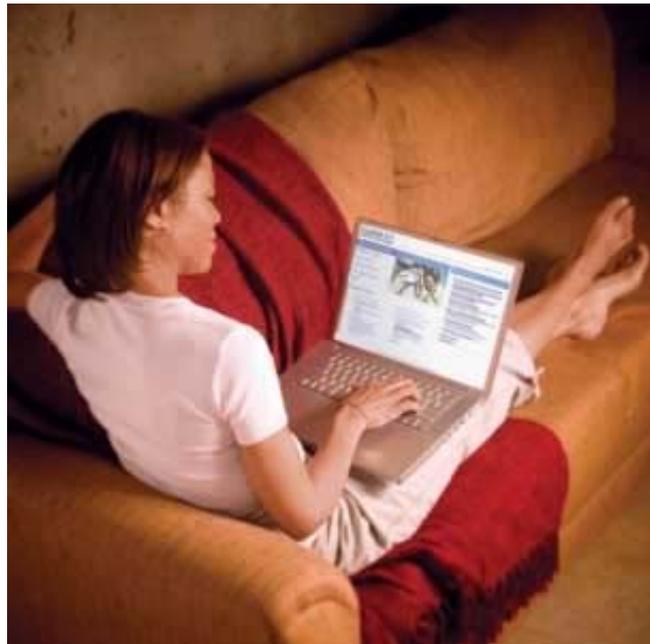
Across every TV day part, unmarried women in the widowed/separated/divorced category are more likely to be watching compared to all adults and compared to never married women.

Weekday Day Parts



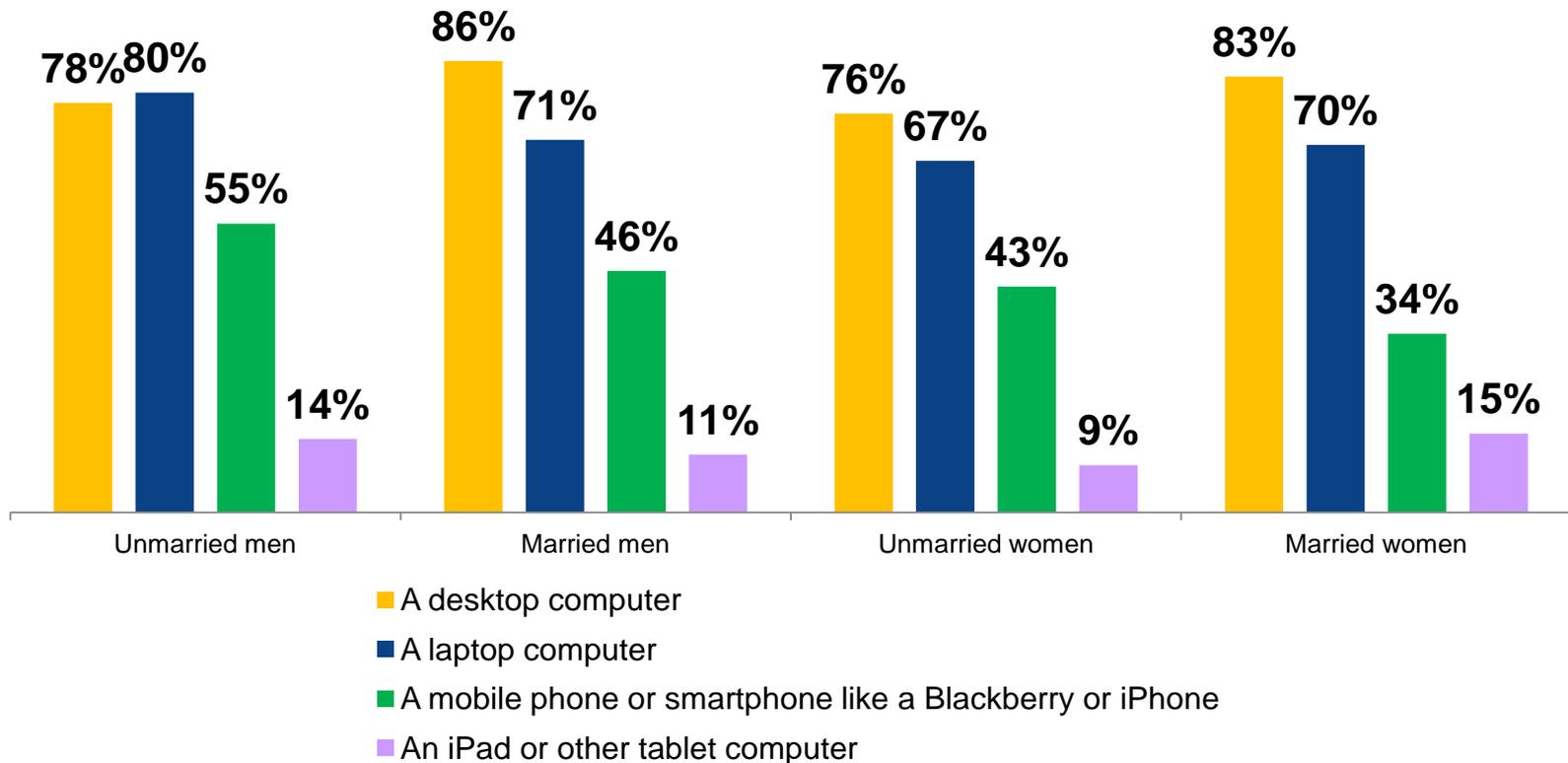
Unmarried women (wid/sep/div) have an index of 100 or greater across every weekday day part meaning they are more likely than adults overall to be watching in that daypart.

