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Exhibits, Identities, and Memories

Why Museum Shops Matter

MSAForward 2024
Baltimore, MD

Colleen Dilenschneider

Co-Founder, IMPACTS Experience



@impacts-experience
@colleendilen

On average, museums with **retail experiences** enjoy:

- **6.1%** higher guest satisfaction than museums without retail stores
- **19 minutes** longer length of stay
- **10.6%** greater likelihood of endorsement
- **5.8%** higher value for cost of admission

Wait a second....

Could it simply be that
bigger museums are more
likely to have bigger stores
and greater retail recall?





Let's be **data detectives.**

For this keynote, let's shift our focus.





Sample sizes

As of Q1 2024

n=94,775

US composite, exhibit-based organizations with onsite retail stores (cumulative)

n=15,939

Recent visitors to exhibit-based organizations with onsite retail stores (three years)

n=3,867

Members of an exhibit-based organization with an onsite retail store (three years)

n=4,524

Recent visitors to a museum store (three years)

IMPACTS Experience has been granted permission to share extant contemporary research sponsored by key partners with vested interest in understanding audiences for visitor-serving organizations.



Stanford

Caltech

the David &
Lucile Packard
FOUNDATION

IAS

INSTITUTE FOR
ADVANCED STUDY

Museum retail visitors...

