



User Review Sites

Prepared by: VeraQuest, Inc.

Date of Survey: November 15 – 17, 2011

For more information, contact:

Peter Gold

CEO, VeraQuest, Inc.

peter.gold@veraquestresearch.com

Ph: 914.219.5077

On the behalf of Quirk's, VeraQuest conducted a survey among adults in the U.S. to:

1. Understand how much faith the online population has in the trustworthiness of user review sites
2. Determine whether people who use social networking sites ever use these sites to seek out the opinions of people with whom they seldom agree, in order to determine what not to do

Questions focused on the following:

- Awareness of specific user review sites
- If used in past year
- Rating on Trustworthiness
- Membership of a social network
- Existence of person who seldom agree with, that would do the opposite of
- Frequency of checking out reviews from this person

Summary Findings

Trustworthiness of user review sites

With the exception of Amazon, which is also an online retailer, the user review sites we evaluated foster a bit of skepticism with respect to trustworthiness. Only about half of respondents aware of the sites rate them an 8-10 on a ten-point trustworthiness scale. Even about 20% - 25% of people that actually use them fail to rate them an 8 or higher.

Using recommendations from social network “friends” to see what not to do

More than a third (38%) of Americans who use social networking sites actually peruse recommendations of people whose opinions are often substantially different from their own, in order to do the opposite. This contrarian behavior is accentuated among Americans aged 18-39 (54%) and even more so among Hispanics (61%). About 47% of Non-Hispanic Blacks also look for “friends” whose opinions they rarely share in order to do the opposite.

Research Design

Respondents were recruited from the uSamp panel (www.usamp.com). This panel has over 2 million members in the U.S. who have been recruited through a number of different panel enrollment campaigns. Panelists are required to double opt-in to ensure voluntary participation in the surveys they are invited to complete. Respondents receive points for the surveys they complete that can be accumulated and redeemed for a variety of products.

Adult respondents were randomly selected from the uSamp panel to be generally proportional of the age, sex, region, race/ethnicity, income, and education strata of the U.S., based on Census proportions. Once selected, respondents were sent an invitation to a protected web-based survey which ensured that only the intended recipient could complete the survey, and that the survey could only be completed once. There were 1,526 respondents from the U.S. who were 18 or older who completed the survey. Quotas were established for the demographic groups (region, age, sex, income, education, race/ethnicity) to ensure sufficient diversity of the sample in proportions so that they would resemble that of the United States.

Research Design

Computing Weights

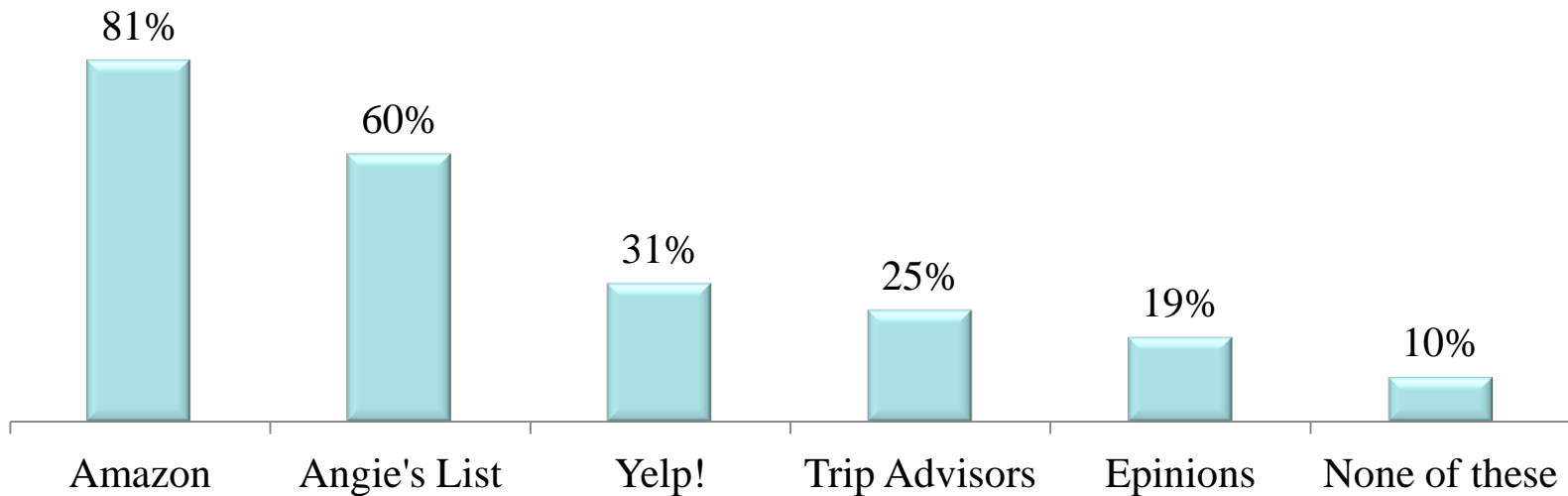
Since all samples can diverge from the intended population due to non-response bias and sampling bias, we also demographically weight the data. We use a common raking weighting technique (i.e. iterative proportional fitting) that adjusts sample proportions in order to resemble the proportions of the general U.S. population. By demographically weighting the data for key variables (age, sex, region of country, income, education, and race/ethnicity), we can examine experimental effects in the sample 'as if' it were randomly drawn from the U.S. population.

