

# TRICKS, TREATS & TRENDS

A snackable  
summary of  
consumer insights  
for Halloween

Updated July 23, 2024

In partnership with



# Methodology

## Ipsos Omnibus

Ipsos U.S. Omnibus is a multi-client online, device agnostic survey fielded each business day among a nationally representative sample of US adults 18+.



### Field Dates:

4/11/2024 - 4/16/2024



### Total Respondents

(n=3,000)

These are some findings from an Ipsos survey, conducted on behalf of Mars, Incorporated, among n=2,256 adults in the U.S., age 18 and up, who indicate plans to celebrate Halloween. The survey was conducted online, in English, between April 11-16, 2024. The starting sample for the survey was a representative sample of n=3,000 U.S. adults, including an oversample of n=105 Gen Z adults, who were then screened on how, if at all, they plan to celebrate Halloween. The credibility interval, a measure of precision used for online, non-probability polls, for this survey is plus or minus 2.5 percentage points.

### Questionnaire

# Counting down to Halloween: A spooktacular look at how consumers celebrate & shop for the holiday.

## TOP HALLOWEEN RITUALS



**PASSING  
OUT CANDY**  
**52%**

Most likely to: **BOOMERS: 58%**  
**GEN X: 56%**



**DRESSING  
UP**  
**36%**

Most likely to: **MILLENNIALS: 54%**  
**GEN Z: 53%**



**SOCIAL  
GATHERINGS**  
**35%**

Most likely to: **GEN Z: 52%**

BASE: Planning to Celebrate Halloween (n=2,256)  
Q1. How do you plan to celebrate Halloween this year?

## SPOOKY SEASON RETAIL TRENDS

(Among those who plan to purchase candy)



**PLAN TO BUY  
CANDY IN STORE**

**59%**

**In-store shoppers**

More concerned about **running out** of candy: **43%**

More likely to buy packs with a **single brand: 50%**

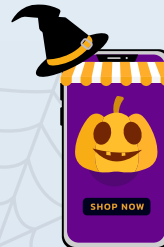


**PLAN TO BUY  
CANDY IN STORE &  
ONLINE**

**24%**

**Omnichannel shoppers**

**61%**  
buy Halloween-  
specific candy



**PLAN TO BUY  
CANDY ONLINE**

**17%**

**Online shoppers**

Plan for Halloween (**7.9 WEEKS IN ADVANCE**) &  
purchase candy (**2.9 WEEKS IN ADVANCE**) sooner

**64%** consider their reputation when buying  
candy to pass out or fill in a bowl for hosting

BASE: Halloween Candy Purchasers (n=2,107)  
Q5. Do you plan to purchase any of your Halloween candy online through a retailer website, delivery service or mobile app?

*New insights added July 23, 2024*

# Key generational differences help to illustrate the Halloween experience.

## GEN Z AND MILLENNIALS



Plan to celebrate by **dressing up**



Plan **6.8 weeks** in advance



More likely to go **bigger than past years**  
(Although most expect plans to be in line with last year)



More likely to purchase candy **online**  
(Although most purchase in store)



More likely to purchase **packs with multiple varieties**



More likely to purchase **gummy, fruity & sour candy**  
(Although chocolate is most popular)

## GEN X AND BOOMERS



Plan to celebrate by **passing out candy or treats**



Plan **later** (5.3 weeks for Gen X and 3.1 weeks for Boomers)



Expect plans to be **the same or smaller than past years**



Purchase candy **in store**



More likely to purchase **packs with a single brand**



**Younger generations are changing the game- striving for bigger & better** across a variety of activities, candy flavors and even purchase channels.



**For older generations, passing out candy is a way to participate in the holiday** with minimal planning, sticking to traditional varieties and purchase channels.

