



ONLINE-
VERMARKTERKREIS
IM BVDW

BVDW

Trend Survey Paid Content

#bvdw
#digitalexperten



More and more online news portals and websites with editorial or journalistic content no longer offer all their content completely free of charge but also provide fee-based articles and digital subscriptions (e.g., Plus access, e-papers). The revenues from the use of paid content supplement or replace the online advertising revenues.

But do users pay willingly for editorial content on the Internet? With a trend survey the OVK (committee of online sales houses) within the BVDW conducted a survey with German internet users about their attitude and usage of "paid content" and hereby presents the results.

The survey was conducted in October 2021. 3,029 users of German media brands as well as of social media sites took part.



Overall, three quarters of respondents use editorial content on the Internet. One in five of these uses paid content (21 percent). The ratio of users willing to pay to users who only use free editorial content therefore is 1:4.

Men and young users are more willing to pay for editorial content: 63 percent of the male users, and one in four 16-29-year-olds (27 percent) pay for articles or subscriptions. People aged 50 or older make up the largest group of editorial content users (51 percent). In this group, more than half are fundamentally unwilling to pay for editorial content on the Internet (52 percent).

The most frequently used kind of paid content are e-papers or e-magazines, fee-based access to news portals or online services is second best. E-papers or e-magazines appeal primarily to people aged 50 and over; 55 percent of users of paid content in this age group have (at least) one subscription. Paid podcasts, on the other hand, are used overproportionately by younger people.



Asked about the reasons for their unwillingness to pay, almost half of the non-payers say that the amount of free content on the Internet is sufficient for them. More than a third think news content should always be free. Almost one in four users and younger non-payers in particular feel that the fees are too high. Users who have paid for editorial content in the past also cite the sufficient supply of free content as a reason for not paying; however, the second most frequent citation in this group is the level of the fee.

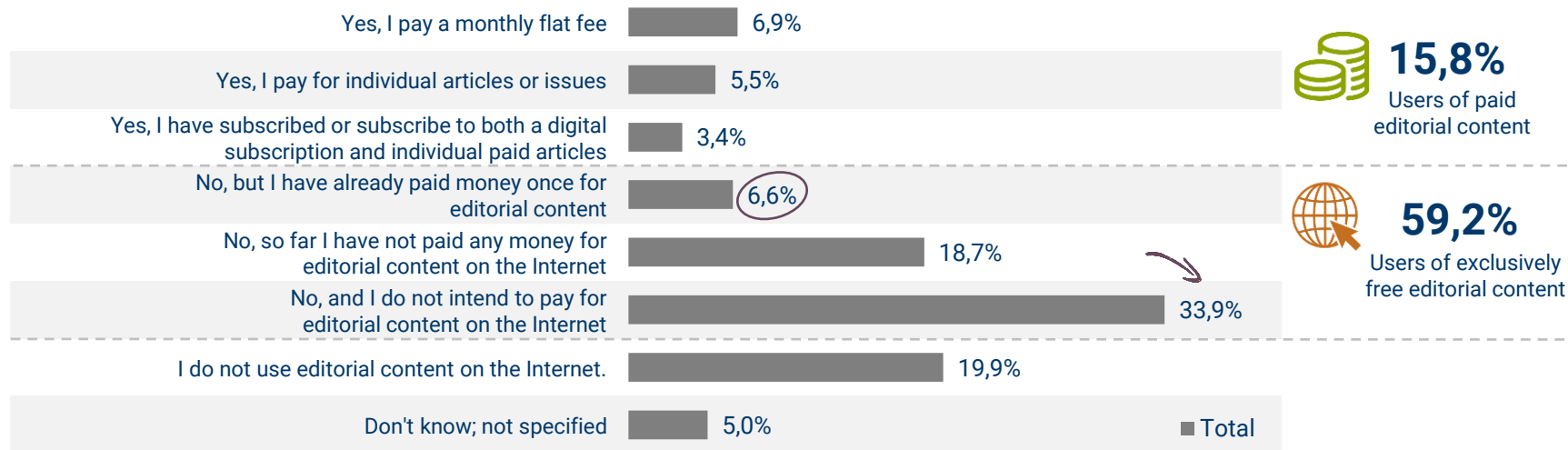
For two-thirds of users of editorial content on the Internet, mandatory consent to website cookies is a possible alternative to payment models, and over half are also in favor of mandatory registration.

