



↗ We Know Experiences

Connected Consumers

Experiences Without Barriers:
Making Events Accessible to All

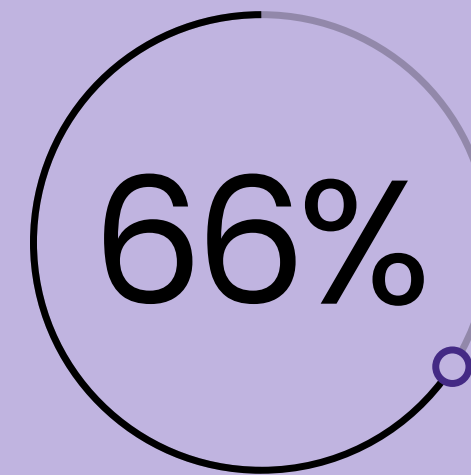
The Great Divide

Have you ever injured yourself and tried to go about your daily routine?

A 10-minute walk from point A to point B can suddenly become an arduous journey for a person with a sprained ankle. The mere task of taking notes suddenly becomes impossible because of a broken wrist.

For some, this is just a temporary inconvenience, lasting a few weeks, if that. However, for many, this is part of their daily lives. According to the World Health Organization, an estimated **1.3 billion people live with a significant disability**, and this figure is expected to grow. In addition to increased lifespans (and the ensuing physical declines), medical advances are raising awareness of invisible disabilities such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or Dyslexia.

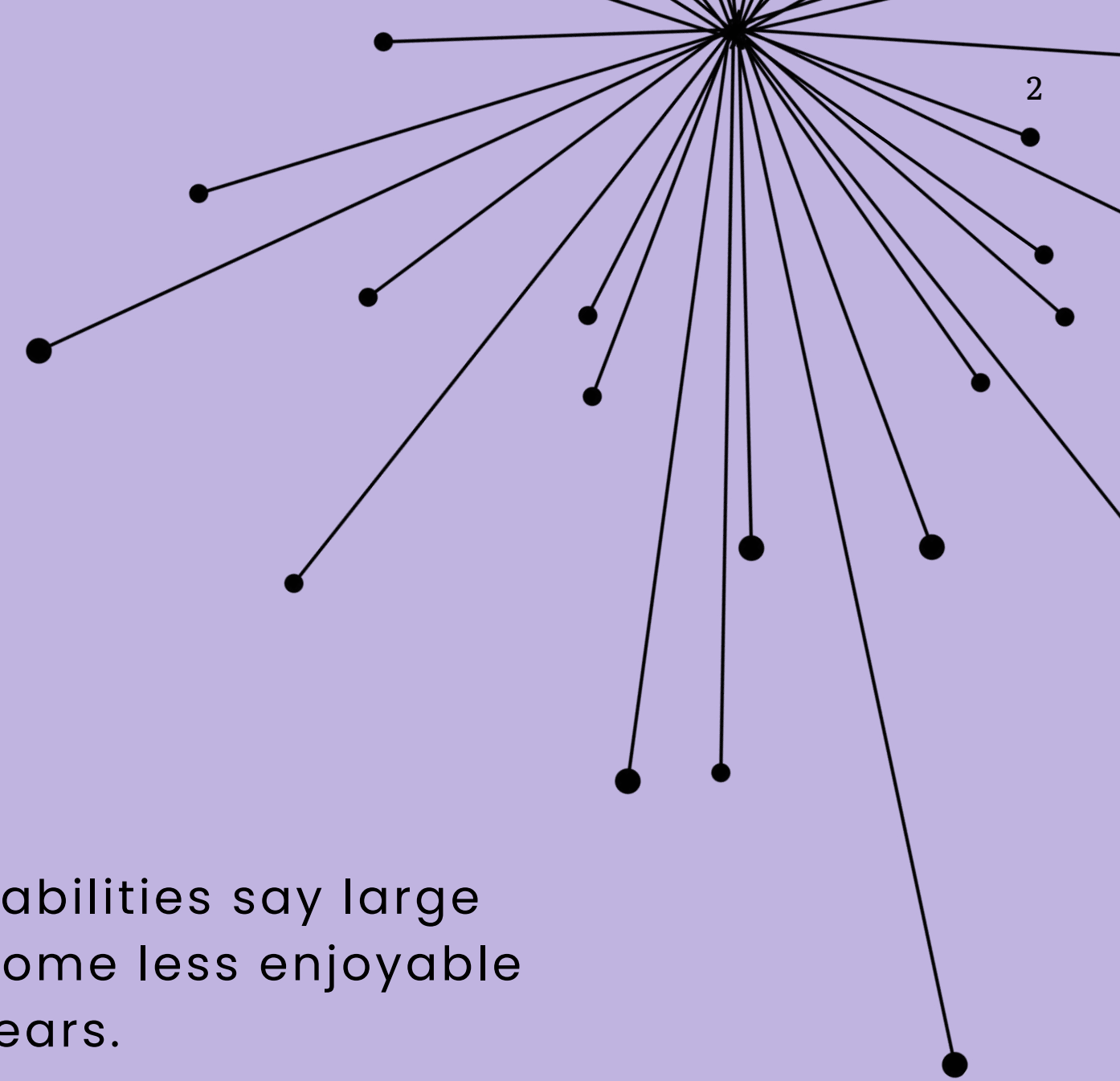
Despite the knowledge that **1 in 6 of the world's population currently live with a disability**, many experiences fail to take into account the challenges disabled people face when attempting to participate. Experiences can in fact be a stressful endeavor, now more than ever.