**32%**

Of Gen Z expect their Halloween plans to **be bigger than past years.**

**17%**

Most likely to make **multiple trips to purchase candy.**

**36%**

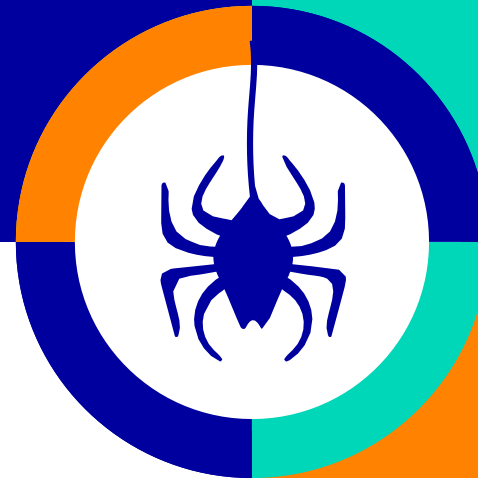
Plan to celebrate Halloween plan for the holiday **more than a month in advance**, and some Gen Zers plan for Halloween **six months out.**

**GEN Z**  
**Halloween heroes**

**MILLENNIALS**  
**Trick-or-treat enthusiasts**

Millennials, like Gen Z, plan for Halloween **further in advance (6.8 weeks)** and shop both in store and online.

Millennials are more likely to celebrate by **trick-or-treating** and use candy for **out of home occasions.**



**7 in 10**

Gen Xers expect their Halloween plans to be **in line with last year.**

**More likely to purchase packs with a single brand** compared to younger generations.

Like Boomers, Gen Xers stick to traditional purchase habits and are **more likely to conduct their shopping in store.**

**GEN X**  
**Transitional celebrations**

**BOOMERS**  
**Here for the candy**

**7 in 10**  
Boomers report having **leftover candy after Halloween.**

**58%**  
Of Boomers' Halloween plans involve passing out candy or treats – their **#1 use of candy** during the season.

# With the majority of Americans planning to celebrate Halloween, there are generational differences in how people celebrate the occasion.

## Plans for Halloween 2024

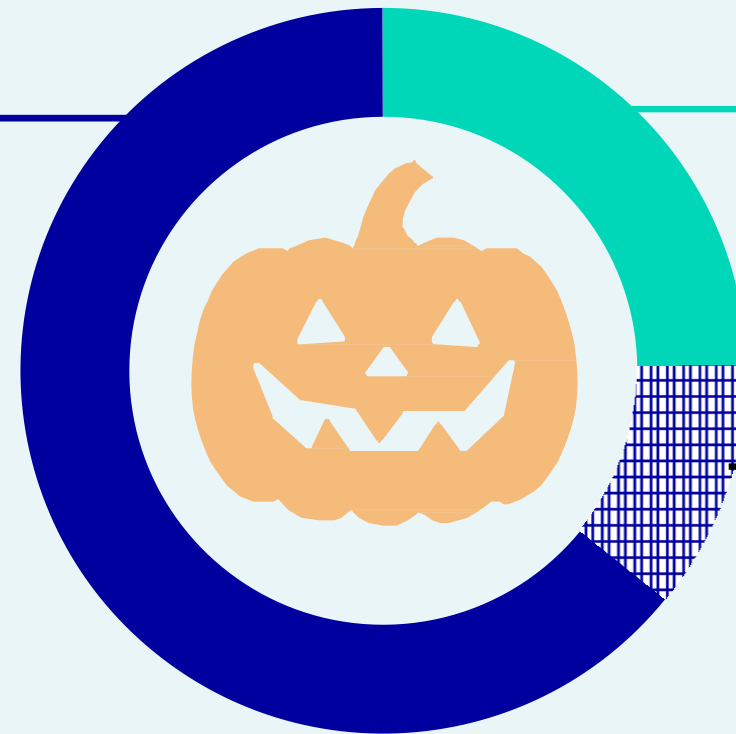
**75%** Plan to celebrate Halloween

**25%**

Don't plan to celebrate Halloween

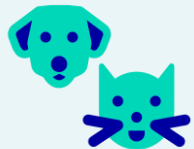
**11%**

Plan to celebrate Halloween but their **plans are undecided**



### Top Plans Differ by Generation

Generation	Plan	Percentage
Gen Z	Dressing up	53%
	Socializing	52%
Millennials	Dressing up	54%
Gen X	Passing out candy or treats	56%
	Passing out candy or treats	58%
Boomers	Passing out candy or treats	58%



**1 in 4** Gen Z and Millennials plan to **dress up their pet**

# Consumers are planning for Halloween and purchasing candy early in the season.

## Halloween Planning Timeline 2024

Halloween is  
Planned



Halloween Candy is  
Purchased



**GEN Z + MILLENNIALS**

Plan further in advance  
**(6.8 weeks)**

and are more likely to **already be planning for Halloween**

**GEN Z**

Is most likely to **make multiple trips to purchase candy**

**(17%)**

BASE: Planning to Celebrate Halloween (n=2,256)

Q2. When will you/your family begin to plan for Halloween?

