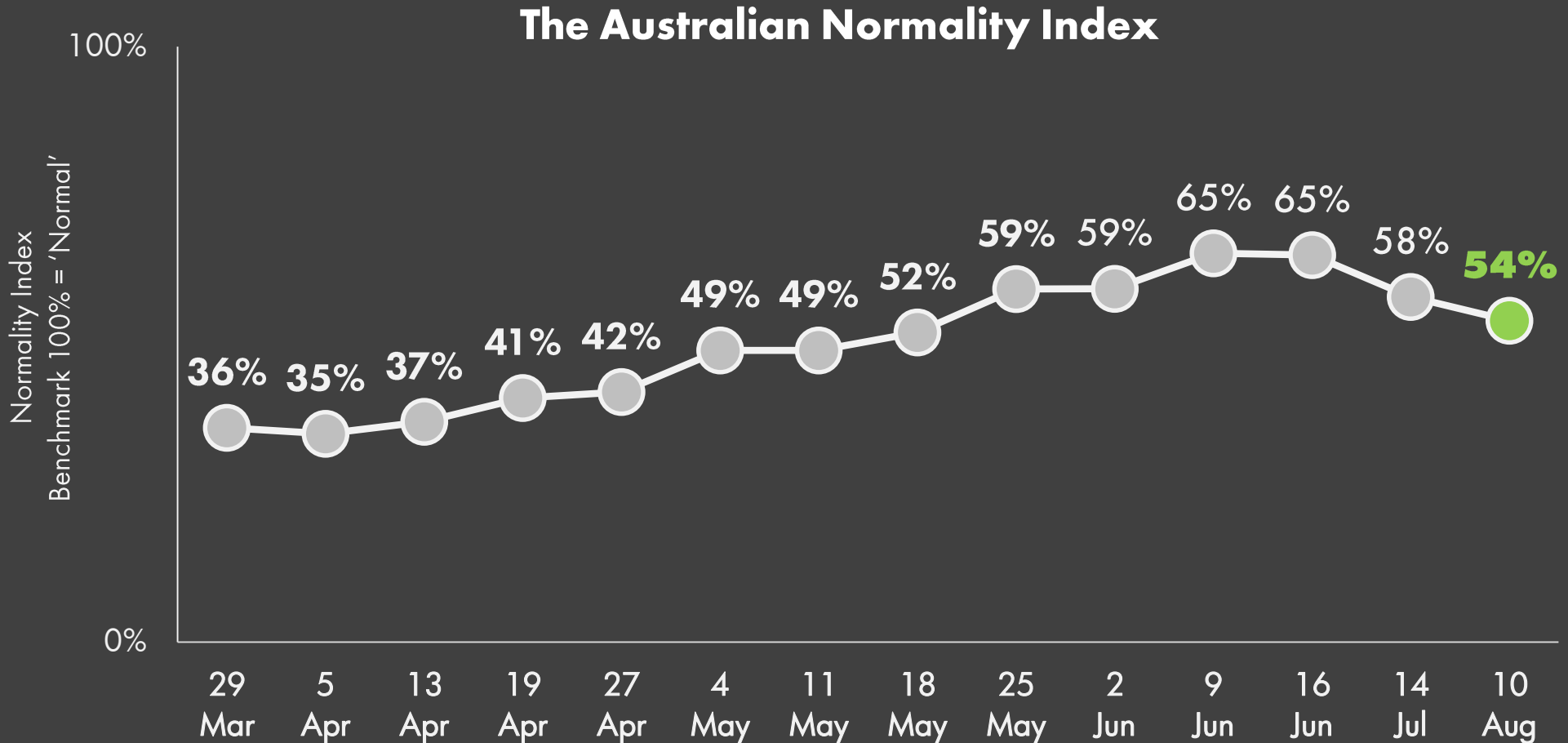


AUGUST 2020 (14 July – 9 August 2020)

# Australians' sense of normality further declines to 54%

## The sentiment in Victoria worsens



- 1. We are still a long way off feeling normal.**
- 2. Be careful in your comms, the word “Covid” continues to upset us.**
- 3. Customers are not loving their digital experience. You need to fix.**

#### **NORMAL IS A LONG WAY OFF MANAGING THE MESSAGE REMAINS CRITICAL**

The gap between states in the return to feeling normal has become increasingly stark. Western Australia reached the highest Normality score observed since March 2020, while sentiment in Victoria continued to decline.

