

HOW DO YOU LISTEN?

Classical Music Listeners' Habits And Purchasing Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

How Do Reviews Influence You?

Critical reviews of classical music recordings are published daily in paper and digital format. One of their presumed aims is to influence the classical music market in terms of the value attributed to the listening experience and subsequent consumer decisions regarding investment in the recording. However, no research has examined the popularity of reviews or confirmed whether they impact listeners' opinions and choices.^[1] In particular, in the age of YouTube, iTunes, and Spotify, we need to understand who engages with music review and what makes for a convincing argument when it comes to deciding "to listen or not to listen".

OBJECTIVE

Document classical music listeners' habits and opinions with focus on 1) their listening and buying behaviours and 2) their engagement with professional music reviews.

METHOD

Online Survey in Qualtrics (English/German; May-Dec 2017). Questions on demographics, listening habits, opinion and expectations about music review in general and with a focus on professional criticism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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HEADLINES

Classical Music Listeners

Review Readers

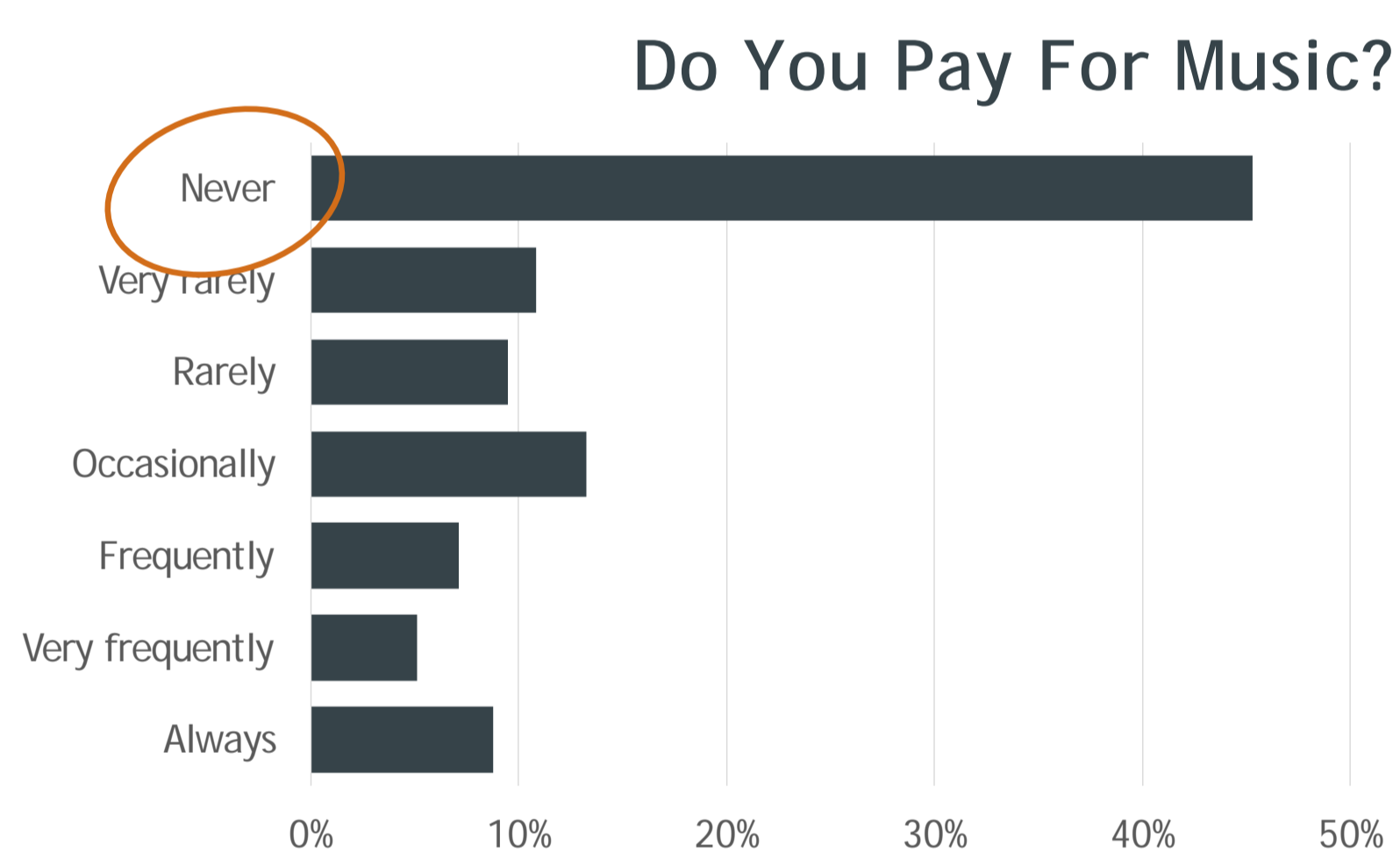
CDs (54%) Still Twice As Popular As Spotify (28%) Or iTunes (21%)
45% Never Pay For Music
Radio Is The Top Review Source (67%)
Only 38% Don't Engage With Music Review