Computers and the Internet



Computers still dominate for accessing the Internet. Tablet computers are not highly used across marital groups, but their growth is likely on the rise as the technology becomes more affordable.

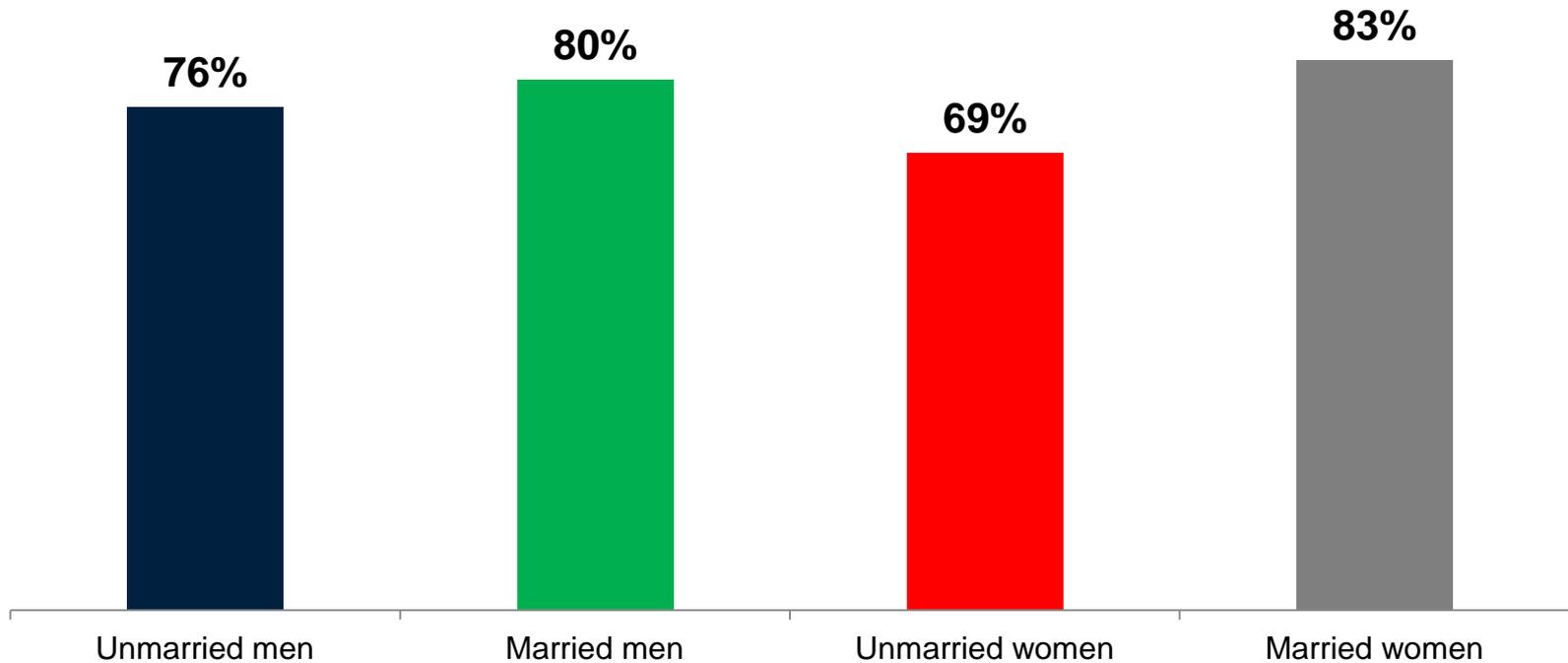
Do you ever access the Internet from (INSERT), or not? [Asked of those who use the Internet or email at least occasionally]



There is a marital gap on Internet use. Still, a large majority of unmarried women use the Internet.