While users of paid content are open to a wide variety of access conditions, non-payers prefer options that continue to allow free usage. Financing free content via advertising is suggested by both paying users and non-payers. Users that only use free content would also consider flexible subscription systems where they can combine content individually from different providers.

16 percent of all respondents use paid access to editorial digital media content, while a third rule out paid models in principle.



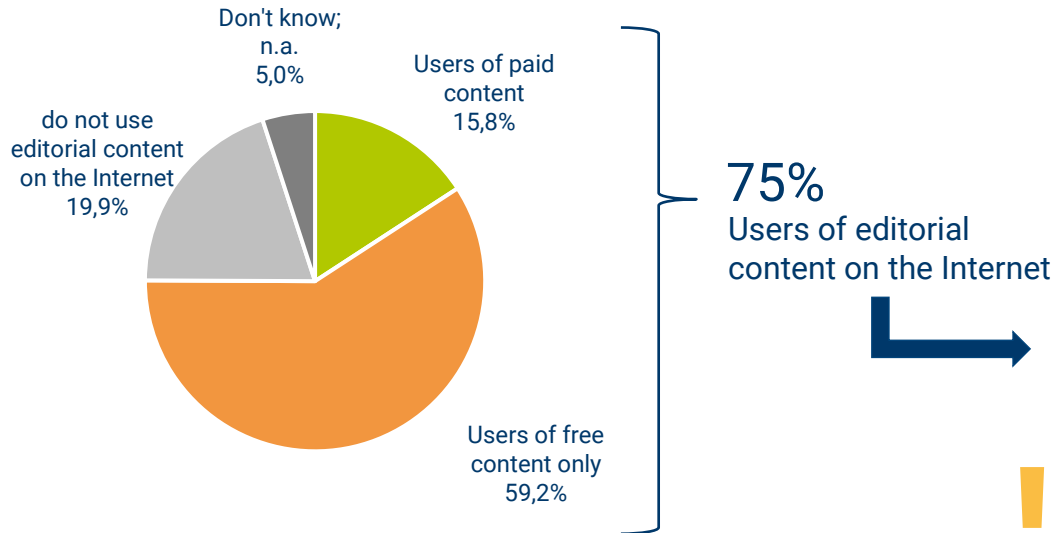
Use of editorial content on the Internet :



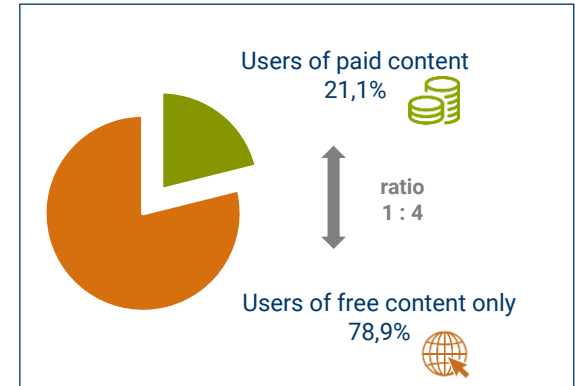
Basis: n = 3.029 (Total); figures in percent, Q 6.1: Have you paid money for editorial content on the Internet in the last 12 months?

Overall, three quarters of respondents use editorial content on the Internet. One in five of them pays for paid content. The ratio of paying to non-paying users of editorial content is 1:4.

Use of editorial content on the Internet - composition:



Basis: Users of editorial content on the Internet



! The further evaluation refers to the basis "Users of editorial content on the Internet" !