Cultivate **attendance**

Secure **support**

Underscore your
museum's **uniqueness**

Make meaningful **connections**





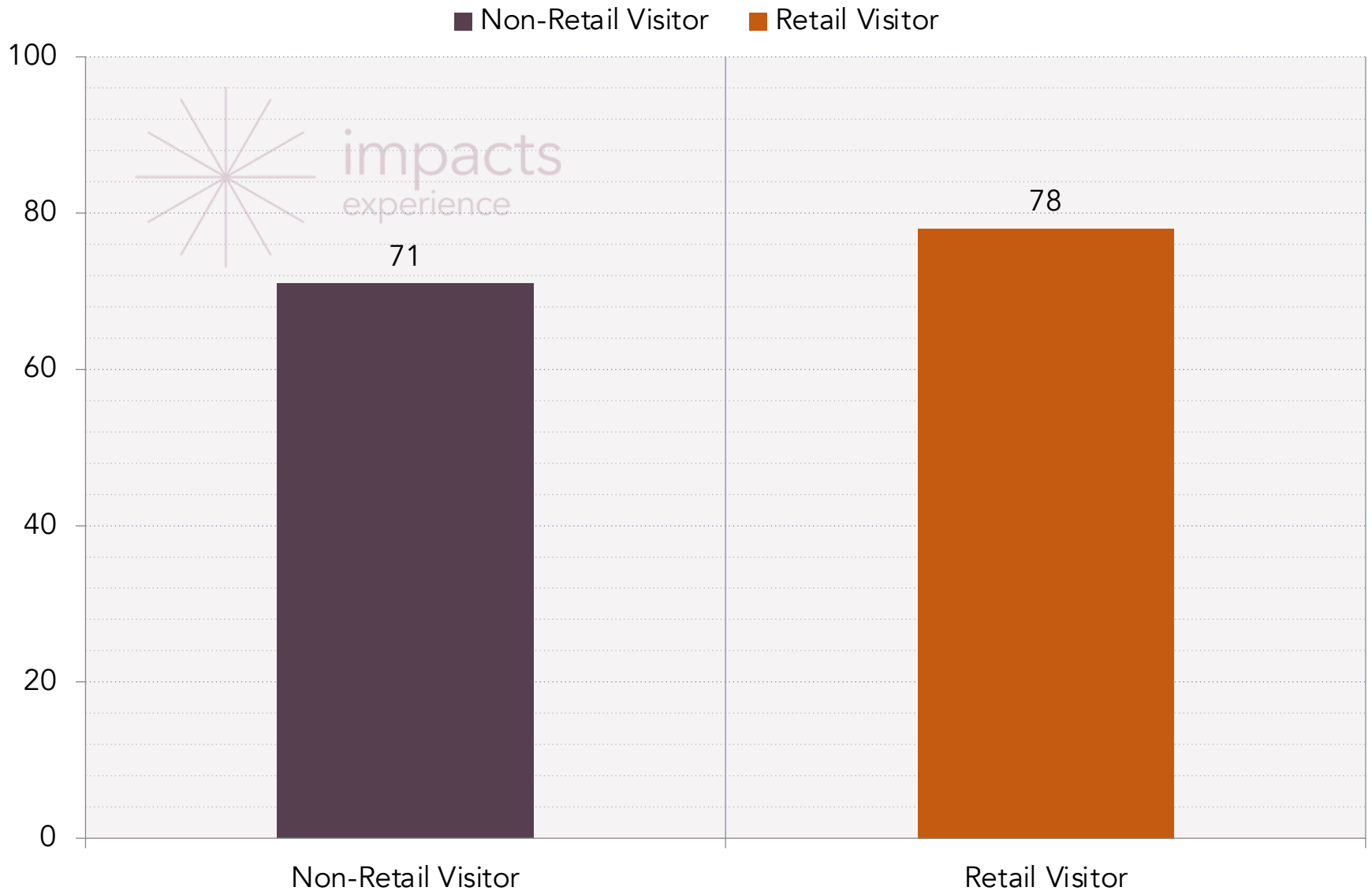
Attendance

Three metrics tend to correlate with greater attendance:

- **Overall satisfaction**
- **Intent to visit**
- **Endorsement**

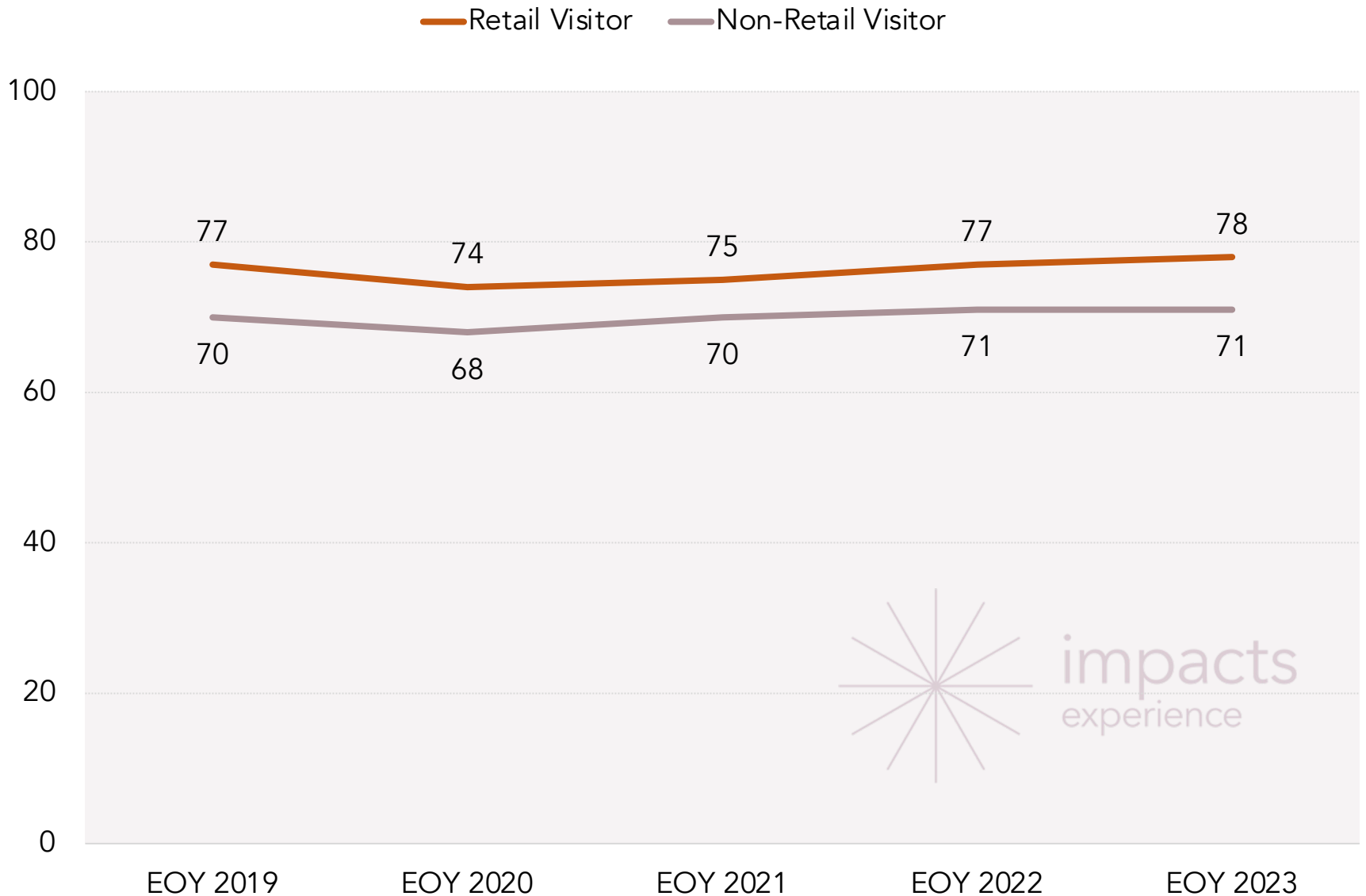
Overall satisfaction

EOY 2023 analysis, 81 museums with retail stores,
retail visitor and non-visitor comparison