of those with disabilities say large events have become less enjoyable over the last 5 years.



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Experiences Through the Lense of Disabled People

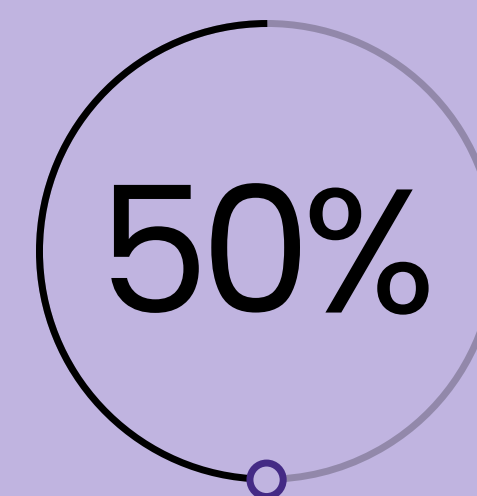
Imagine This: You are a music fan with a physical disability. You find out your favorite artist is having a concert.

You immediately **encounter difficulty** even purchasing tickets and organizing access. To obtain accessible seating, some venues require you to purchase tickets over the phone. Once a phone call is made, you learn there is limited seat availability, excluding many disabled music fans from even attending.

If you can secure tickets, you learn upon arrival at the venue that your **experience will continue to be frustrating**. Elevators are limited and crowded, wheelchair ramps are few and far between, and accessible bathroom stalls are occupied—often by the non-disabled. If the concert is outdoors, the grassy field makes navigating a wheelchair incredibly difficult.

Those with mobility issues are not the only ones who have **to be concerned with the concert experience**. Loud noises and pyrotechnics often prove too much for those with sensory issues, the visually impaired have difficulty navigating venues and those with hearing loss often do not have access to captioned

services or interpreters. As a result, those with disabilities often refuse to engage with brands and experiences if they do not see accommodations made for them.



of those with a disability refuse to go to a store that does not make an effort to be accessible.

The lack of accommodations for disabled people can create a major disconnect between brands and disabled people. Momentum Worldwide's 2024 We Know Experiences: Connected Consumer global study uncovered that experiences are, more than ever, important in fostering connections. However, the majority of consumers worldwide (60%) find it **harder to make connections** than they did five years ago. This is particularly evident **among those with a disability, where this number increases to 66%**.