Despite the shocks to Victoria, when we look across the nation we can see that increasingly Australians expectations have altered with most of us not seeing a return to normality for at least 6 months, and many anticipating never seeing the old normal again.

With the resurgence of the virus in Victoria (and risks to other parts of the country) we see that the word Covid is still creating angst. Tone deaf communications will not be received well.

#### **IMPLICATIONS**

There are differences between the states and their sense of Normality – should you be communicating differently across locations – both in content and tone?

#### **CATCH YOUR BREATH, AND GO AGAIN: IT IS TIME TO OPTIMISE THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE**

Due to Covid19 businesses have had to pull forward or create digital strategies and implement them months and years ahead of schedule. It's been tough. But they have done it. So now what?

This month, the Normality Index study revealed the importance of developing and maintaining a strong digital experience and offer.

Over 50% of Australians made an online purchase in the last week. However 57% of us were not satisfied with the experience. Issues raised were with delivery and delivery times, stock outs, inaccurate descriptors and poor payment experiences. There is no time to rest, rather business must quickly catch its breath and go again to continue to refine the digital experience to protect their existing base and secure new customers.

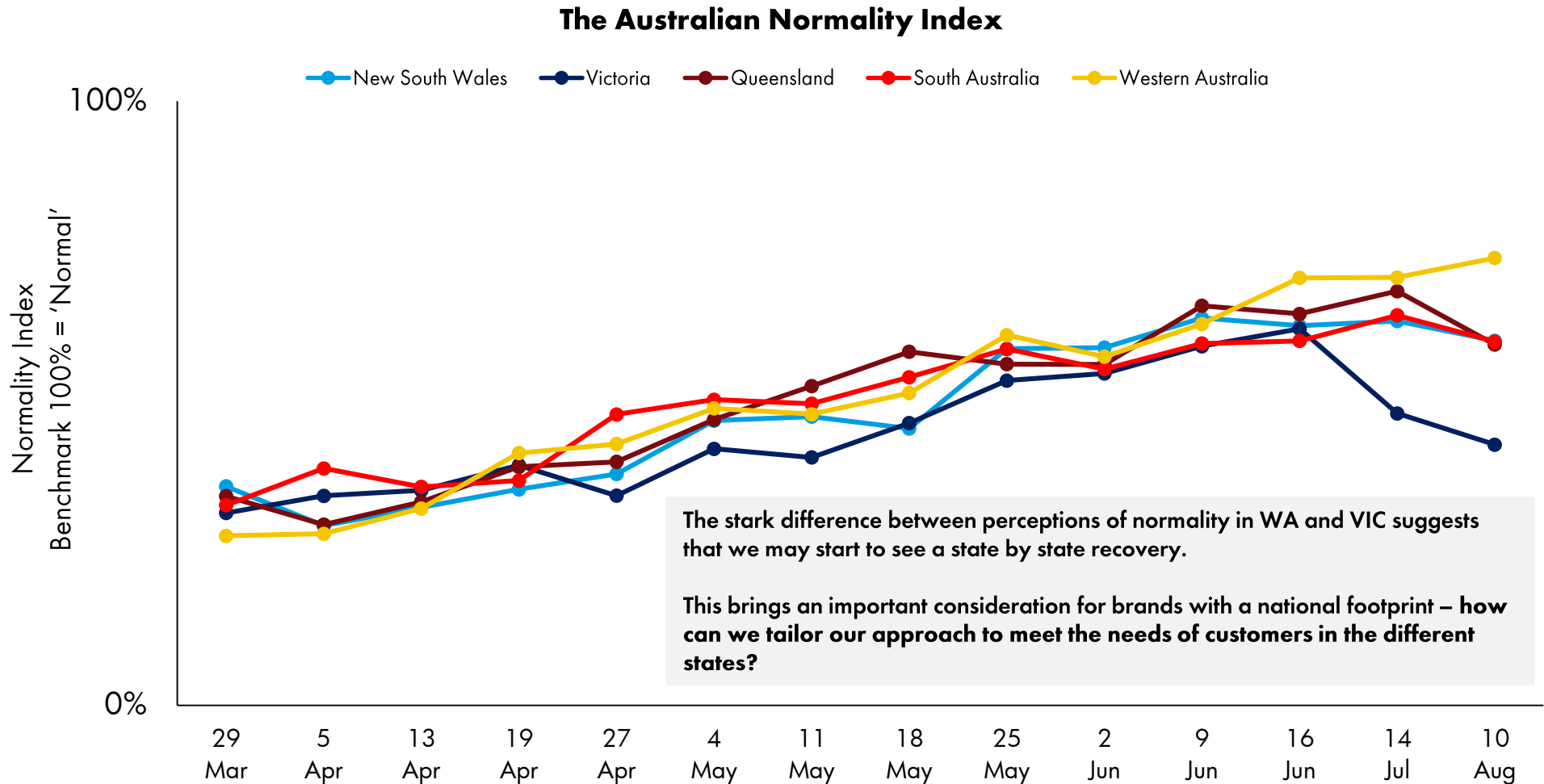
#### **IMPLICATIONS**

It is time for brands to ensure that all channels, both online and physical stores, are optimised to meet changing demand and expectations.

And now is the time brands should be asking:

- Is our online experience meeting market standards and expectations;
- Do we have an intuitive website;
- Are our process instructions clear and unambiguous;
- Is our online experience delivering on our brand promise?