BASE: Halloween Candy Purchasers (n=2,107)

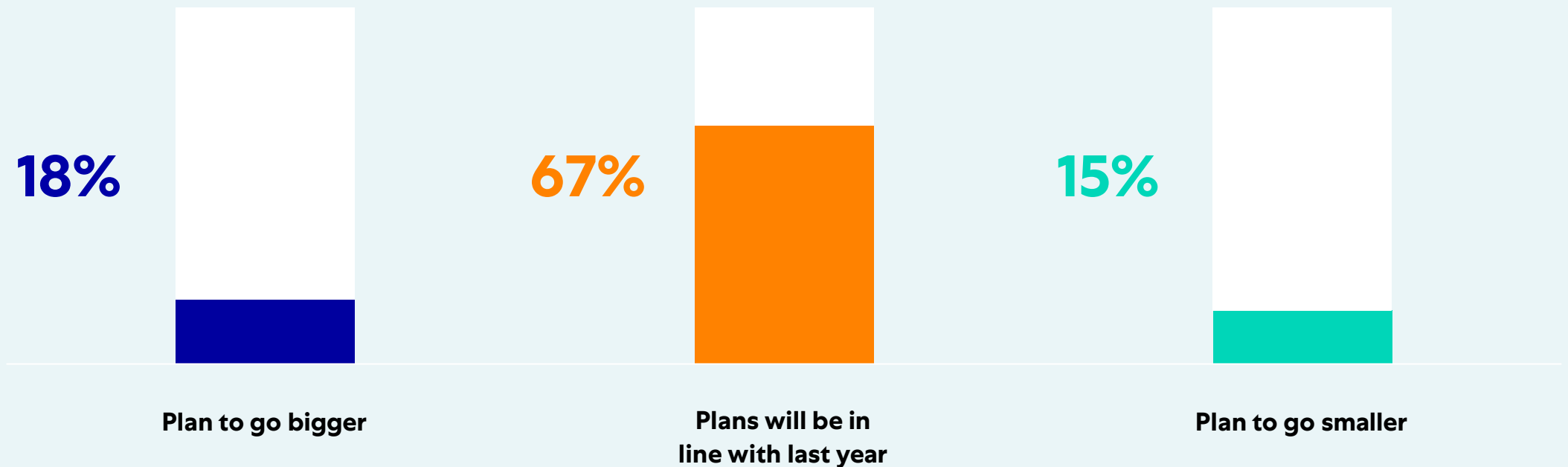
Q8. How far in advance do you purchase Halloween candy?

# Among those planning to celebrate Halloween, 85% either plan to go bigger or maintain plans in-line with how they celebrated last year.

## Change in Plans vs. Past Years

Among Those Planning to Celebrate Halloween

**GEN Z (32%) and MILLENNIALS (28%) are more likely to go bigger.**



BASE: Planning to Celebrate Halloween (n=2,256)

Q16. Are you planning to go bigger with your Halloween plans this year compared to past years?



# Who is planning to go bigger?

## Those planning to go bigger include...



**GEN Z & MILLENNIALS\***



**FAMILIES\***



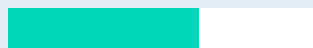
**URBAN RESIDENTS\***

## They are planning to do more activities, including...



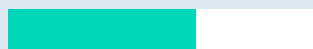
**61%**

**DRESSING UP**



**60%**

**PASSING OUT CANDY**



## They are also more likely to...



**PLAN FURTHER IN ADVANCE\***

**(10.3 weeks)**



**BUY**

packs with **multiple varieties\***

**(68%)**

**full size candy\***

**(45%)**

BASE: Planning to Go Bigger (n=408)

Q16. Are you planning to go bigger with your Halloween plans this year compared to past years?