Review Readers Are Older & Show Higher Musical Engagement And Training
Exposure To Written Reviews Increases Perceived Usefulness
A Good Review Should Fully Justify Reasons For Evaluation
A Critic Must Be Respectful & Constructive; Experience Is Less Important

RESULTS

Who Took Part In The Survey?

N=1200; 779 English, 421 German
62 countries; 89% Europe
637 male, 552 female, 11 other/n.a.
44yro (17-85)
GoldMSI 85.05 (average 81.58^[2])



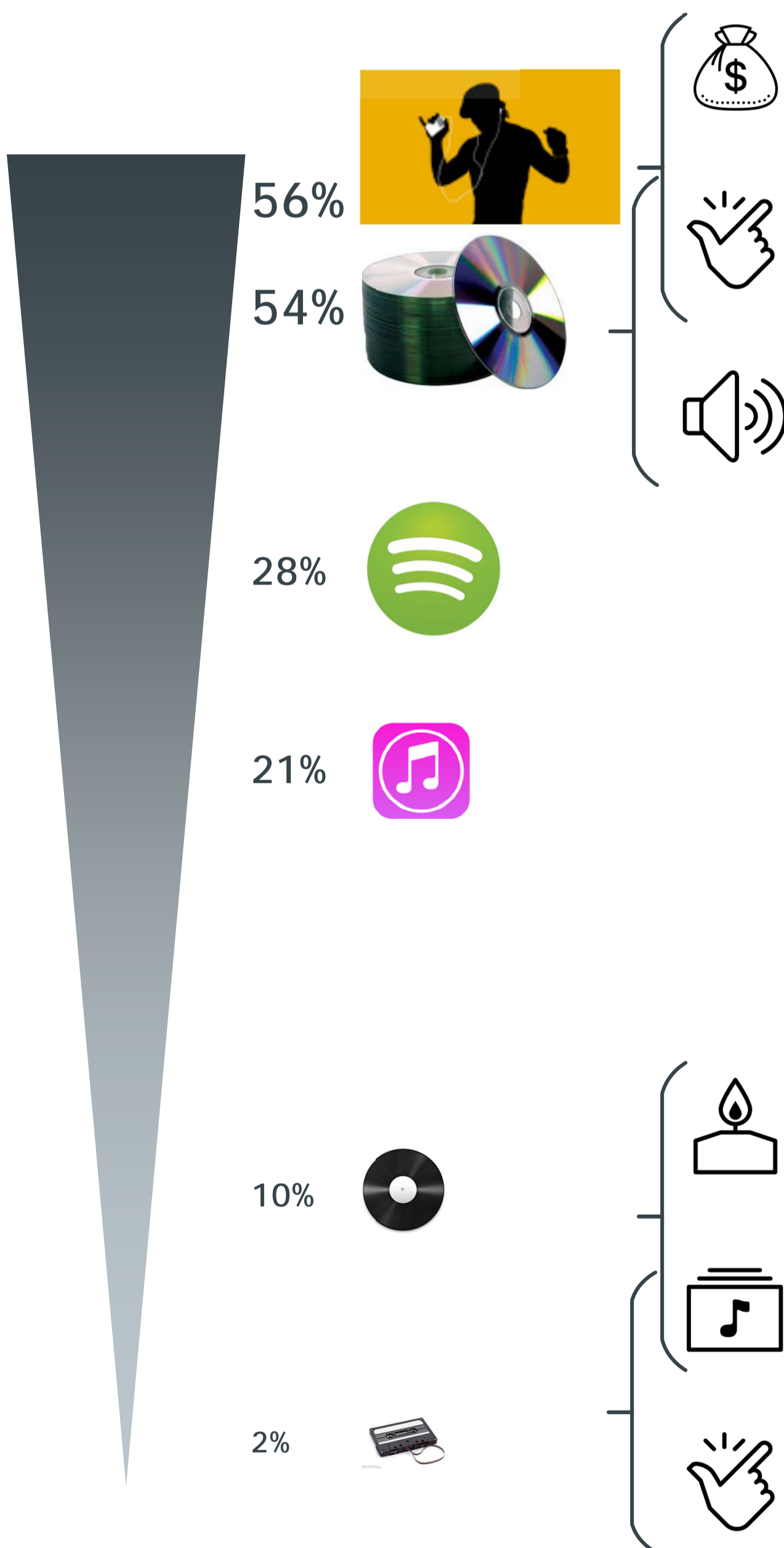
Who Reads Music Reviews? (And Who Doesn't?)