The Bare Minimum: Part 1

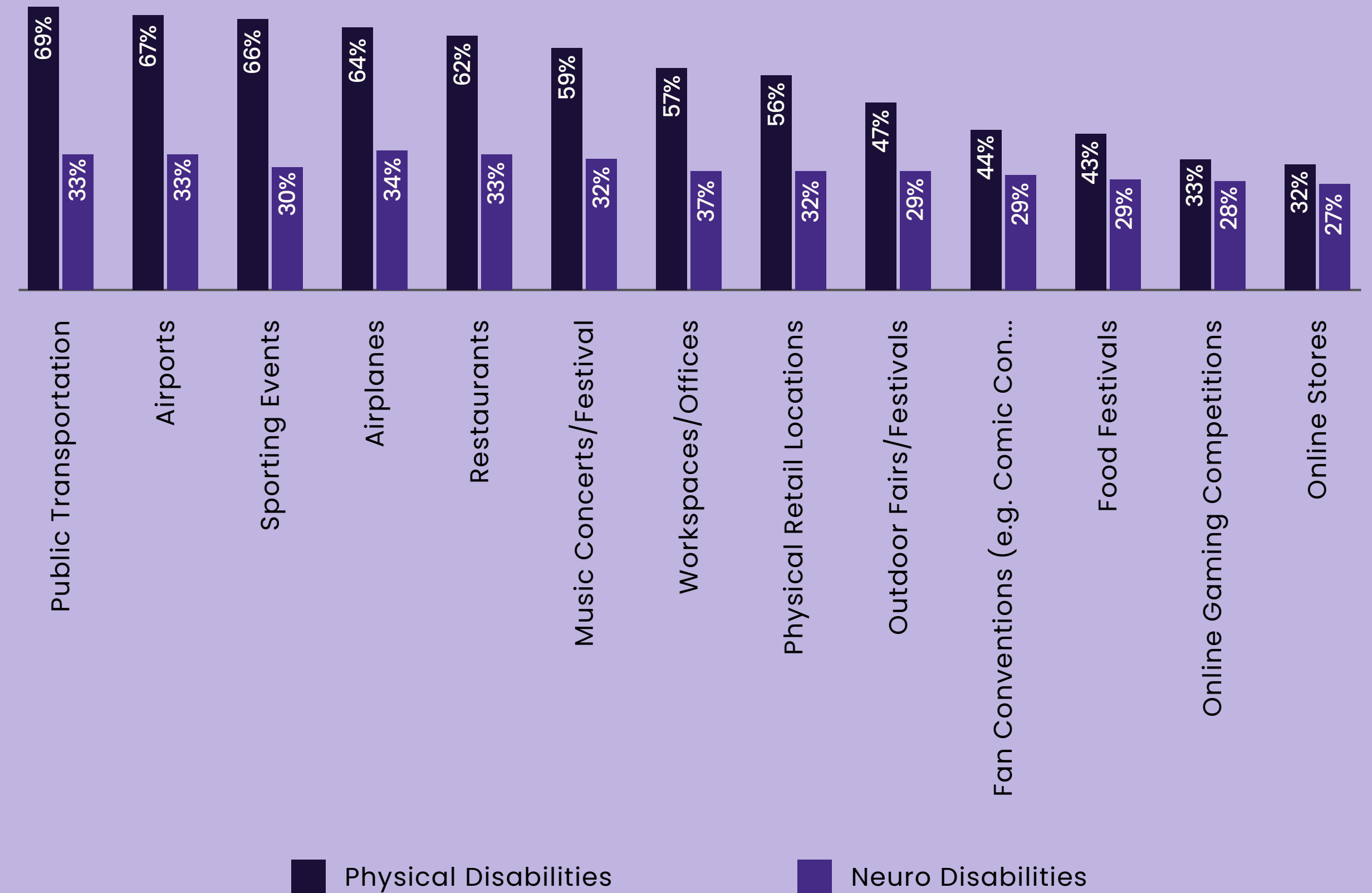
Nearly all developed nations have a set of laws that afford those with disabilities basic human rights.

Large venues adhere to the basic laws by including the bare minimum.