\*Over-indexed (120+) vs. Total

# One thing generations can agree on? Candy is the top contributor to a positive Halloween experience.

	Gen Z	Millennials	Gen X	Boomers
Candy <b>(31%)</b>	=	↓	=	↑
Socialization <b>(21%)</b>	=	=	=	↓
Value <b>(19%)</b>	↓	=	=	↑
Costumes <b>(17%)</b>	=	↑	=	↓
Spookiness <b>(12%)</b>	↑	=	=	↓

More/less/equally important

BASE: Planning to Celebrate Halloween (n=2,256)

Q18. When planning for Halloween, which factors contribute most to how you will define a positive seasonal experience?

Generations were indexed vs. total (120+= More important, <80= Less important)

# Older generations primarily use candy for trick-or-treating, while younger generations have multiple, varied use cases.

## Use of Halloween Candy Purchased



To pass out through trick-or-treating **63%**

To treat myself/snack at home **53%**

Filling candy bowls for guests/hosting **38%**

For use outside the home **20%**

To bake at home **15%**

Decoration/on display **14%**

### Top Use For:

**MILLENNIALS, GEN X,  
BOOMERS**

**GEN Z, MILLENNIALS**

### Most Common Among:

**GEN Z, MILLENNIALS**

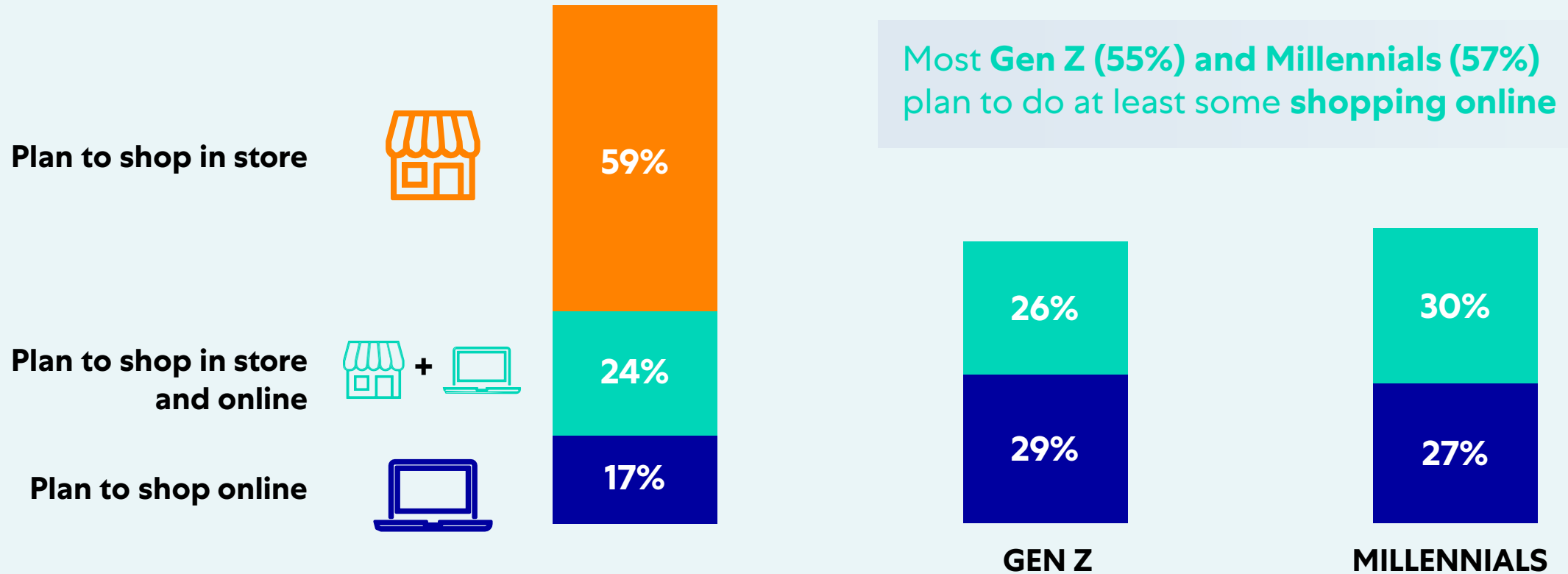
**MILLENNIALS**

**GEN Z, MILLENNIALS**

# Brick-and-mortar still rules when it comes to Halloween, with majority of candy buyers planning to shop in store.

## Planned Purchase Channel

Among Those Who Purchase Halloween Candy

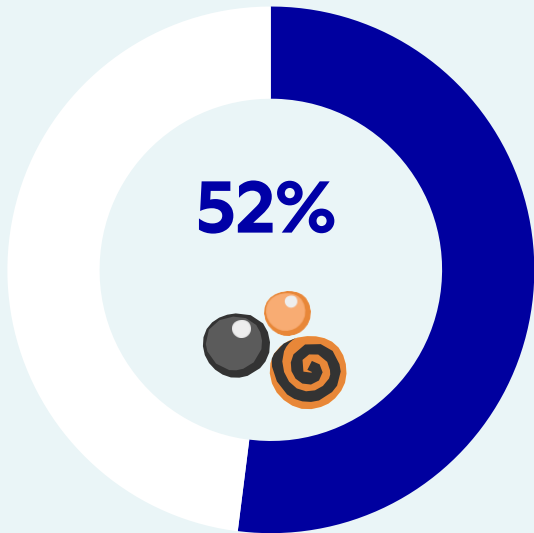


BASE: Halloween Candy Purchasers (n=2,107)

Q5. Do you plan to purchase any of your Halloween candy online through a retailer website, delivery service or mobile app (e.g., Walmart.com, Amazon, DoorDash, etc.)?

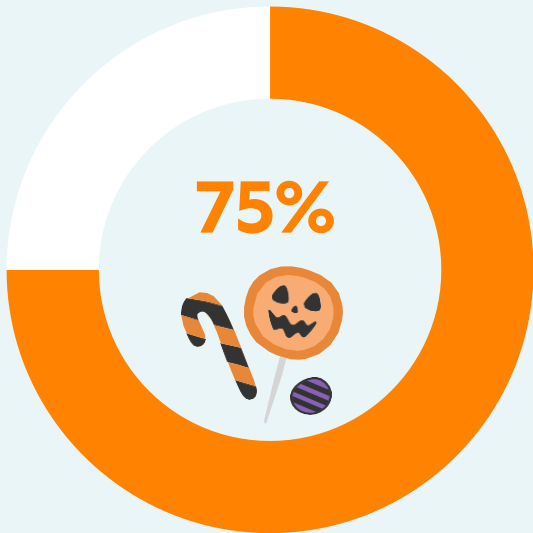
# Fun size candy is the favorite for Halloween, though full size is a popular choice for Gen Z.