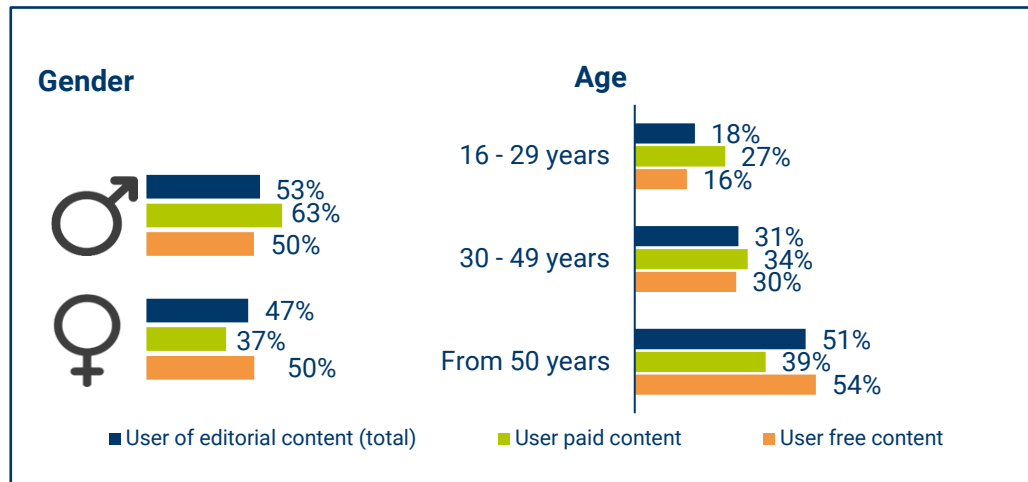
Basis: n = 3.029 (Total); figures in percent, Q 6.1: Have you paid money for editorial content on the Internet in the last 12 months?

Among users of paid editorial content, men and young users are overproportionately represented. One in four users willing to pay is between 16 and 29 years old.

Structure breakdown of user types:

Yes, I pay for a monthly flat rate and/or for individual articles or issues.

21,1%



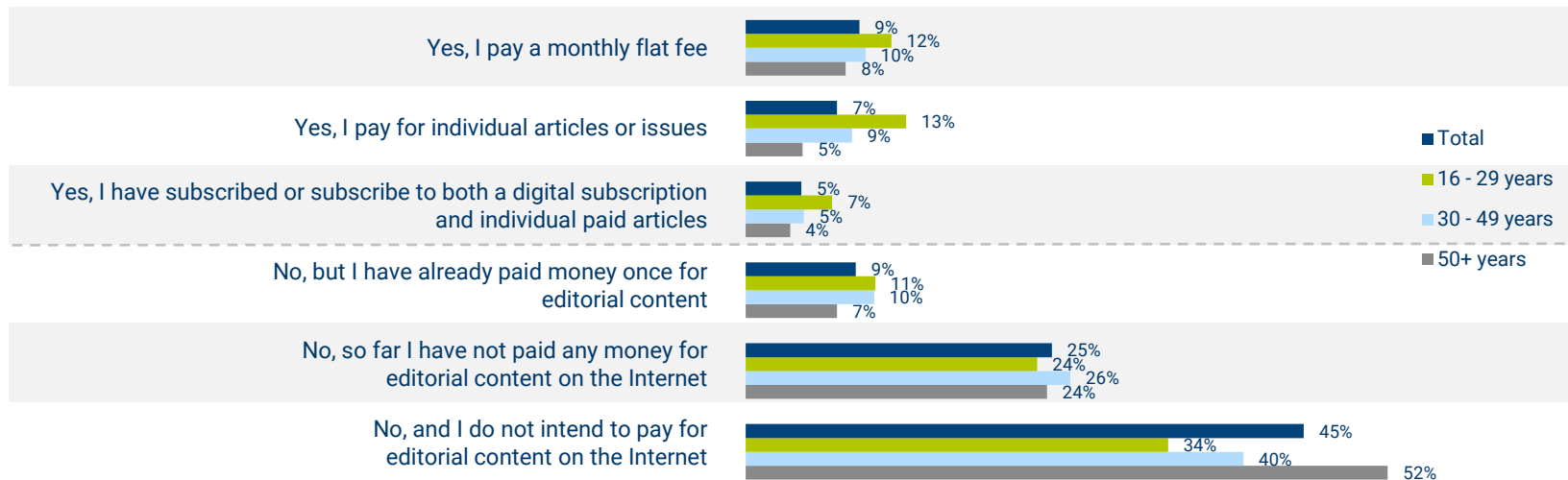
Basis: n = 2.275 (Users of editorial content on the Internet (total)); n=480 (Users of paid editorial content on the Internet); n=1795 (Users of free editorial content on the Internet); figures in percent, Q 6.1: Have you paid money for editorial content online in the last 12 months?

The willingness to pay is comparatively strongest among 16–29-year-old persons. Among older people, more than half are not willing to pay for editorial content on the Internet.