Do you use the internet, at least occasionally?

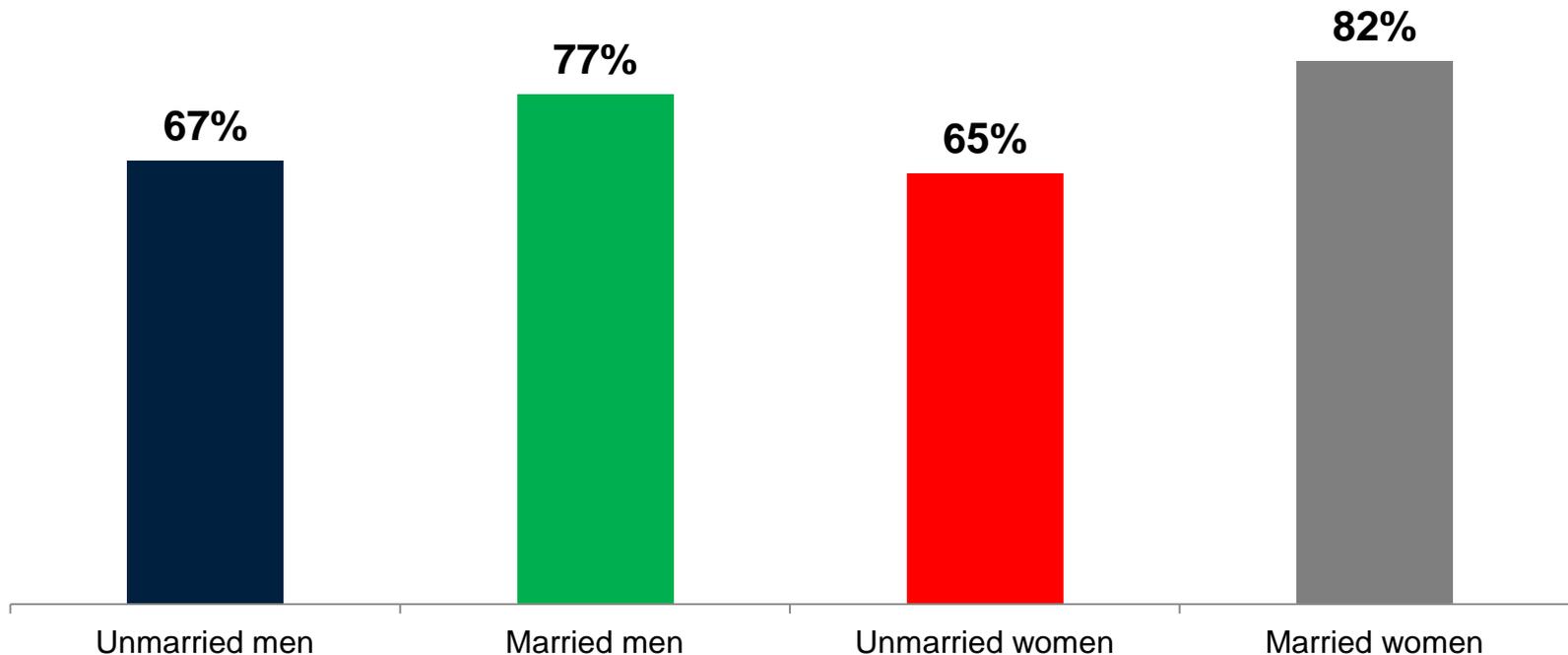
% Yes



Likewise, email use is higher among married Americans compared to those who are unmarried. Just about two-thirds (65%) of unmarried women are emailing.