In some instances, percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Key Findings

Four-fifth's of the online population are familiar with Amazon. About two-in-five are familiar with Angie's List and substantially fewer are aware of Yelp, Trip Advisors and Epinions.

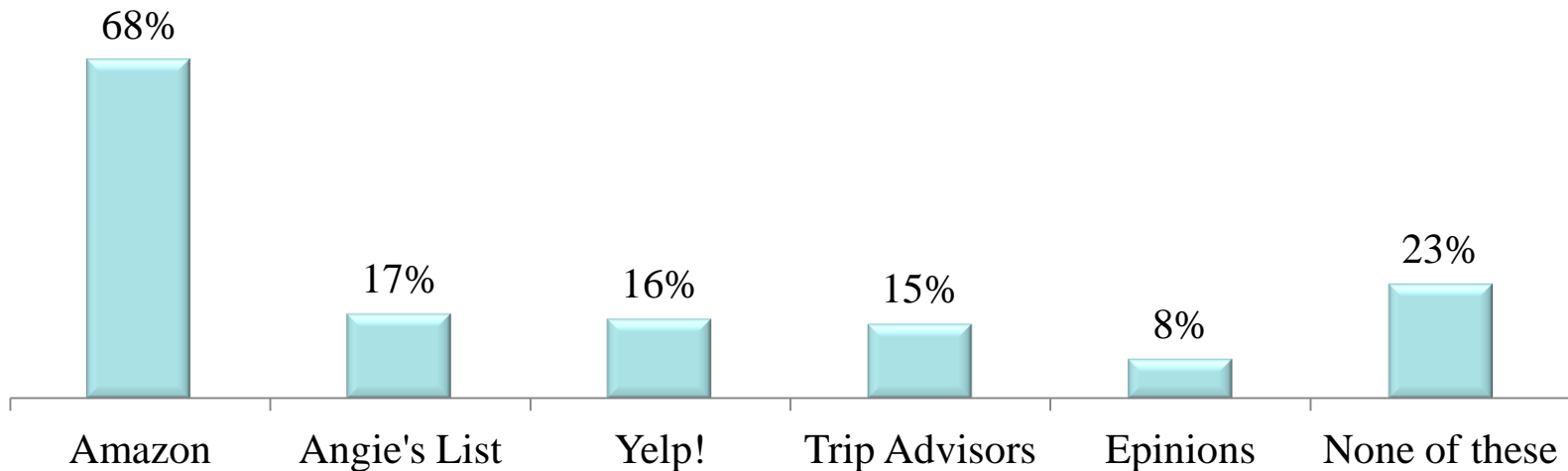
User Review Sites Aware of



Among those that are aware, two-thirds use Amazon; however, Amazon serves as both a retail shopping site and a user review site. Except for Amazon, only about one-in-six or less of online respondents who are aware of these others sites actually use them.