## Typical Candy Size Purchased Among Those Who Purchase Halloween Candy

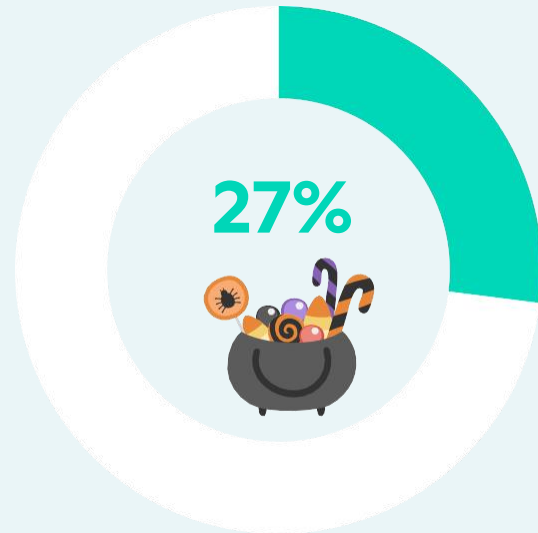


**Minis**

Most common among  
**MILLENNIALS (56%)**



**Fun Size**



**Full Size**

Most common among  
**GEN Z (41%)**

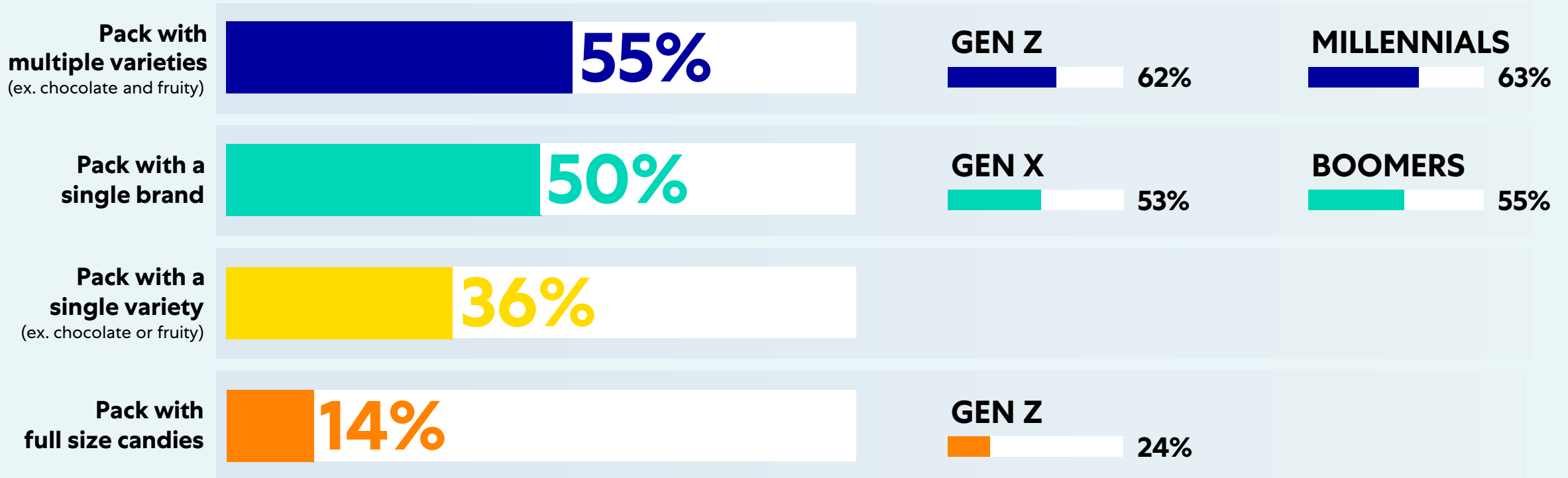
BASE: Halloween Candy Purchasers (n=2,107)  