Accessible seating is present in many places. Designated parking spaces and wheelchair user-friendly stalls have also been prevalent for some time now. But the **quality and abundance of these offerings, as well as even basic awareness, varies from place to place.**



Awareness of Accessibility



The Bare Minimum: Part 2

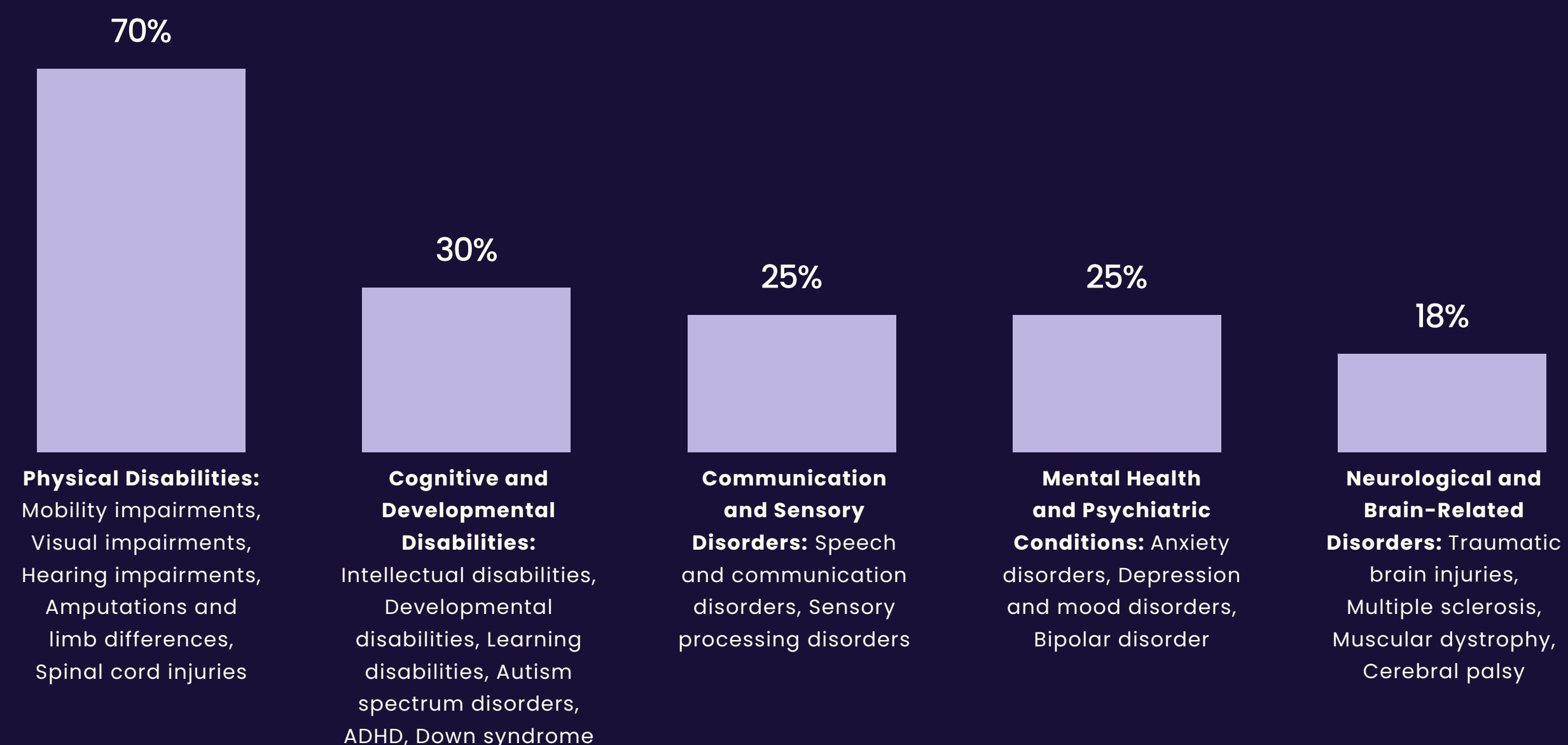
It is no surprise that **airports have high awareness of accommodations for persons with physical disabilities.** With dedicated attendants and assistive devices, it is hard to miss the accessible accommodations. **Also high on the list are sporting events.**

A study by Age UK, a charity that helps senior citizens in the UK navigate the increased difficulties that come with aging, showed that all Premier League Stadiums offer accessible entrances, toilets, ticket counters and wheelchair viewing areas, and the majority offer sensory suites.