Use of editorial content on the Internet :

Age Split



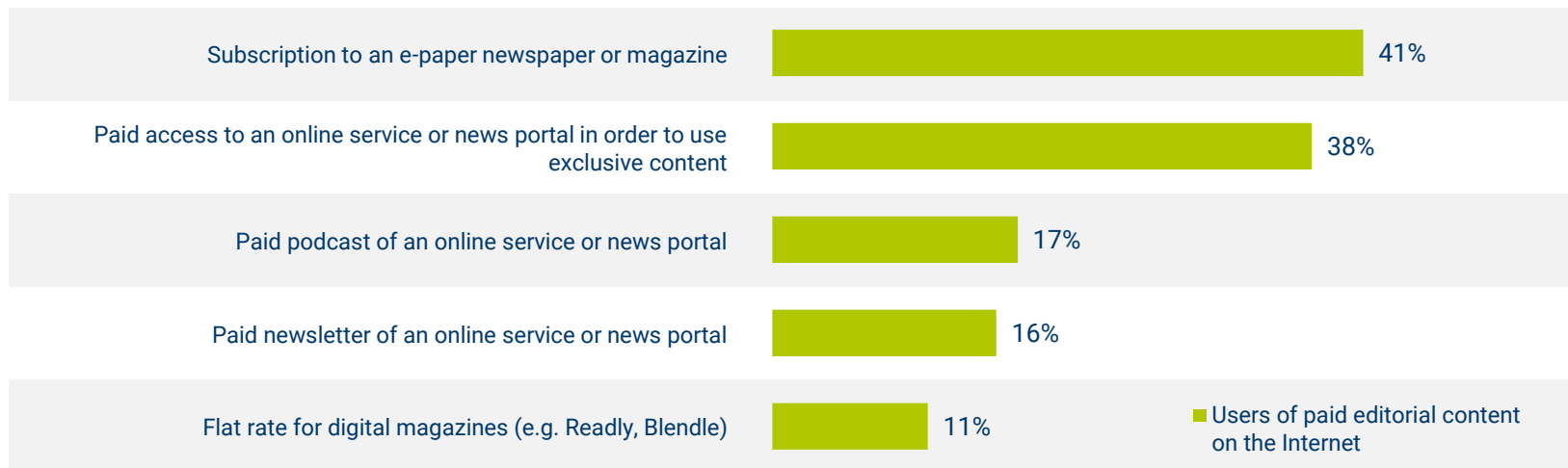
Basis: n = 2.275 (Users of editorial content on the Internet (total)); offers in percent, Q 6.1: Did you pay money for editorial content on the Internet in the last 12 months?

The most frequent subscriptions are to paid e-papers or e-magazines, followed by paid access to online services or news portals. Paid podcasts come in third place.



Type of chargeable access:

Users of paid content on the Internet



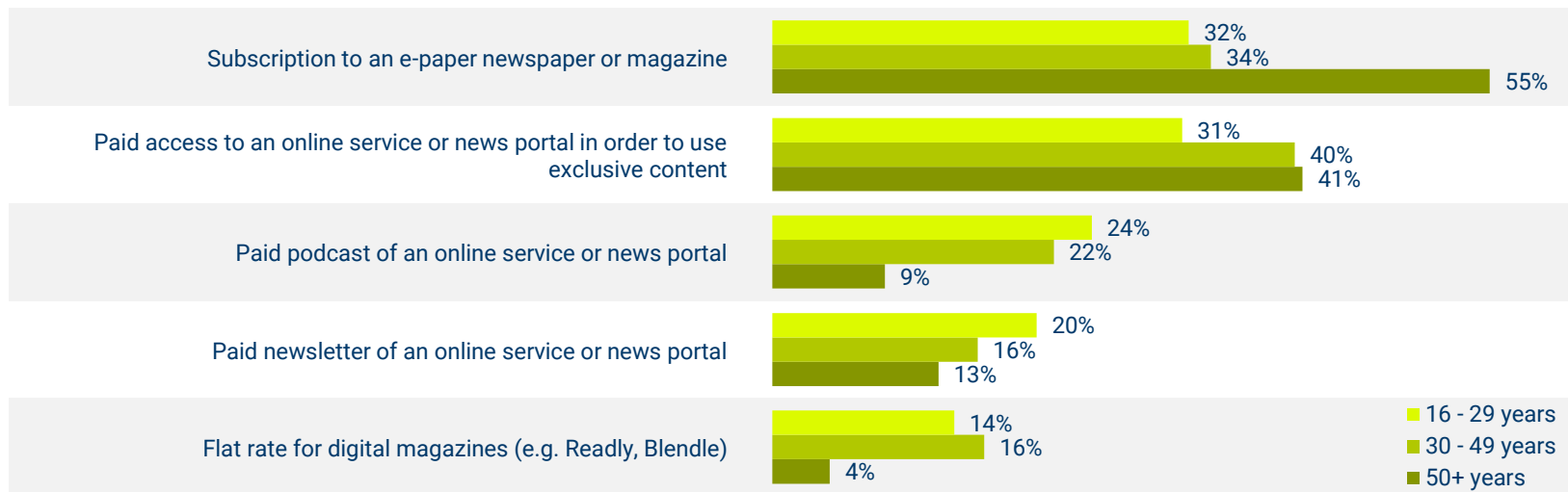
Basis: n = 481 (users of paid editorial content on the Internet); figures in percent, Q 6.2: What kind of paid access to digital editorial content do you already use?