# Taking a state view, WA leapt ahead as their sense of normality reached a new peak



# The State Report

# “It’s life Jim, but not as we knew it” Many believe the old “normal” will never return

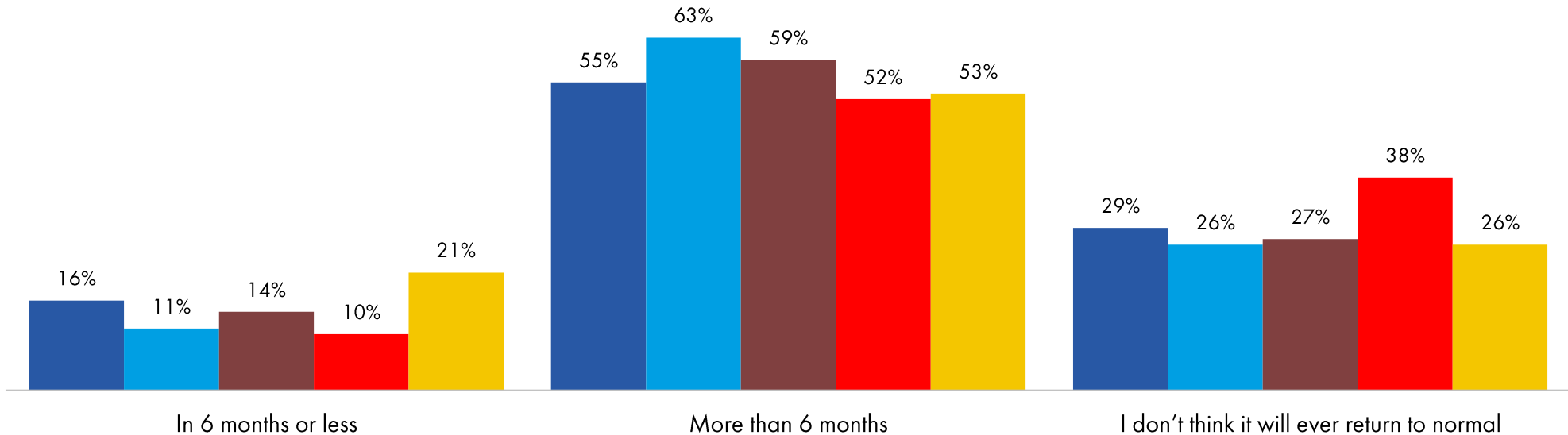
## State breakdown

Unsurprisingly, one fifth of those in WA anticipated life to return to normal in six months or less. South Australians had taken a more