Lower on the list are workspaces and offices. Tight accommodations, often in the form of cubicles and open workspaces, can make the in-person work experience difficult for those with both physical and invisible disabilities and neurodivergence. Also low on the list are fan conventions, such as San Diego Comic Con, which is notorious for crowded exhibit halls and long, outdoor lines that span miles.

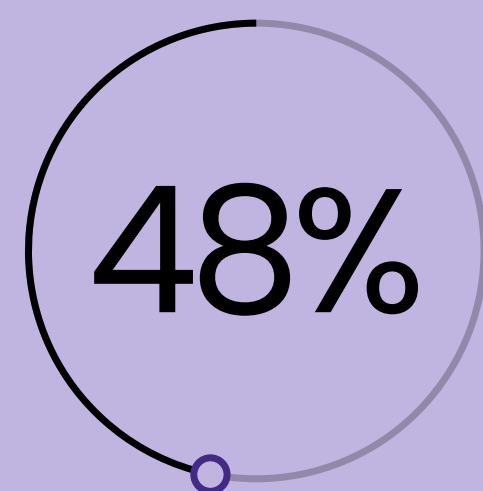
While the vast majority are aware of adjustments for persons with physical disabilities at most facilities and events, significantly less are aware of those offered for other types of disabilities.

What types of disabilities have brands or experiences made accommodations for?



The Bare Minimum: Part 3

Many invisible disabilities are not considered when making accessibility accommodations, even by those who suffer from those very disabilities. Many neurodivergent individuals are afraid to seek accommodations, as they do not believe that they deserve the same considerations as those with physical disabilities. They are also afraid that people think they are faking it or taking away space from those who have more visible disabilities.



of those who consider themselves neurodivergent do not believe that brands should make accommodations for those who are neurodivergent.

Accessible accommodation can make persons with disabilities feel othered. One in five, in fact, say that accommodation makes them feel different—and not in a good way.

“ I just want to be like the others and be treated as them as well. ”

 US Respondent

“ Being patronising to me as a disabled person isn't nice. ”

 UK Respondent

“ I would feel like an outcast or victim and I don't want to have to feel that way. ”

 Canada Respondent

“ We all try to help with our best intentions, and we do not realize that this can make the person being helped feel useless. ”

 Spain Respondent

“ It is a reminder that my physical abilities are not very good. ”

 Japan Respondent

Poor Communication

One of the biggest frustrations for disabled people is the **difficulty in finding out what sorts of accessibility accommodations are being provided.**

82%

of those with disabilities wish brands did a better job of communicating accessibility initiatives.

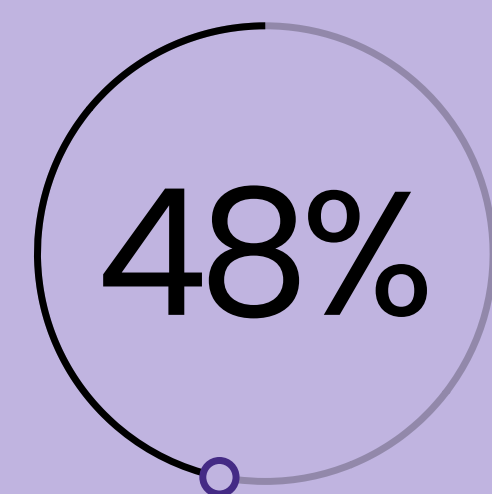
Accommodations are frequently buried in a website's subsections, laden with hard-to-understand language and in typeface that is difficult to read for those with visual impairments or learning disabilities. Often, asking venue staff about accommodations is unclear and inconsistent, leaving many with more frustrations.

At some events, procedures are even decided on the spot, with separate lines for people with disabilities suddenly appearing when they were previously told there were none.



The Frustrations of the Abled

Inconsistent and unclear accessibility accommodations can also unwittingly breed resentment among the non-disabled.



48% of the non-disabled believe that many accessibility initiatives end up inconveniencing others.

Make no mistake, **the majority of non-disabled consumers support accessibility initiatives.**



85% of initiatives are meant to benefit all, not just a select few.

With the best intentions, brands have become increasingly aware of the need to create inclusive experiences. We are seeing more empathy. At many music festivals, there are several dedicated accessible areas at the various stages—shaded and low to the ground, these areas also have attendants and sign language interpreters for those with hearing loss. Quiet rooms are also becoming increasingly prevalent at events.