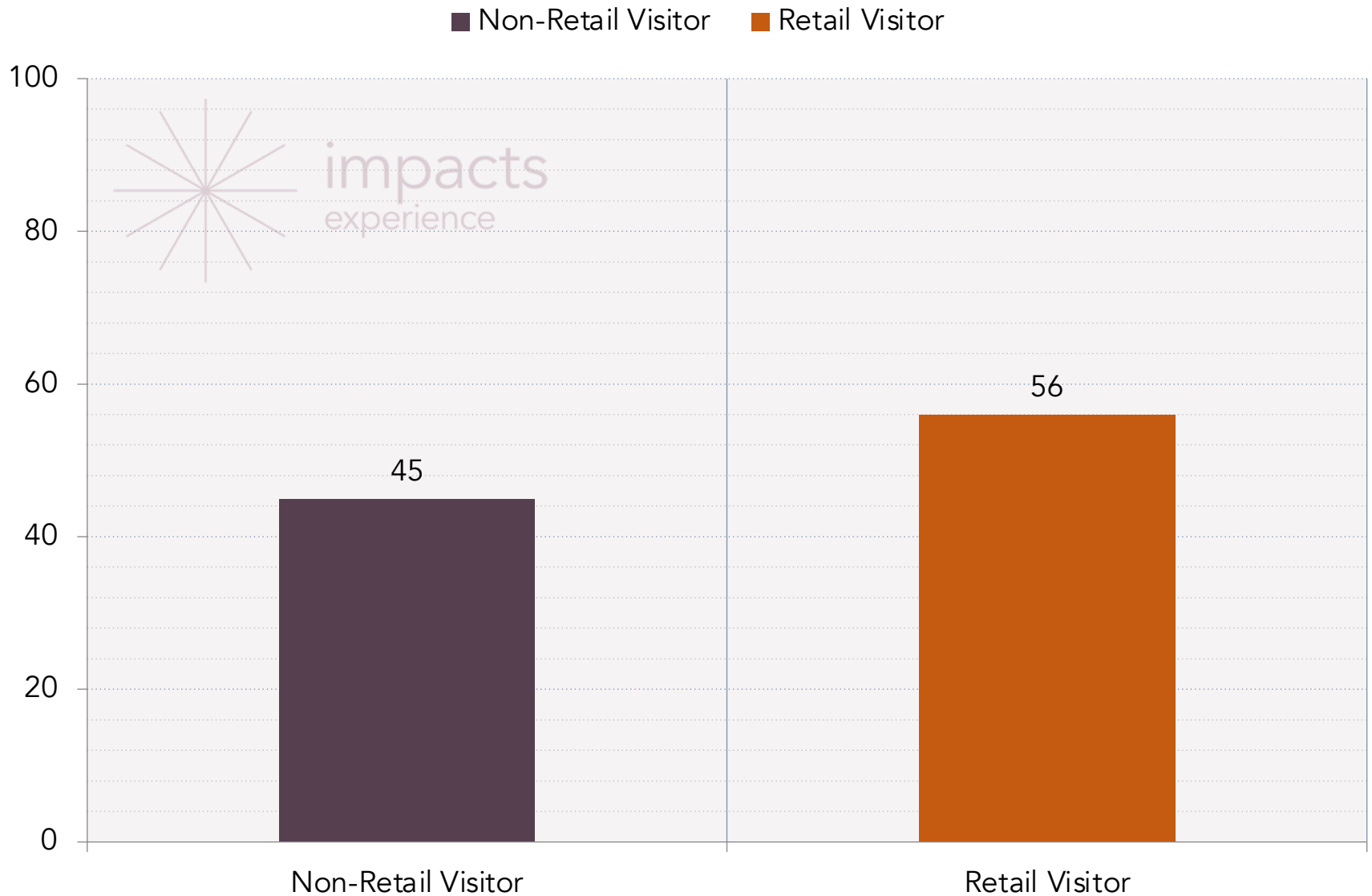
Overall satisfaction

Temporal analysis, 81 museums with retail stores,
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Intent to revisit within one year