conservative view, being the most likely to think that things will not return to normal.

It is important for businesses to monitor the mood in each state to guide short and longer-term brand activity.

## When do you think life (including wider society) will return to normal?

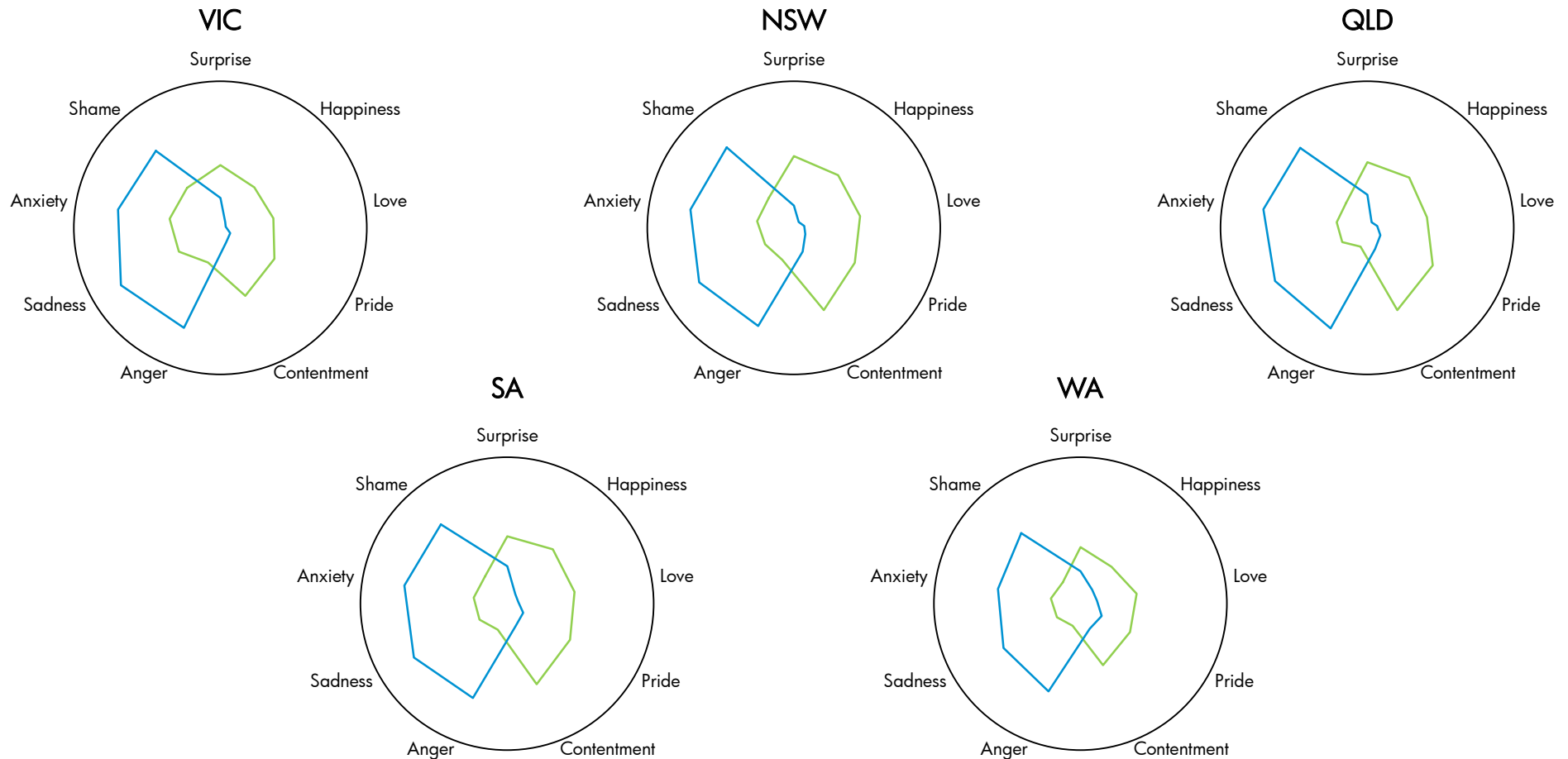
■ Victoria ■ New South Wales ■ Queensland ■ South Australia ■ Western Australia