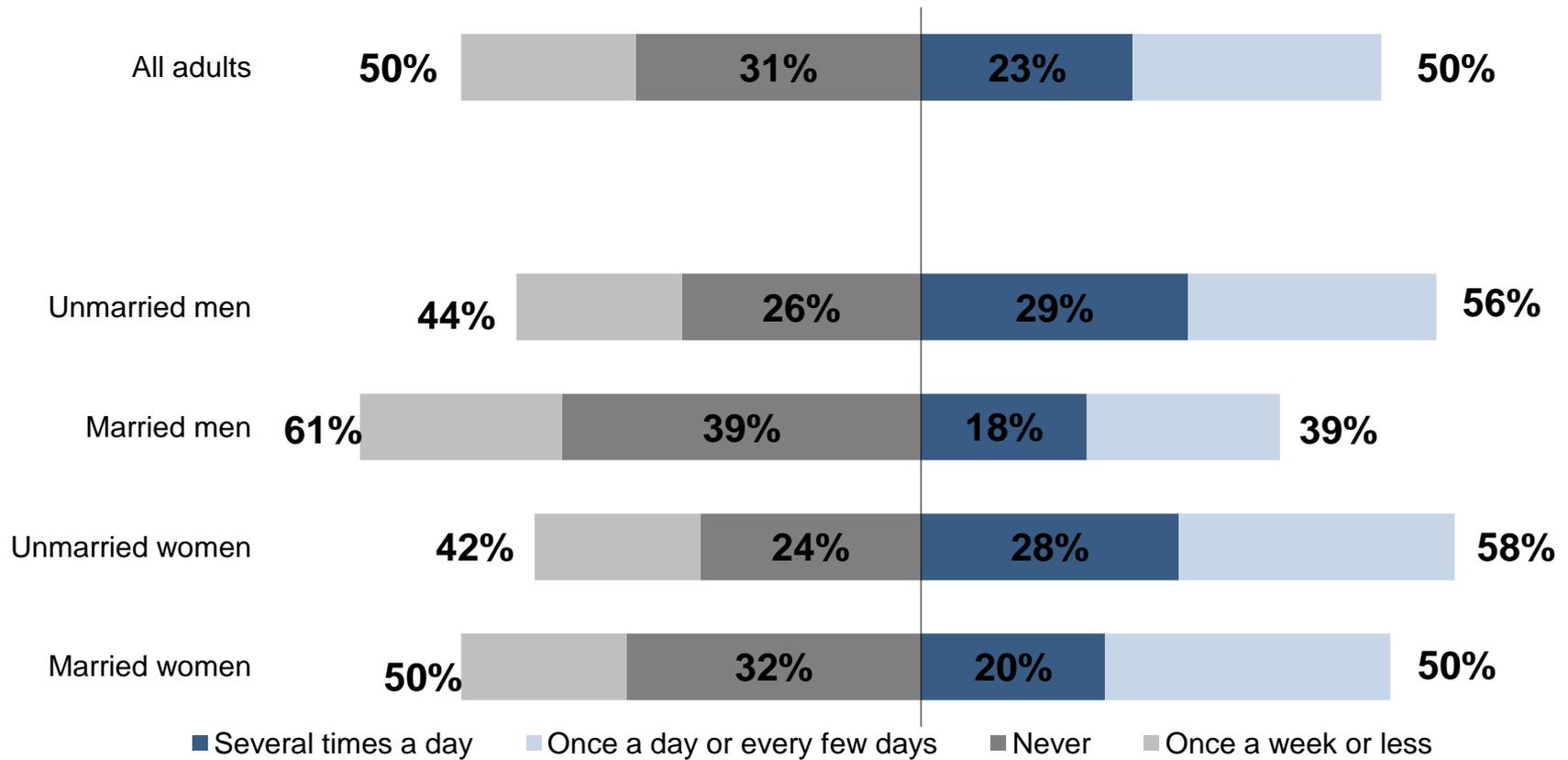
Do you send or receive email, at least occasionally?