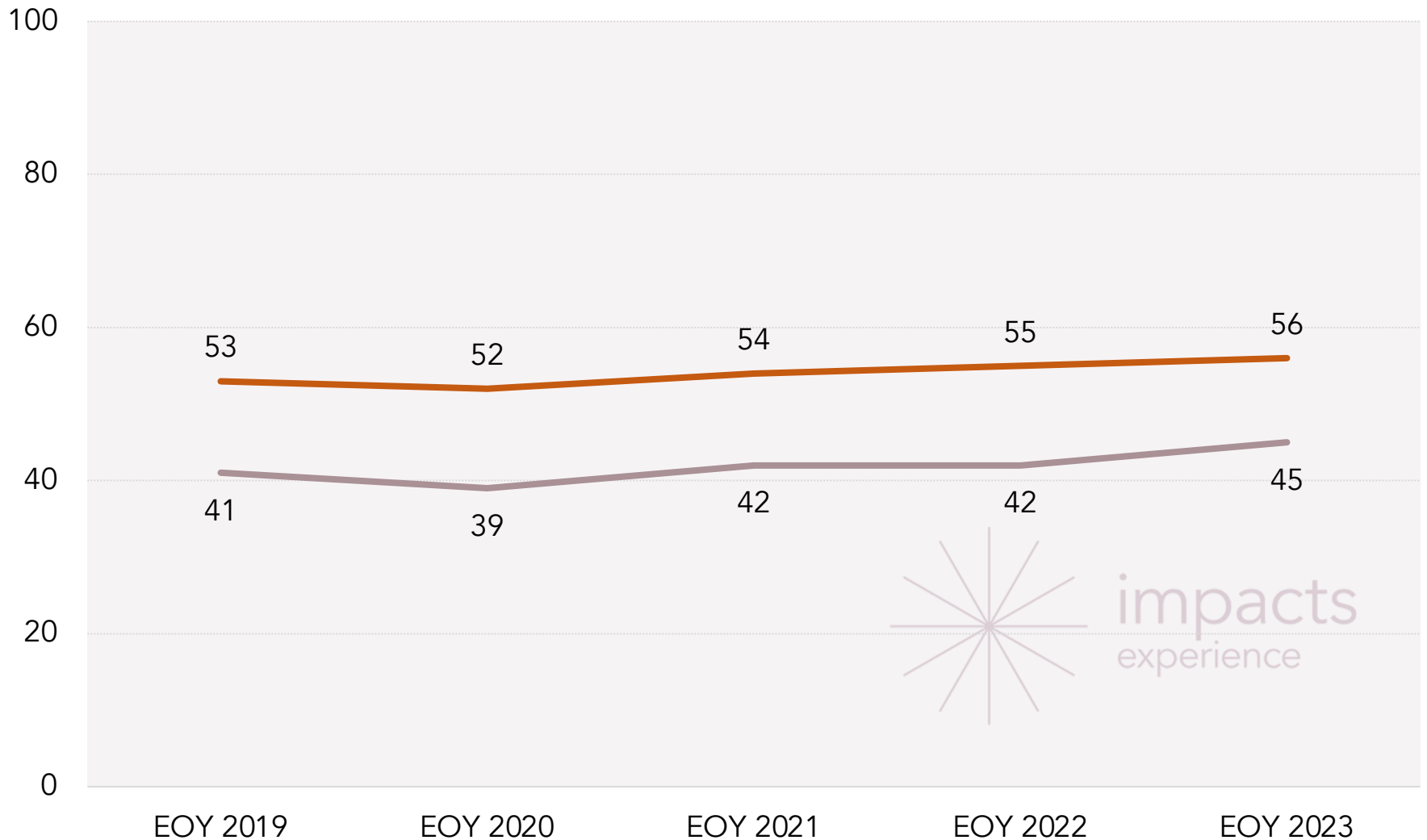
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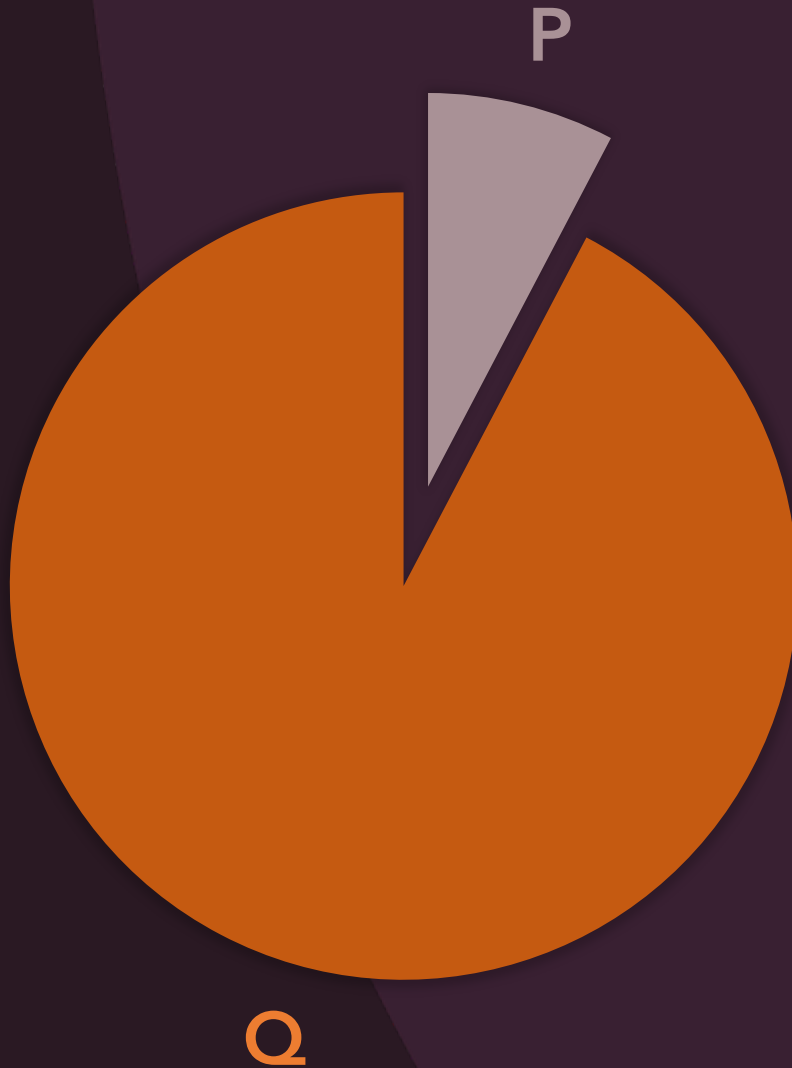
Temporal analysis, 81 museums with retail stores,
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Retail Visitor Non-Retail Visitor