N=741; 490 English, 251 German
48 countries; 89% Europe
441 male, 294 female, 6 other/n.a.
46yro (vs. 41yro)
GoldMSI 90.88 (vs. 75.58)
Music Training 46.67 (vs. 36.38)
Music Engagement 28.53 (vs. 22.13)

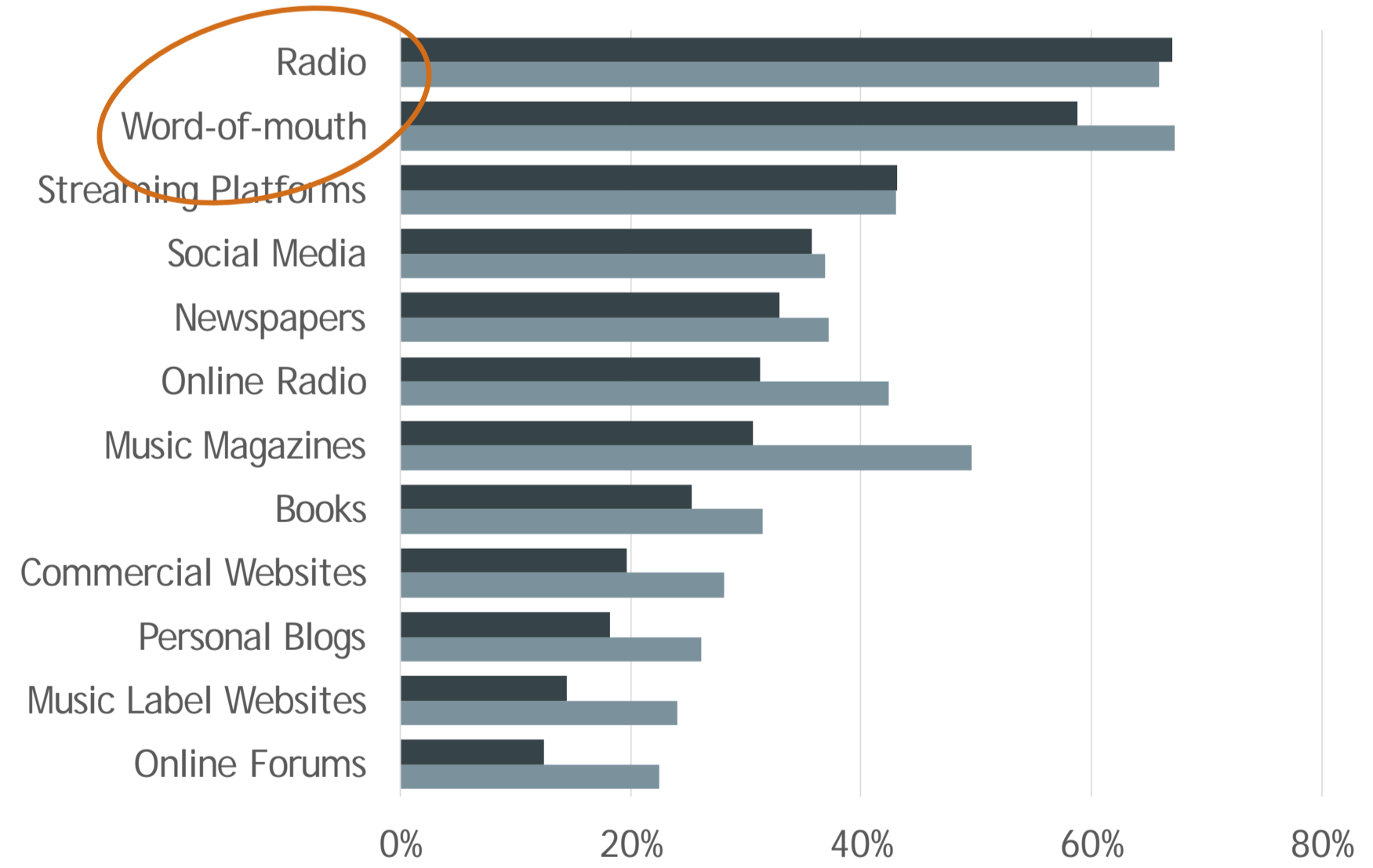
A Good Review Provides



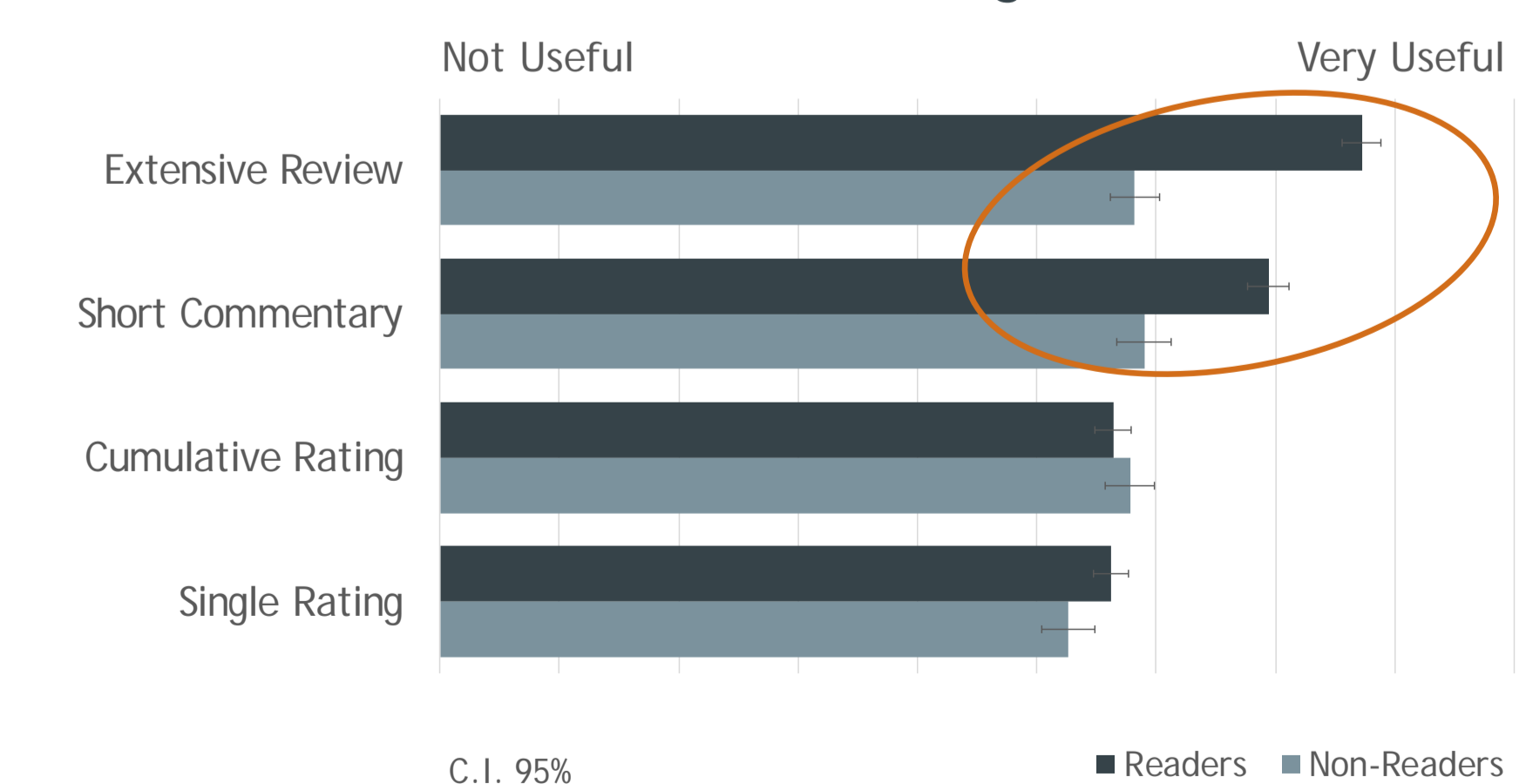
How Do You Listen? — And Why?