% Yes



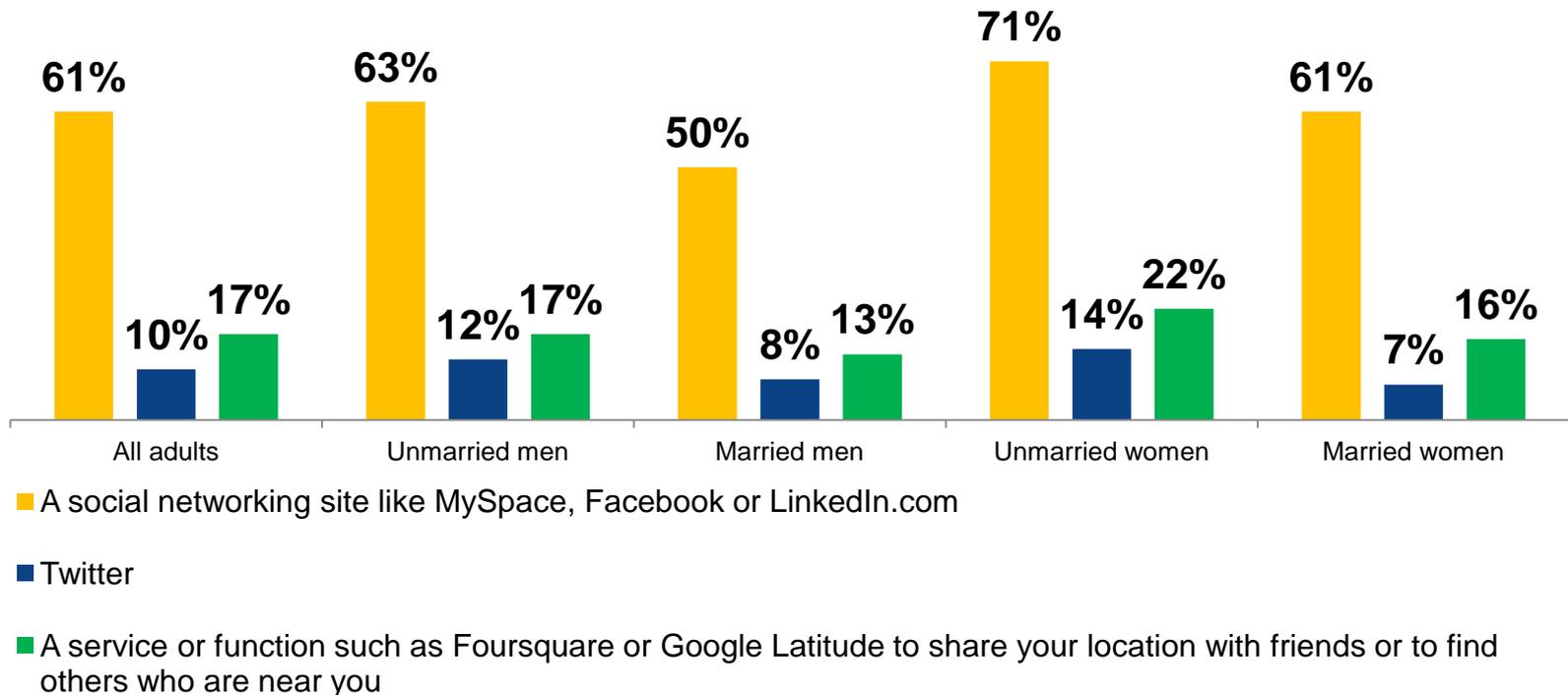
More than half of unmarried women visit a social networking site every few days. Unmarried men and women are more frequent visitors compared to their married counterparts.

How often do you use the Internet to visit social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, or LinkedIn?