Why is **endorsement** particularly important for attendance to museums?

Let's get nerdy.



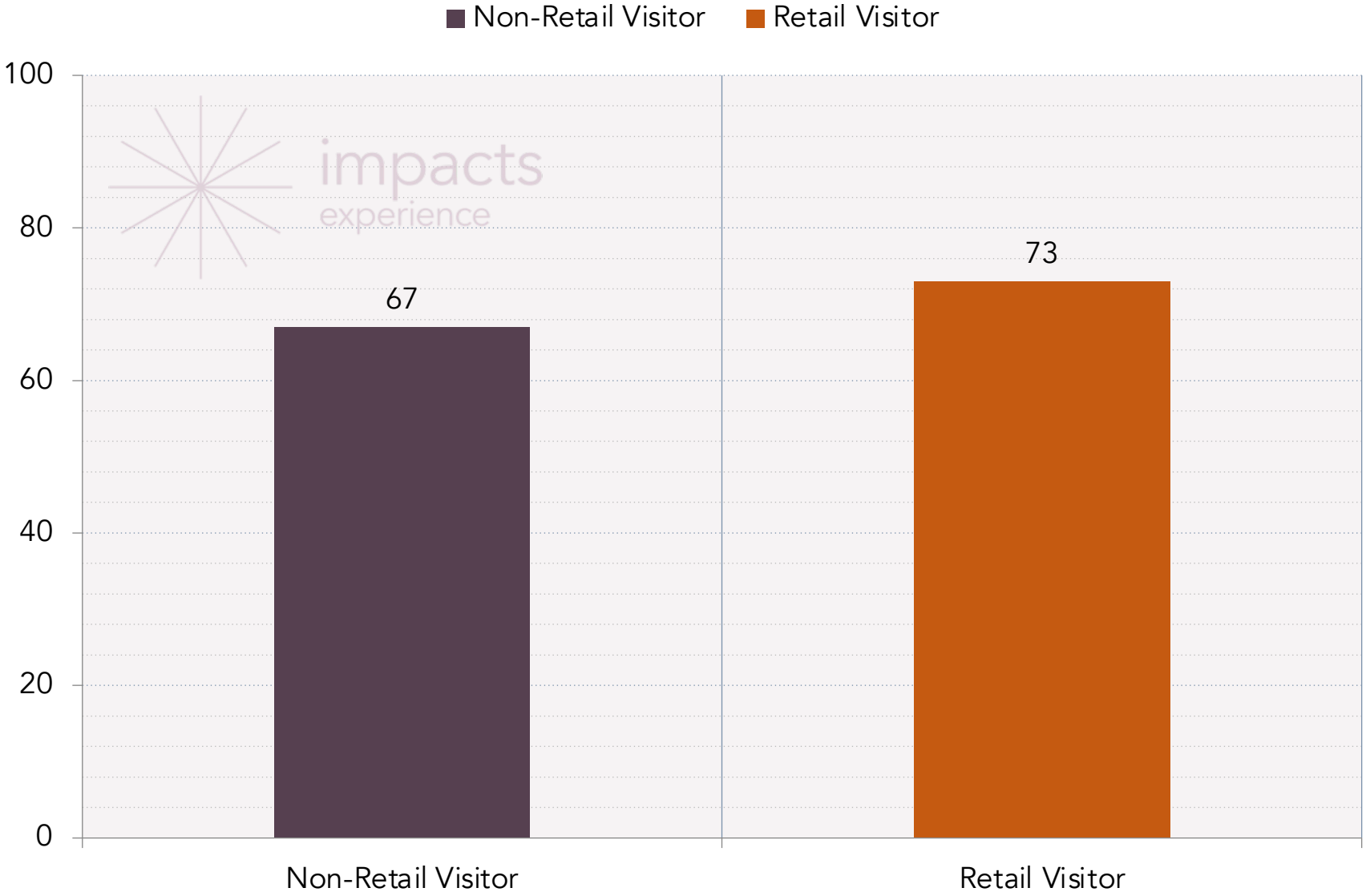
P = {
 Paid media
 Advertising
 Broadcast
 Cable
 Radio
 Online
 Cinema
 } *What you say about yourself*