E-papers or e-magazines appeal primarily to people aged 50 and over; 55% of users of paid content in this age group have (at least) one subscription. In contrast, paid podcasts are used overproportionately by younger people.



Type of chargeable access::

Age split; users of paid content



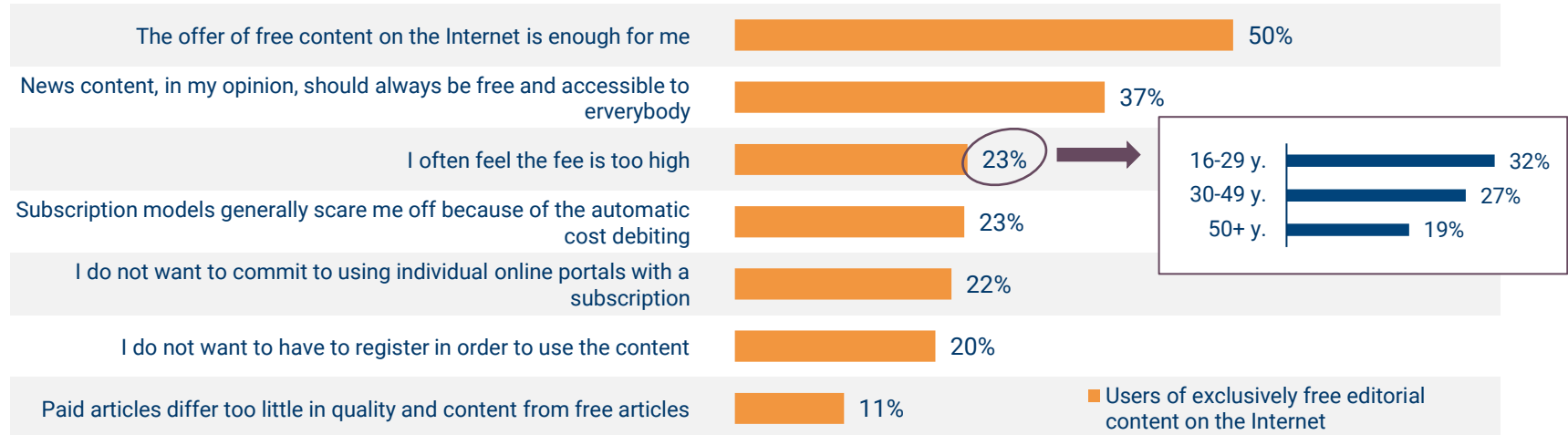
Basis: n = 481 (users of paid editorial content on the Internet); figures in percent, Q 6.2: What kind of paid access to digital editorial content do you already use?

For half of the non-payers, the offer of free content on the Internet is sufficient. More than a third think news content should always be free. Younger non-payers in particular feel that the fees are too high.