User Review Sites Used in Past Year

-Among Those Aware of at Least One Site -

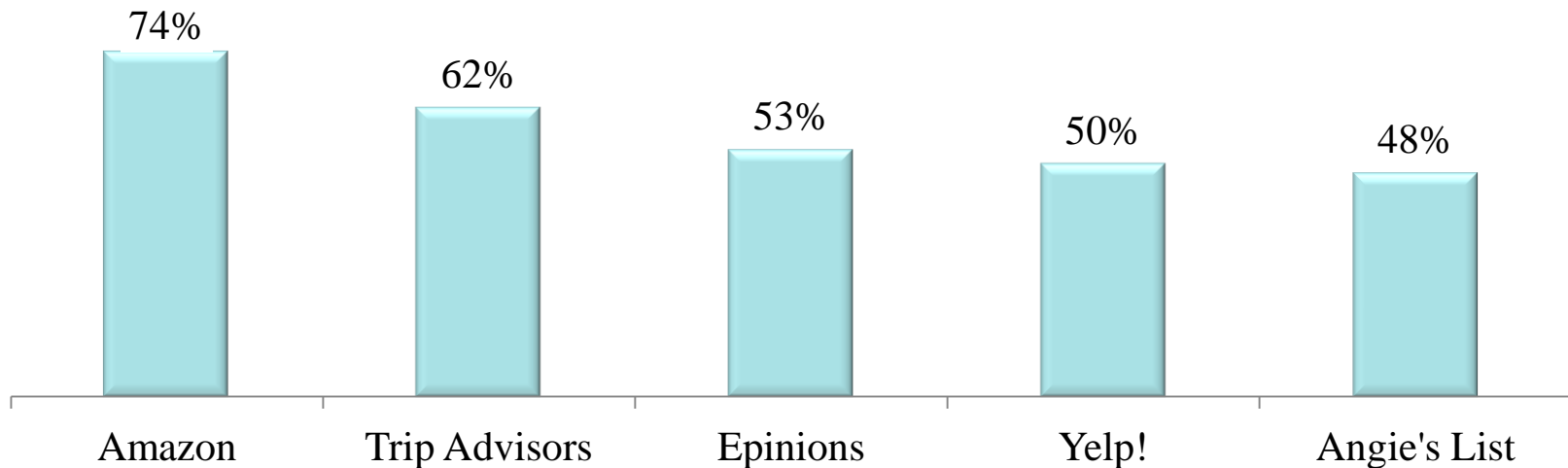


On a ten-point trustworthiness scale, only about half give Epinions, Yelp, and Angie's a score of 8-10. Amazon and Trip Advisors fare better.

Trustworthiness of User Review Sites

- Among Those Aware of the Site -

Top 3 Box on 10-point Scale



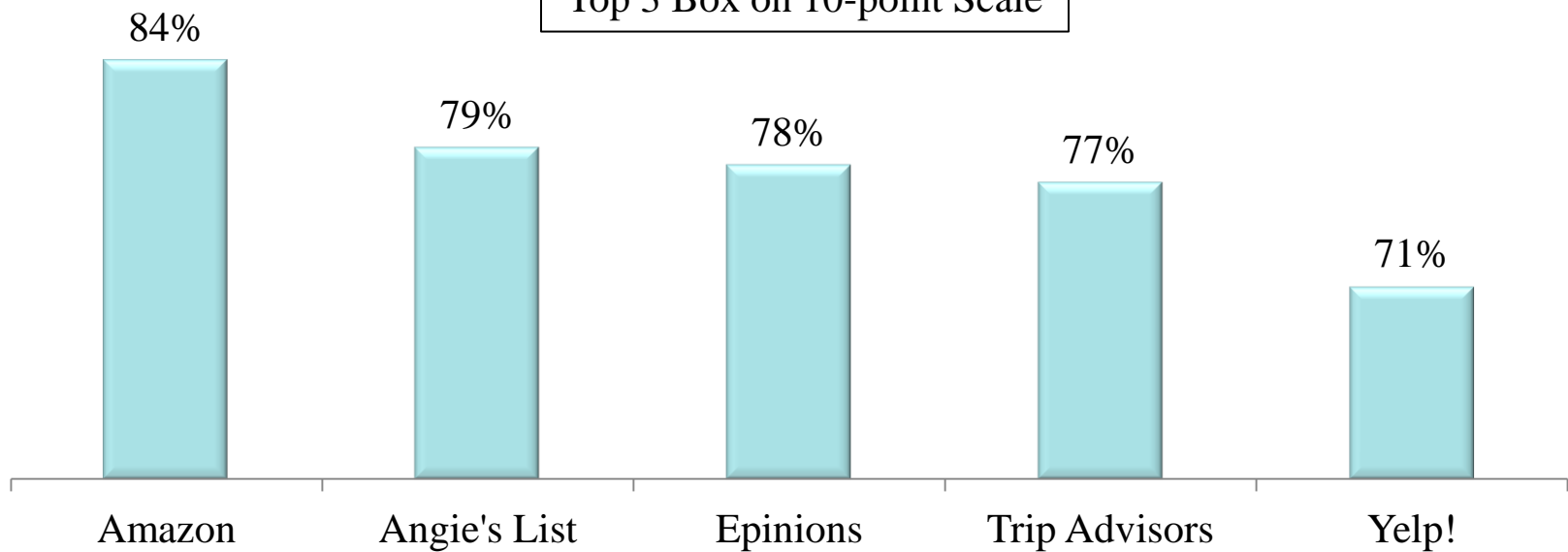
Q503 Still thinking about user review sites, please rate each on a scale from 1 – 10 on how strongly you believe each of these sites provide accurate, trustworthy information. Please use a scale with 1 meaning completely untrustworthy and 10 meaning completely trustworthy. *You may use any number from 1 to 10.*
BASE: Amazon=1249, Angie's List=922, Epinions=313, Trip Advisors=368, Yelp!=462