Q = {
 Trusted sources
 Peer reviews
 Word of mouth
 Interpersonal
 Social media
 Earned media
 } *What others say about you*

Q (the coefficient of imitation) has a value **12.85x** greater than that of **P** (the coefficient of innovation).

Likelihood to endorse/recommend visit (to the organization)

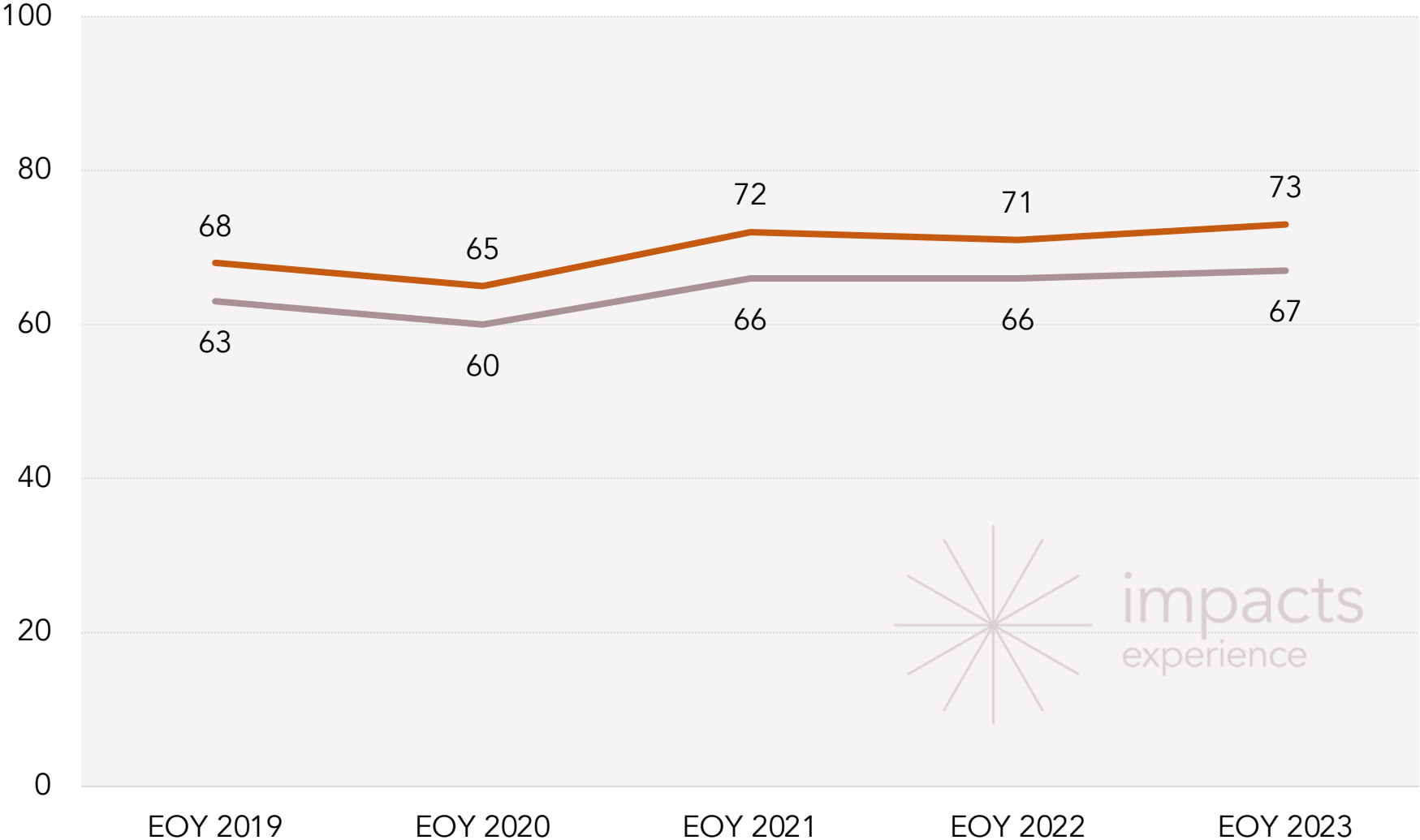
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Likelihood to endorse/recommend visit (to the organization)