Reasons for lack of willingness to pay:

Users of exclusively free content on the Internet



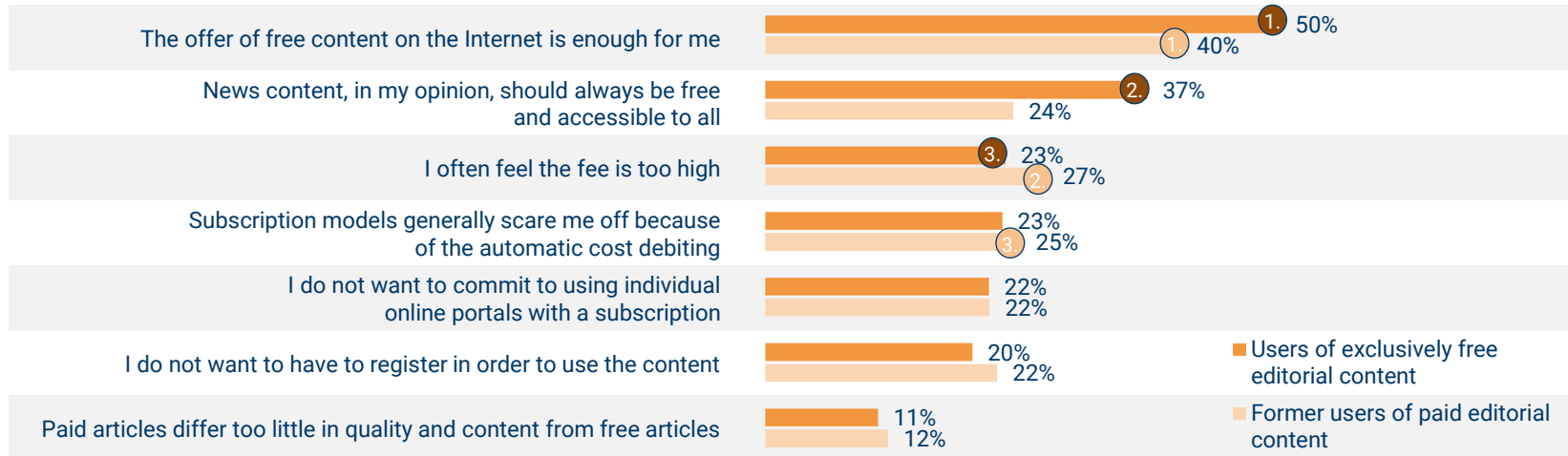
Basis: n = 1,795 (users of exclusively free editorial content on the Internet); figures in percent, F 6.3: You indicated that you have not paid any money for editorial content on the Internet in the last 12 months. Why were you not willing to do so?

Users who have paid for editorial content in the past also cite the sufficient supply of free content as a reason not to pay; however, the second most frequent citation here is the amount of the fee.



Reasons for exclusive use of free content:

Users of exclusively free content on the Internet vs. users who once paid money

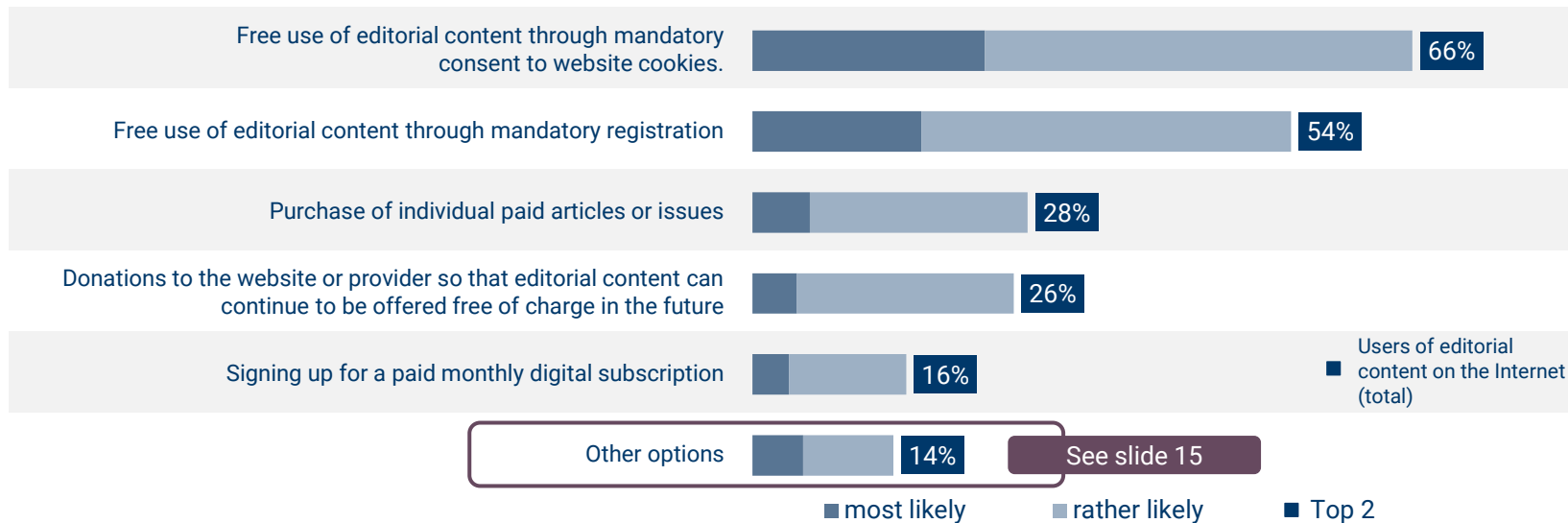


Basis: n = 1,795 (users of exclusively free editorial content on the Internet); n= 201 (former users of paid editorial content on the Internet); data in percent, F 6.3: You indicated that you had not paid money for editorial content on the Internet in the past 12 months. Why were you not willing to do so?

For two-thirds, mandatory consent to website cookies is a possible alternative to payment models, and over half are also in favor of mandatory registration.

Acceptance of possible access conditions to editorial content on the Internet

Top 2 (most likely/ rather likely)



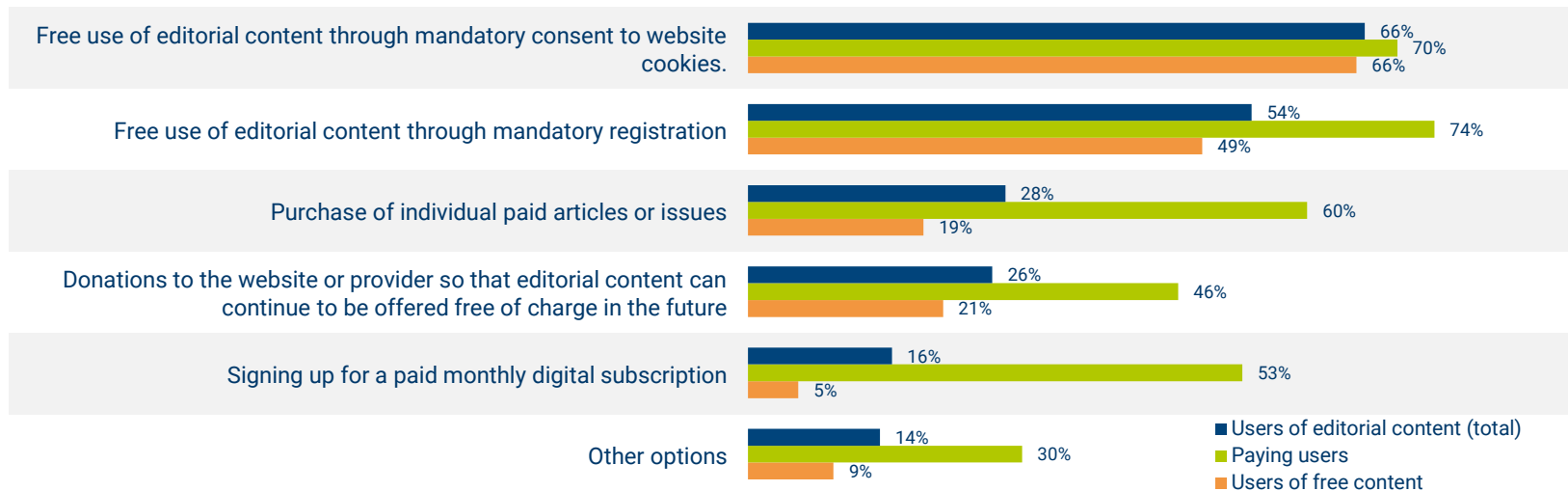
Basis: n = 2,275 (users of editorial content on the Internet (total)); 4-point scale, (1) highly likely to (4) absolutely unlikely; data in percent, Q 6.4: How likely is it that you would use the following options to access editorial content on the Internet in the future?

While users who are willing to pay are open to a wide variety of access conditions, non-payers prefer options that continue to allow free use, such as consent to website cookies or registration.