Even people who have used these sites are wary: about one-quarter of respondents who visit these sites fail to give them top marks for trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness of User Review Sites

- Among Past Year Users of the Site -

Top 3 Box on 10-point Scale



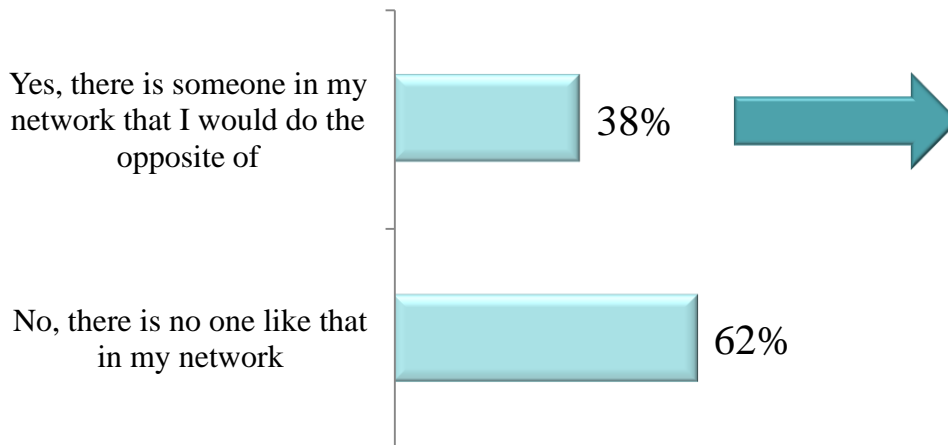
Q503 Still thinking about user review sites, please rate each on a scale from 1 – 10 on how strongly you believe each of these sites provide accurate, trustworthy information. Please use a scale with 1 meaning completely untrustworthy and 10 meaning completely trustworthy. *You may use any number from 1 to 10.*
BASE: Amazon=933, Angie's List=227, Epinions=113, Trip Advisors=209, Yelp!=215

More than one-third (38%) of people who are on social networking sites say there is someone in their network whose opinions are so different from their own, that they tend to do the opposite of whatever they recommend. In fact, 61% of people who feel this way seek out the opinions of these types of “friends” at least occasionally.

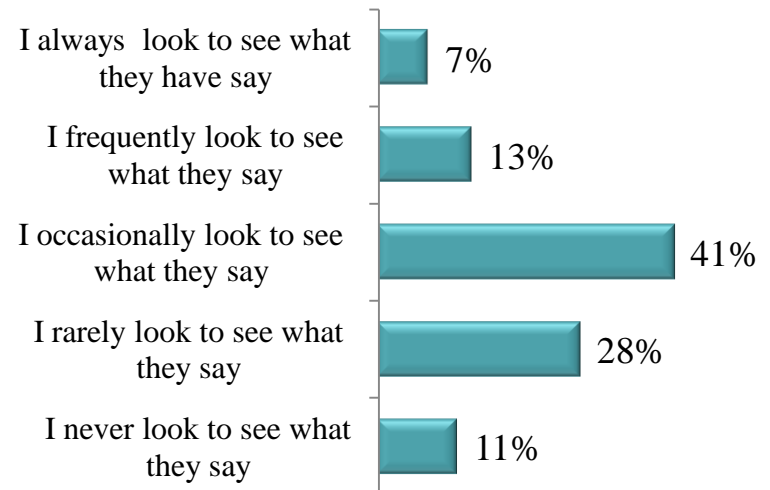
Member of Social Network = 79%

Is there someone in your network with whose opinion you so seldom agree that if you saw it you would tend to do the opposite of what they recommend?

- Among Members of Social Networks -



How Often Seek Out Their Opinion
- Among Those Who Have Someone That They Do The Opposite Of -



Q504 Do you belong to any social networking sites (i.e., Facebook, Myspace, Linked-in)? BASE: TOTAL RESPONDENTS=1526

Q505 Social networking sites such as Facebook, Myspace and Linked-in are recognized places people can go to read recommendations from friends. Is there someone in your network with whose opinion you so seldom agree that if you saw it you would tend to do the opposite of what they recommend? BASE: Members of social networks 1217

Q506 How often do you seek out their opinion? BASE: Social network members who identify that they have someone they would do the opposite of=463

We Americans are not equally cynical. Younger people (18-39) are much more likely to use their social network in this fashion. Moreover, Hispanics, and to a lesser extent, Non-Hispanic African Americans, are more likely to seek the opinions of people with whom they frequently disagree.

Is there someone in your network with whose opinion you so seldom agree that if you saw it you would tend to do the opposite of what they recommend?
- Among Members of Social Networks -