However, brands still have a long way to go...

The biggest hurdle to overcome? **Experiences are often created by the non-disabled and neurotypical, who are using their personal experiences to inform the design.** While they will work hard to ensure that there is accessible seating and staff ready to assist, they do not always consider other aspects, like whether a wheelchair can navigate the grassy areas at an outdoor festival or if the ticketing website is user-friendly for those with vision loss or learning disabilities.

The Ramifications of Accessibility

Creating an accessible experience is not just a tick list to ensure legal compliance. It will 100% benefit brands. In fact, 75% of consumers say they notice when brands make an effort to be accessible to all.

Brands who are accessible to all win the loyalty of consumers. 84% are more likely to support a brand that makes an effort to be accessible to all, and 71% perceive brands that make an effort to be accessible are more likely to have high-quality products and services.

Accessibility will also help improve the bottom line.



75%

of consumers say they notice when brands make an effort to be accessible to all.



84%

are more likely to support a brand that makes an effort to be accessible to all.



71%

perceive brands that make an effort to be accessible are more likely to have high-quality products and services.



80%

believe a focus on accessibility will make a company more profitable.

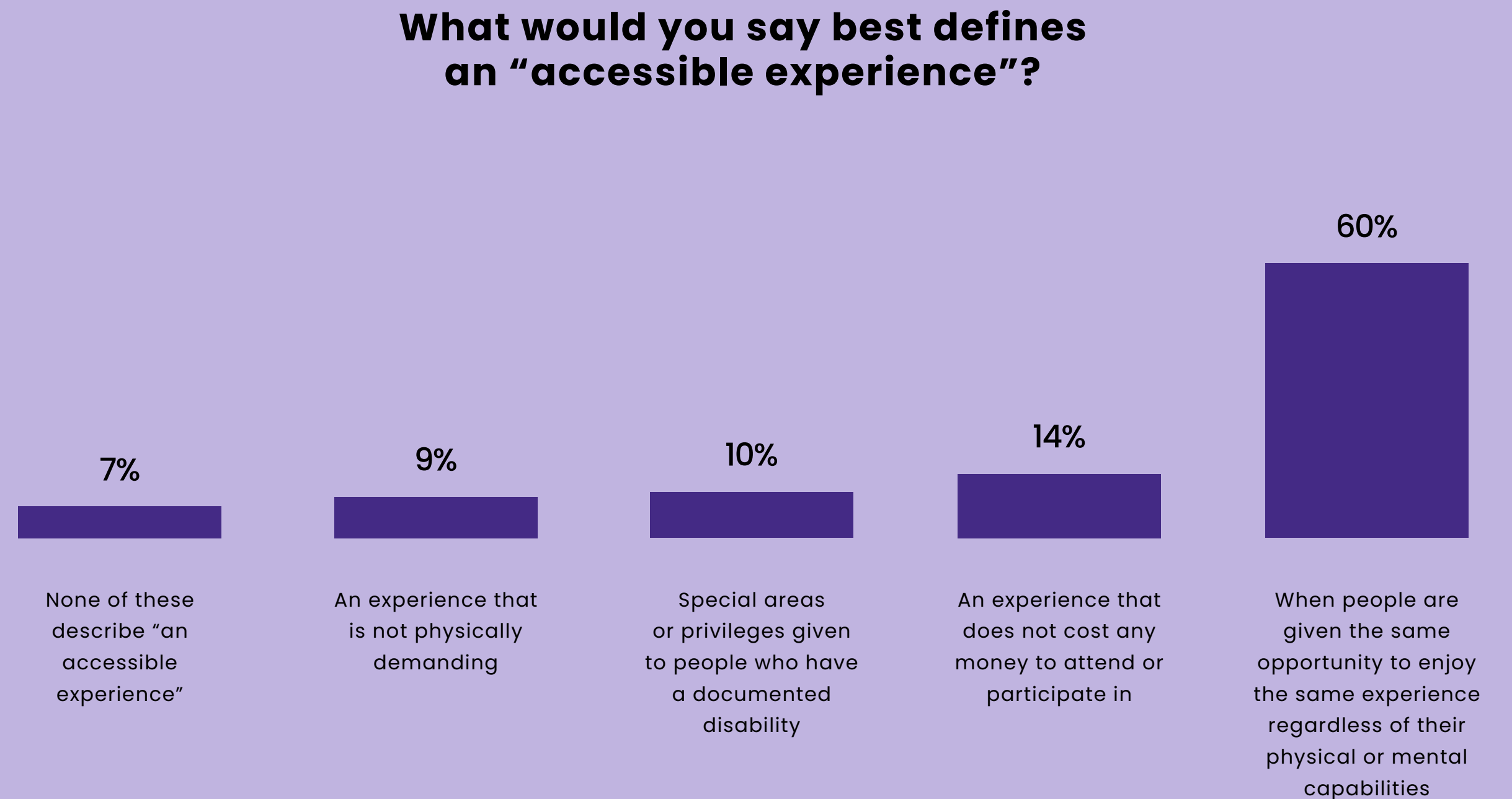
How Brands Can Help: Part 1

1. Make Accessibility a Top Consideration

When designing an experience, **accessibility should be a top consideration**, and one must first determine what that means. Accessibility does not mean “special privileges,” nor does it mean discounts for people with disabilities. The definition needs to be rewritten. It should mean equal opportunity. **Every body should be given the same opportunity to enjoy the same experience.**

2. Be Consistent and Clear

Accessibility accommodations should be consistent and clear. All staff, whether they are in customer-facing roles or work behind the scenes, should be aware and educated. **Accommodations should also be clear for all attendees, not just persons with known disabilities.** Many people who are neurodivergent or have temporary impairments, such as injuries, do not know they qualify for assistance.



How Brands Can Help: Part 2

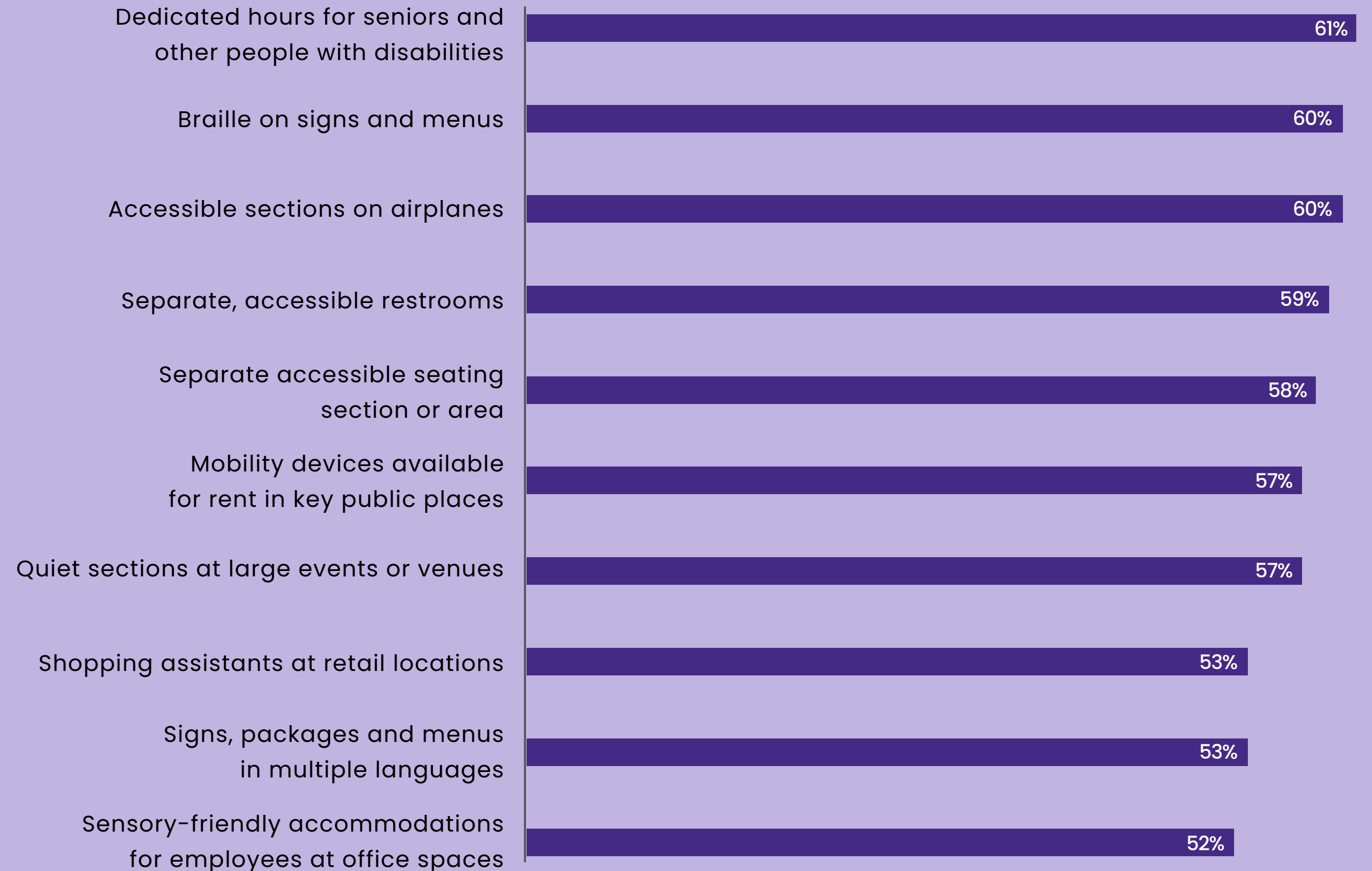
3. Remember the Visible to Invisible Spectrum