Acceptance of possible access conditions to editorial content on the Internet

Top 2 (most likely/ rather likely) by type of previous use.

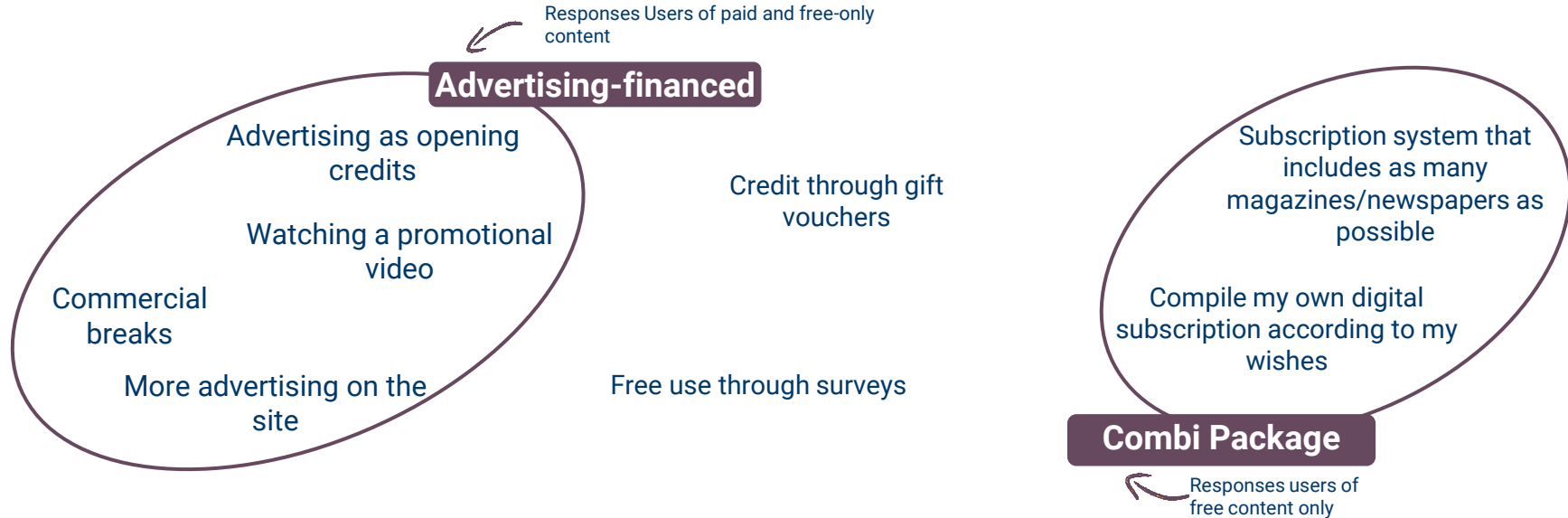


Basis: n = 2,275 (users of editorial content on the Internet (total)); n=480 (users of paid editorial content on the Internet); n=1795 (users of free editorial content on the Internet); 4-point scale, (1) highly likely to (4) absolutely unlikely; data in percent, Q 6.4: How likely is it that you would use the following options to access editorial content on the Internet in the future?

In addition, the financing of free use via advertising is proposed. Users of exclusively free content want flexible subscription systems in which they can put together the components individually.

What additional opportunities do respondents mention?

Open nomination (n=36)



Basis: n = 2,275 (users of editorial content on the Internet (total)); 4-point scale, (1) highly likely to (4) absolutely unlikely; data in percent, Q 6.4: How likely is it that you would use the following options to access editorial content on the Internet in the future?



ONLINE-
VERMARKTERKREIS
IM BVDW



Survey Profile

- Online survey
- Sample: users of websites and apps (TOP-agof sites and apps, social media, news aggregators).
- Number of cases in the study: n = 3,029 cases
- The sample is representative of internet users in Germany in terms of age, gender and education
- Timing: October 2021 (14.10.-22.10.)
- Conducting institute: dcore
- Field institutes: Gapfish, respondi

CONTACT

BVDW

Kathrin Theurig
Referentin Online-Vermarkterkreis
theurig@bvdw.org
Tel.: +49 30 609 86 31-11

The logo consists of the letters 'BVDW' in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a white rectangular border with rounded corners. The background of the entire image is a solid dark blue.

BVDW

#digitalexperten