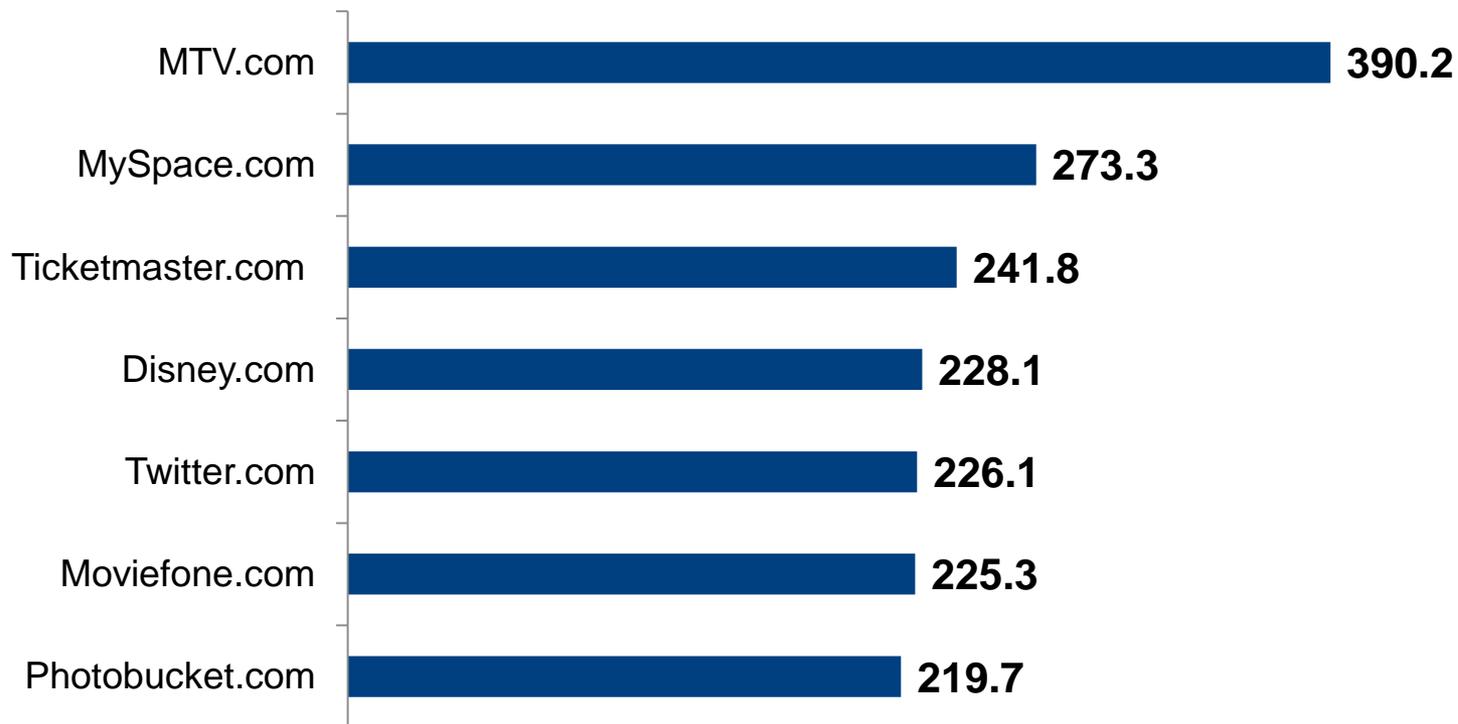
As we see elsewhere, unmarried women use social media to connect with others rather than seek out political information. They use Facebook the most. Twitter is not widely used at this time, but unmarried women lead the way as of now.

Do you ever use...? [Asked of those who use the Internet or email at least occasionally]



The dominant websites among never married women frequently revolve around entertainment and sharing personal ideas.