Temporal analysis, 81 museums with retail stores
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Retail Visitor Non-Retail Visitor



Attendance

Museum retail guests are more satisfied with their visits. They are more likely to come back again *and* to tell others to visit.



Support

Did you know...

On average, a member has 4x greater annual value than a general admission visitor.

What do you think is the top reason why **lapsed members** have not renewed their memberships?

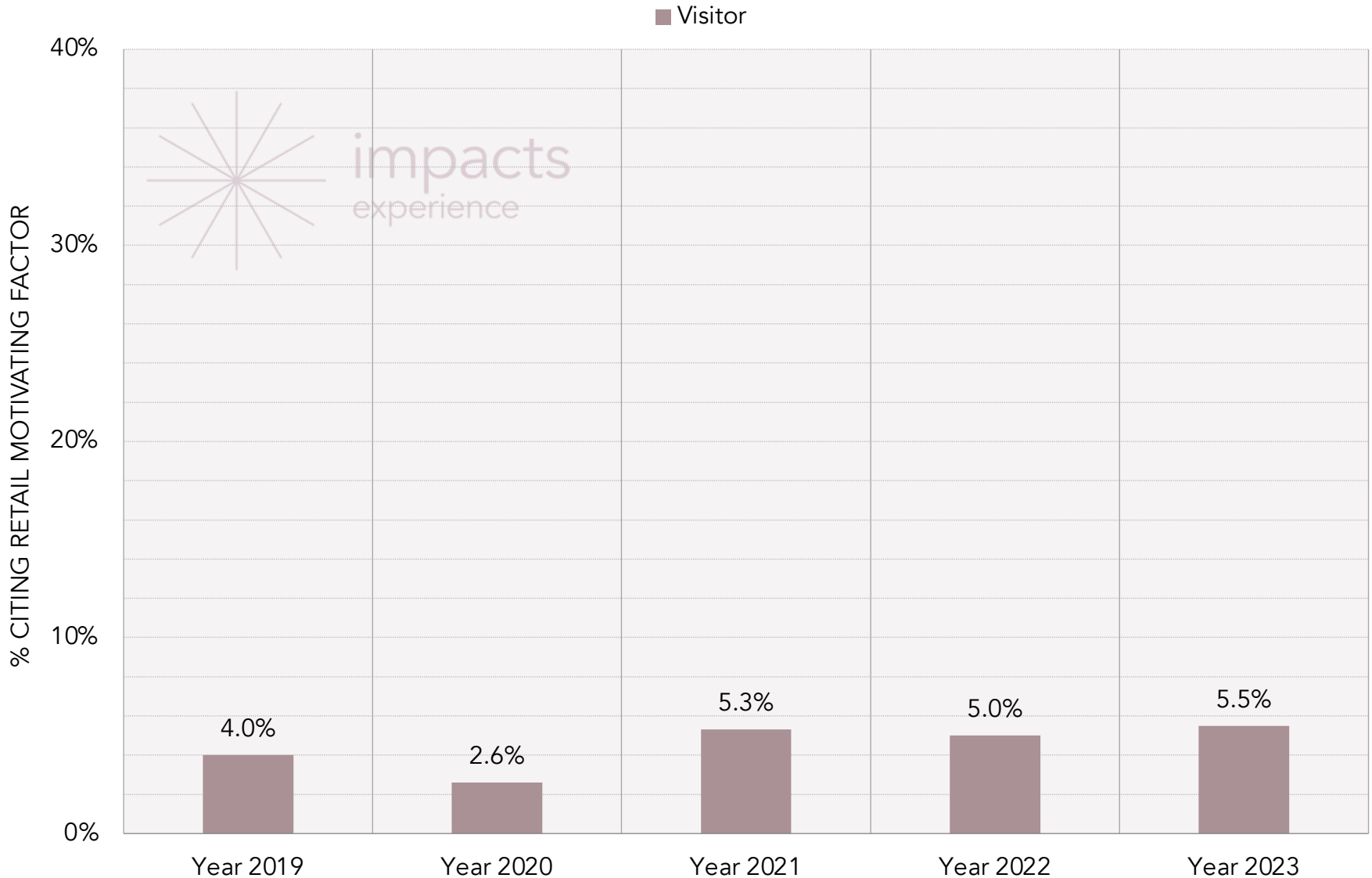
- A) Change in giving priorities or interests
- B) Dissatisfied with membership
- C) Intend to renew when they next visit
- D) Change in financial situation

What do you think is the top reason why **lapsed members** have not renewed their memberships?