# Regardless of state, there was still angst at the mention of "COVID-19". Managing the message remains critical.

## Resting emotional state vs. "COVID-19" prompt

— Resting emotional state — "COVID-19" prompt



# Looking to the future, Australians were not sure if the lasting impact on society would be positive or negative

**Positively, Australians anticipated a reset of values post-COVID, including increased hygiene practices, social distancing and digital becoming the norm**

*"People and governments will be more prepared for the next deadly pandemic. Personal hygiene and social distancing will hopefully become normalised practices."*

Age 18 - 34, VIC

*"This is a time to reassess peoples' lifestyles and finances, leading to changes which may be better for health."*

Age 50 – 64, NSW

*"I think how we work and shop has been directed towards the internet and I believe that in a lot of cases, that is how it will remain."*

Age 65+, QLD

**On the other hand, there was concern about the negative impact on the economy, personal safety and mental health**

*"What will life be like for our children? The govt and people will be paying this debt off for many years to come."*

Age 65+, NSW

*"There are certain things that I don't miss e.g. crowded places but the economy and peoples' mental health will suffer for quite some time."*

Age 18 -34, VIC

*"WA has returned to normal but the rest of the world is not safe. I believe this will now be the new normal."*

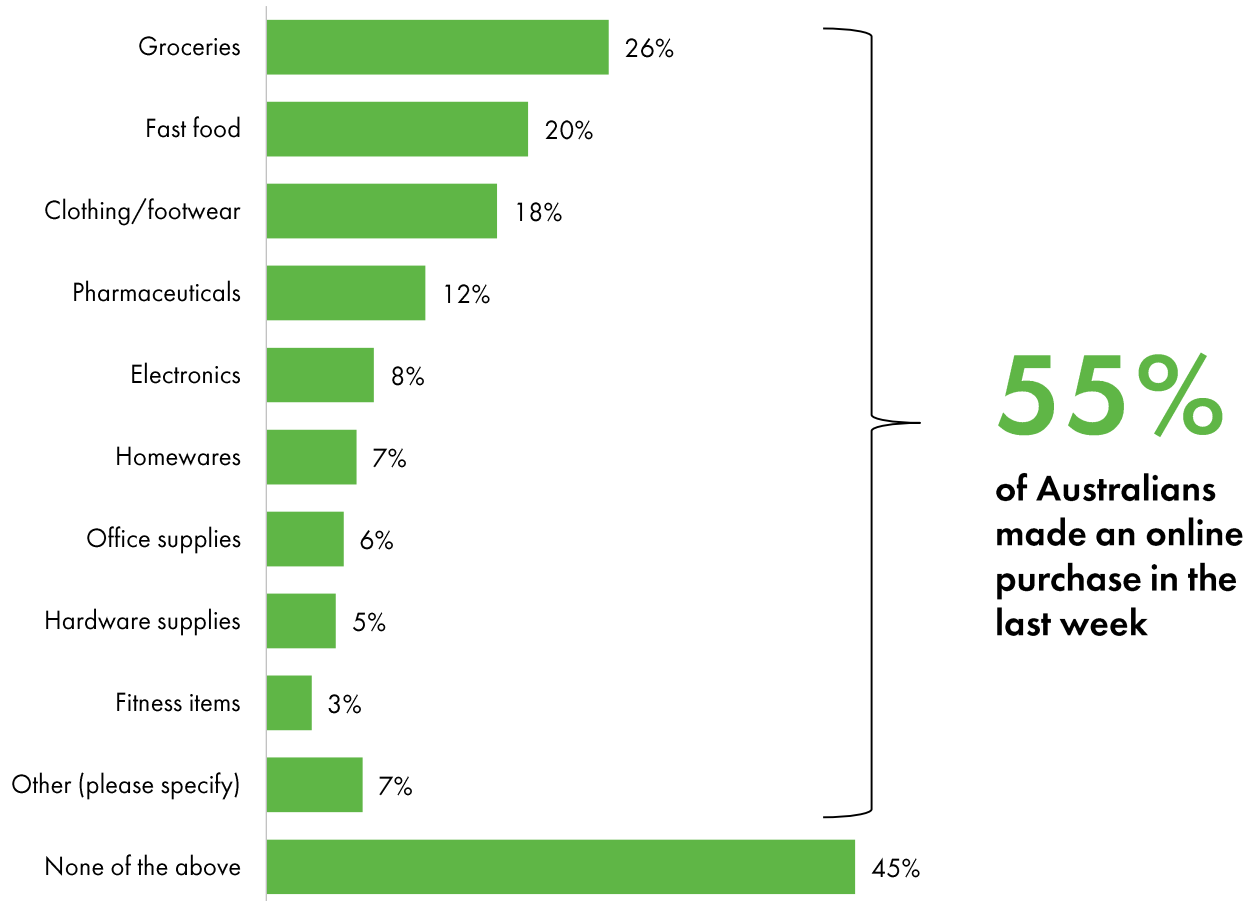
Age 35 – 49, WA

# The Digital Report



# Australians have adapted to online shopping...

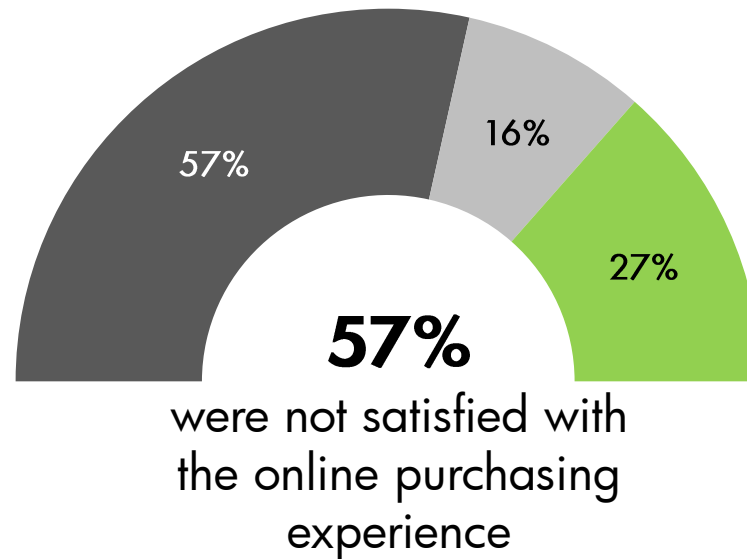
Have you purchased any of the following online in the last week?



... and we know brands have had to execute digital strategy quickly, but there is no time to rest. The online experience offered was not meeting customer expectations

How would you rate your experience with purchasing items online in the last week?