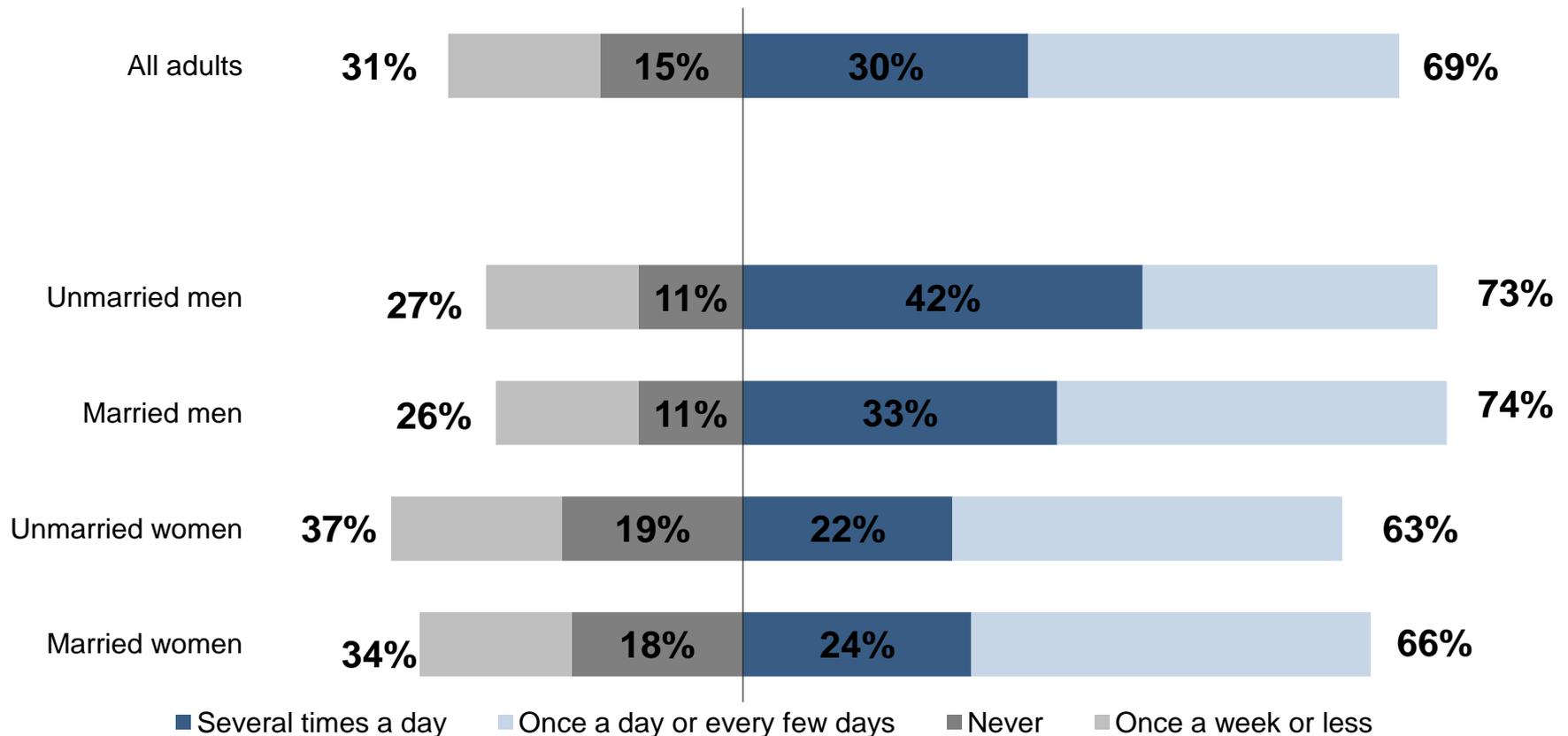
Visited Yesterday Among Never Married



How to read index: An unmarried woman (never married) is 290% more likely to have visited MTV.com than the average adult.

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of unmarried women get news online every few days or more. Women are getting news online less frequently compared to men.

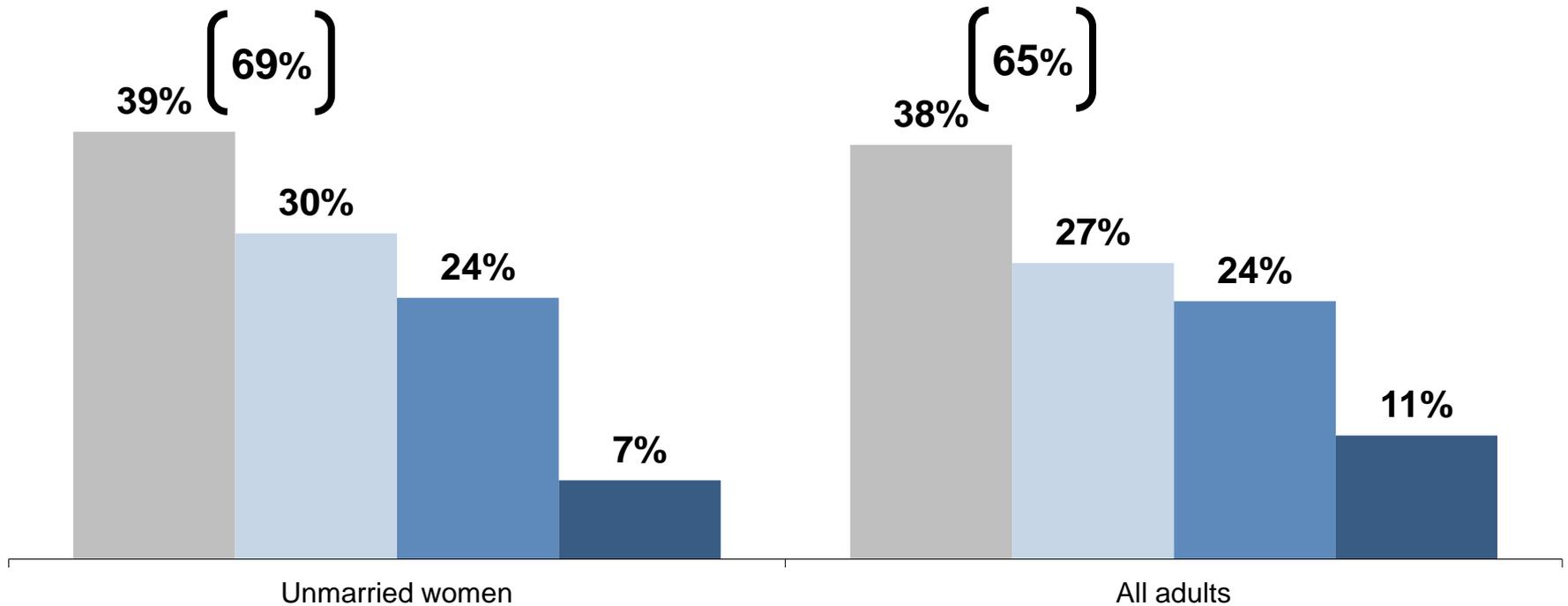
How often do you use the Internet to get news online?