Q6. What size candy do you typically purchase for Halloween?

# Different generations gravitate toward different packs, with younger generations seeking more variety.

## Typical Candy Packs Purchased

Among Those Who Purchase Halloween Candy

More Common Among...



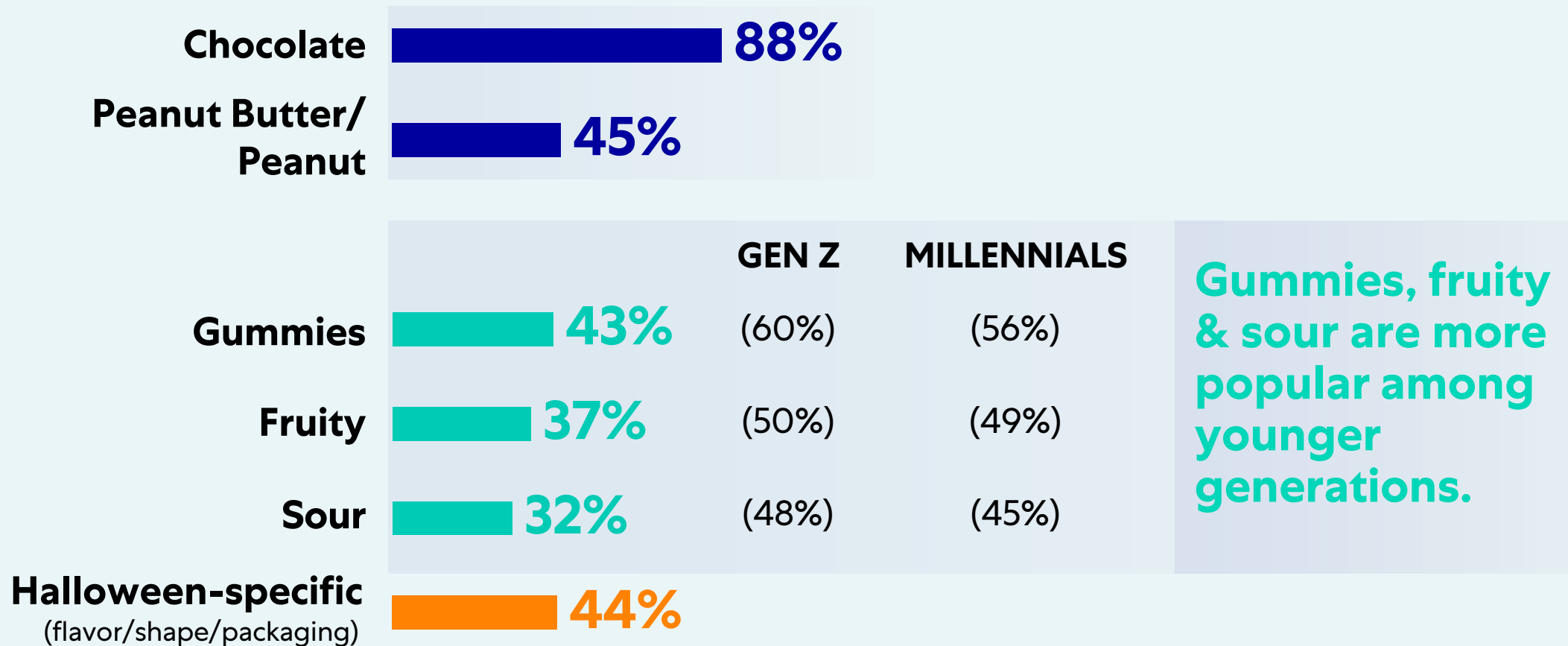
BASE: Halloween Candy Purchasers (n=2,107)