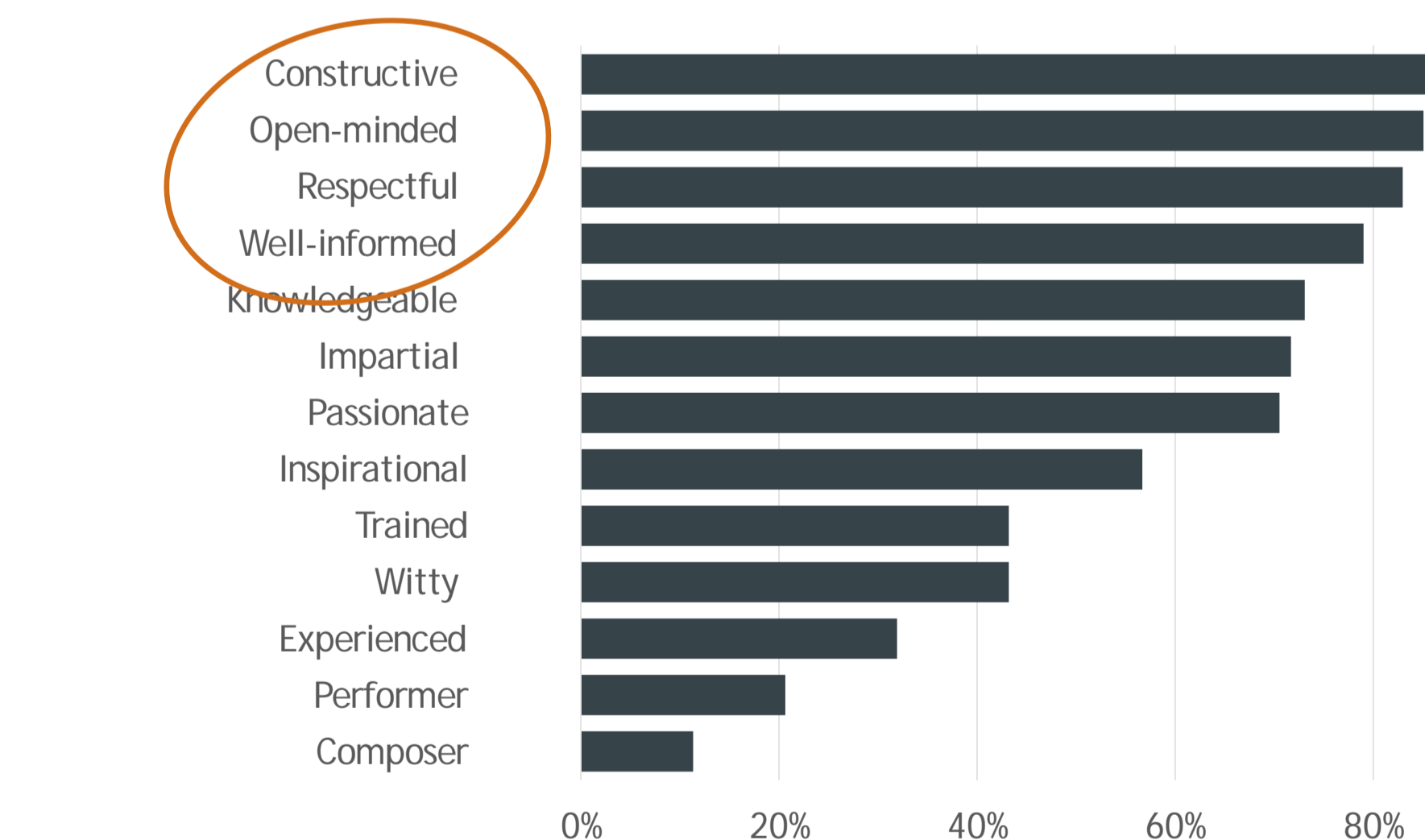
Where Do You Look For Opinion? And What Influences You?