■ 0 to 5    ■ 6 to 7    ■ 8 to 10  
Dissatisfied    Neutral    Satisfied



# Customers who were not satisfied cited slow delivery, lack of stock and inaccurate product descriptions

Why did you give that score (less than 5 out of 10)?

quality  
communications  
time payment  
stock  
incorrect items  
delivery

It is time for brands to ensure that all channels, both online and physical stores, are optimised to meet changing demand and expectations.

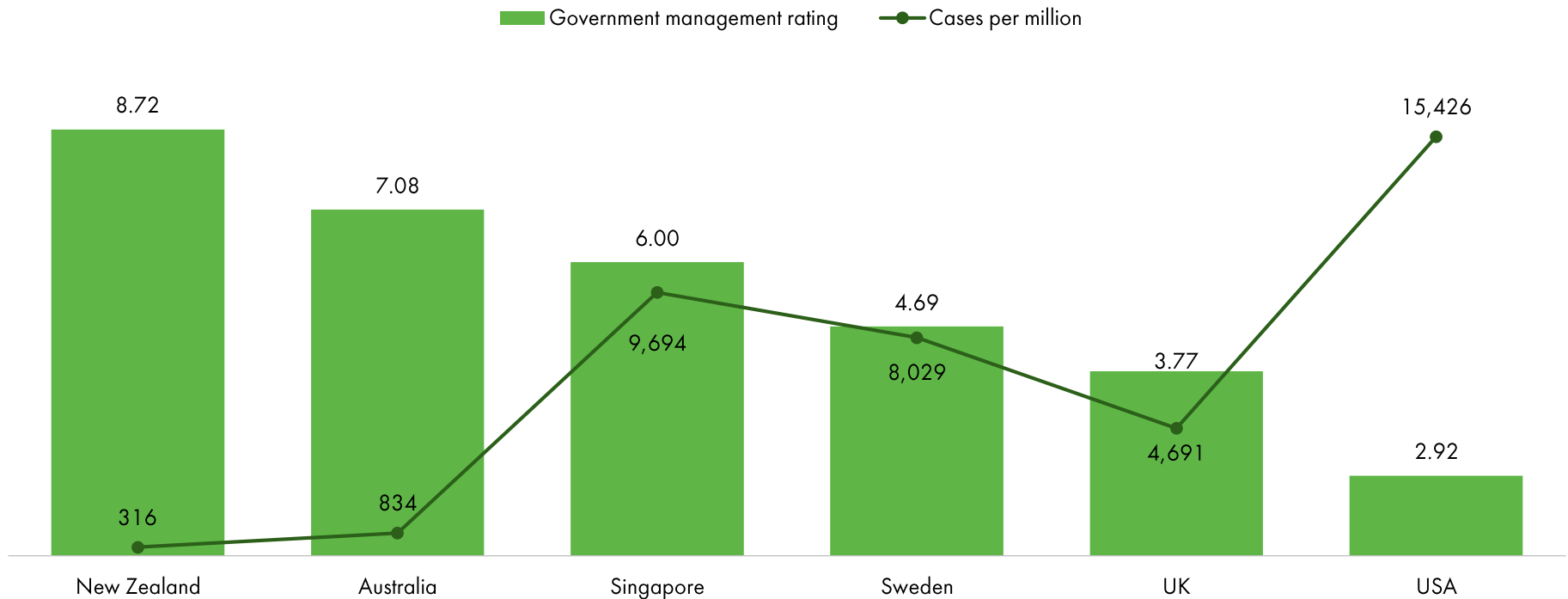
In the digital space, brands should be asking –

- Is our online experience meeting market standards and expectations;
- Do we have an intuitive website;
- Are our process instructions clear and unambiguous;
- Is our online experience delivering on our brand promise?

# The Government Report

# Despite Victoria's second wave, Australians rated the Federal Government strongly on their management of the pandemic

How would you rate the following countries on their government's management of COVID-19?



Perceptions of government performance generally trend in line with the volume of COVID-19 cases per million.

Cases per million data sourced from the Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Centre (August 2020).

# CONTACT

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