Brands need to remember to consider all disability types, from the visible to the invisible. For example, while many live theater venues provide the standard accessibility features, many are still inaccessible for the neurodivergent. A shining example of positive change is the New York City Ballet's attempts to make ballet more accessible by creating sensory-friendly performances with low lighting, quiet rooms, and permitting patrons to enter and exit at any time during the performance (as opposed to standard etiquette requiring those to wait during intermissions to exit the space).

4. Engage and Learn

Finally, brands need to seek the input of people with disabilities. Allowing them a voice will help ensure that experiences are indeed accessible to all. A great example of this is Bupa's Paralympics "Health Is" Campaign (see next page).

% saying they will have a positive impression of brands who include these initiatives



Bupa's Paralympics Campaign "Health Is"

This campaign features an accessibly immersive takeover of St. Pancras International's Underground tunnel, London, UK, featuring the Para athlete Emmanuel Oyinbo-Coker and Paralympic Champion Hannah Cockroft OBE, **highlighting the lack of diverse perspectives** when it comes to showcasing what "health" looks like.

Understanding the challenges faced by disabled people is at the heart of this campaign. This is one of the first campaigns that offers inclusivity on multiple levels. The type is set in an accessible typeface, and several rounds of legibility testing were held to make sure as many people as possible could take in the campaign messaging. In the tunnel, the campaign story is told across three accessible media: print, Braille and audio. Braille features on the underside of the middle handrails and gives a digestible overview of "Health is".

Spatial audio narrations direct people to the Braille handrails. But rather than simply describing what people may not be able to see, **Bupa sought to translate the story in a way that feels inclusive to multiple communities.** The experience is narrated by Samuel Parish, a voice artist who has high-functioning autism. Through this campaign, he hopes that other people will understand different points of view from their perspective.



Experiences For All

Momentum Worldwide's We Know Experiences: Connected Consumer global study showed how experiences are an important means to foster the connections that have been lacking in the last few years. As people begin to reestablish and reinforce connections that were diminished, **it is imperative that brands do not leave people behind in the connection revolution.** Everybody should have the ability to experience the best that brands have to offer.

Methodology

Momentum Worldwide connected with over 3,000 consumers worldwide, both qualitatively and quantitatively, across five countries (US, UK, Canada, Spain and Japan). Among those 3,000, we reached 891 who self-identified as having a disability, including physical, learning and neurodivergence.



More than

3,000

consumer responses both qualitatively and quantitatively across the following five countries:



↗ We Know Experiences

For More Information

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Source:

World Health Organization
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/disability-and-health>

Age UK
<https://www.ageukmobility.co.uk/mobility-news/article/accessible-premier-league-stadiums>