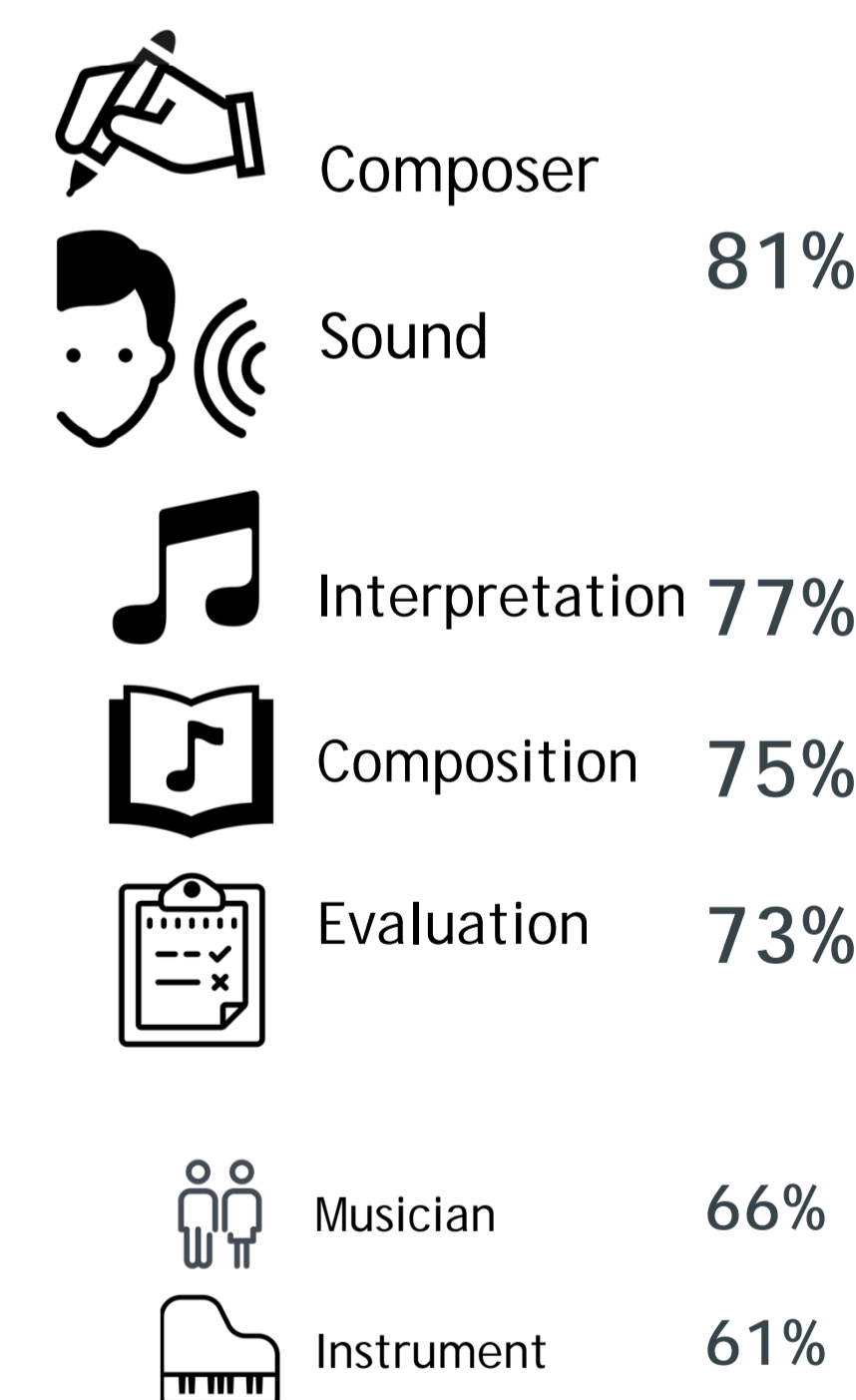
Review Vs. Ratings: How Useful?