Most unmarried women are not reading blogs about politics. They may in fact be reading other blogs that contain political information, but they do not store it that way.

How often, if ever, do you read blogs about politics or current events?
[Asked of those who use the Internet or email at least occasionally]

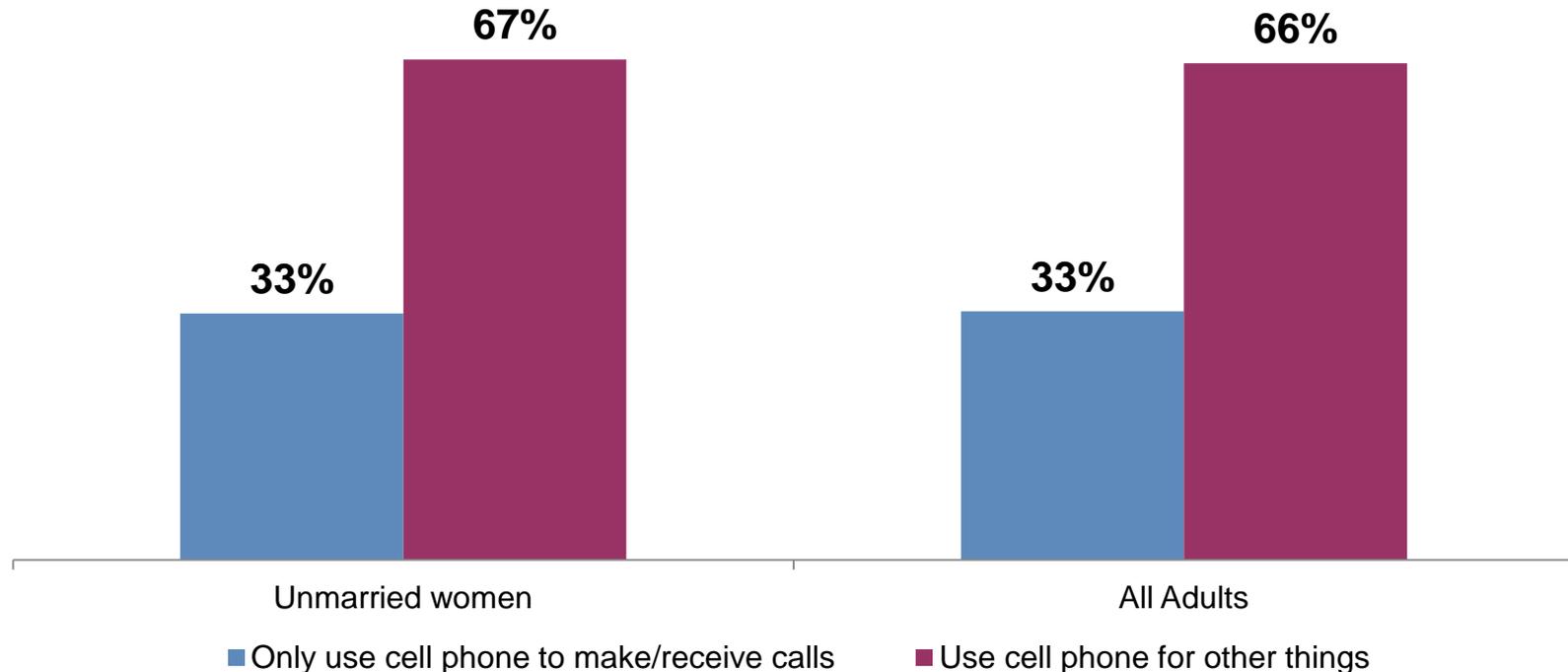
■ Never ■ Hardly ever ■ Sometimes ■ Regularly



Like adults overall, about two-thirds (67%) of unmarried women are starting to use their cell phones for more than just calls. Sending text messages to unmarried women is an increasingly good way to stay in contact with them.

Do you ONLY use your cell phone to make and receive phone calls, or do you sometimes use your cell phone for other things like texting, email, using apps, or using the Internet? [Asked only of those with at least one working cell phone]

% Yes



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