Q7. Which of the following best describes what kind of candy you purchase for Halloween?

# Chocolate is the reigning favorite of Halloween, followed by peanut and gummies.

## Typical Candy Varieties Purchased

Among Those Who Purchase Halloween Candy

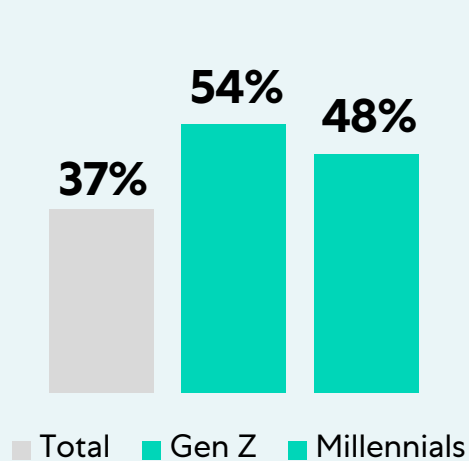


BASE: Halloween Candy Purchasers (n=2,107)

Q4. What type of candy do you typically purchase for Halloween?

# Younger generations care more about their reputation as a host and trick-or-treat destination.

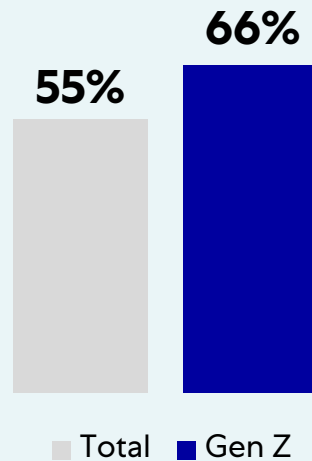
## Influence of Reputation



### of Halloween Hosts\*

State that reputation influences their candy purchases

Pass out through trick-or-treating  
Fill candy bowls for guests/hosting



### of Trick-or-Treaters

Seek out houses based on candy offerings



**Gen Z** is most likely to consider their reputation when purchasing candy **(9%)**



**Neighborhood reputation** is more likely to influence plans for **Gen Z and Millennials (26%)**



**Gen Z (15%) and Millennials (14%)** are more concerned about their reputation as a house with bad treats

BASE: Those Who Give out Halloween Candy at Home (n= 1,674)

Q10. Does your reputation as a host/trick-or-treat destination (i.e., with trick-or-treaters, house guests) influence the candy you purchase?

BASE: Trick-or-Treaters (n=530)

Q14. Do you seek out houses because of their candy/treat offerings for your trick-or-treating experience?



# About Ipsos

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