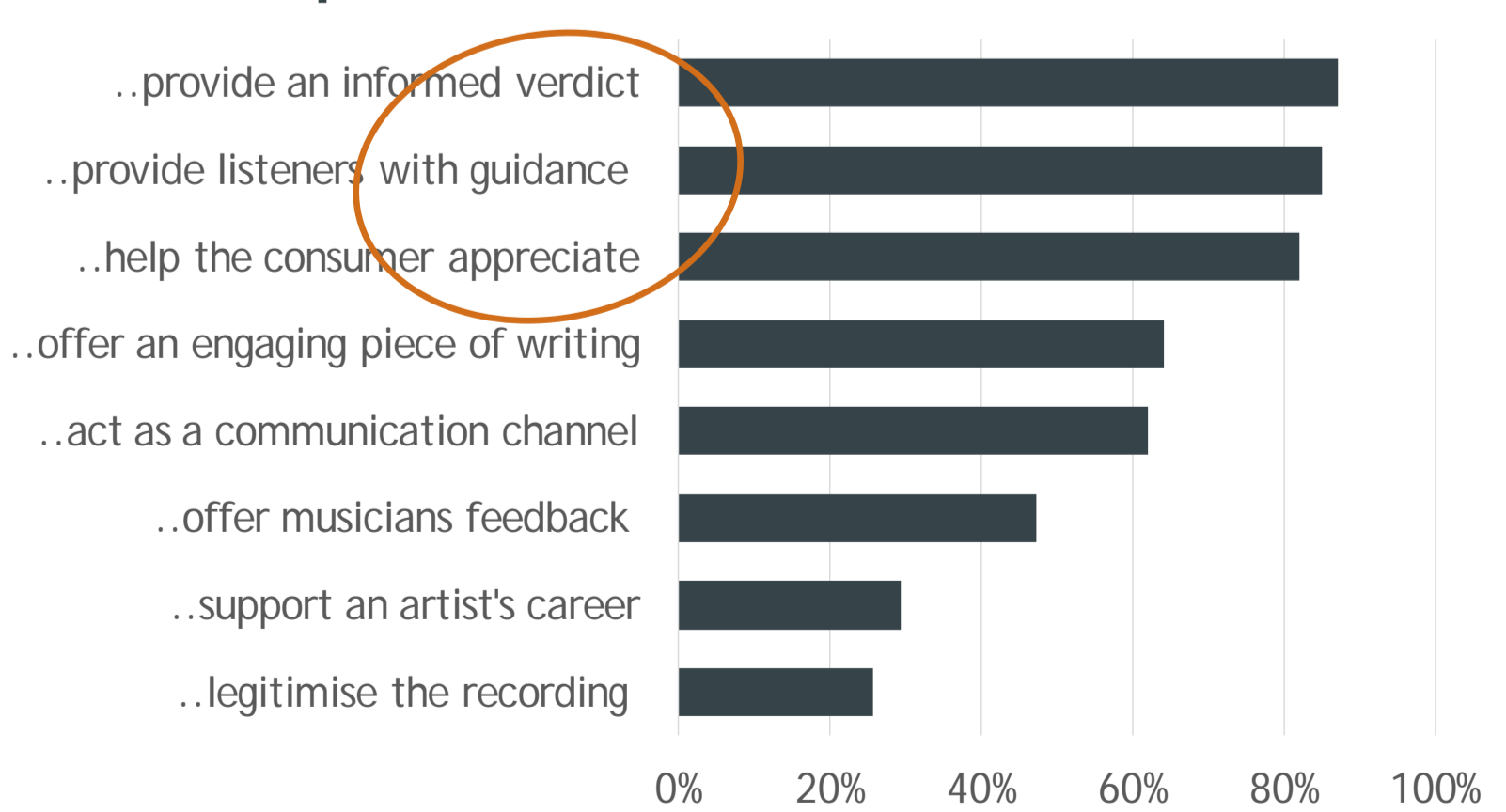
A Good Critic Is



A Good Review Talks About:



The Purpose Of Reviews Is To



REFERENCES

^[1]Alessandri, E., Eiholzer, H., Williamson, A. (2014). Reviewing critical practice: An analysis of Gramophone's reviews of Beethoven's piano sonatas, 1923-2010. *Musicae Scientiae*, 18(3), 131-149.
^[2]Müllensiefen, D., Gingras, Bruno, Musil, J., & Stewart, L. (2014). The musicality of non-musicians: an index for assessing musical sophistication in the general population. *PLOS ONE*, 9(6): e101091.
^[3]Alessandri, E., Baldassarre, A., Williamson, V. J. (submitted). The Critic's Voice: On the role and function of music criticism, *Journalism*.
^[4]Alessandri, E., Williamson, V. J., Eiholzer, H., Williamson, A. (2016). A critical ear: Analysis of value judgements in reviews of Beethoven's piano sonata recordings. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7:391.

NEXT STEPS

Compare findings with interviews of expert classical music critics.^[3] Do critics and consumers agree on what makes a good review & what drives listening decisions?
Experimental work: Prepare novel reviews using our models of standard content.^[4]
Manipulate key elements of text based on findings from questionnaire & interviews to determine how & why reviews influence listener opinions & decisions.