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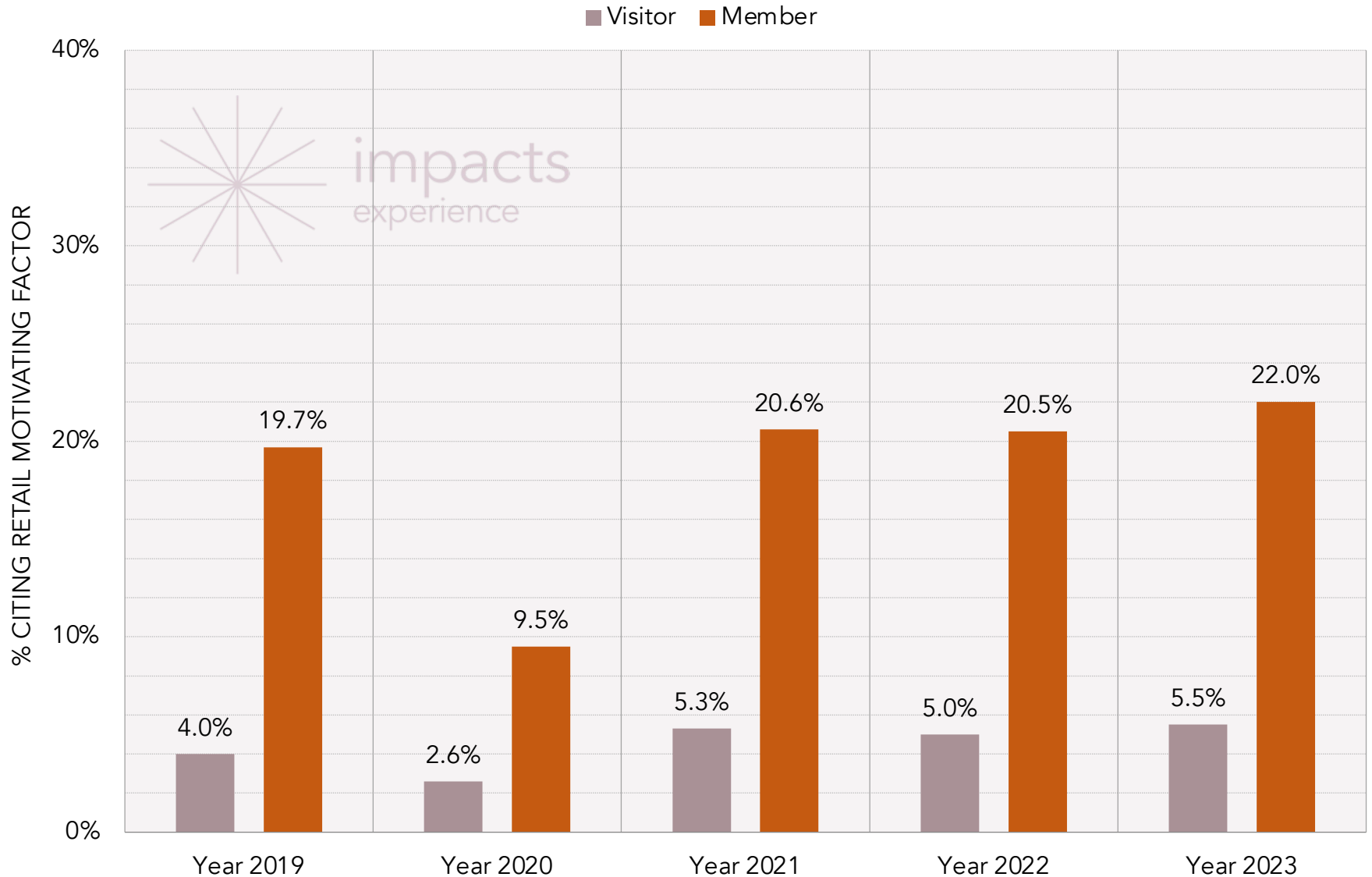
Museum retail motivates member visitation

Respondents citing retail-related factors motivating most recent visit
16 US visitor-serving cultural organizations



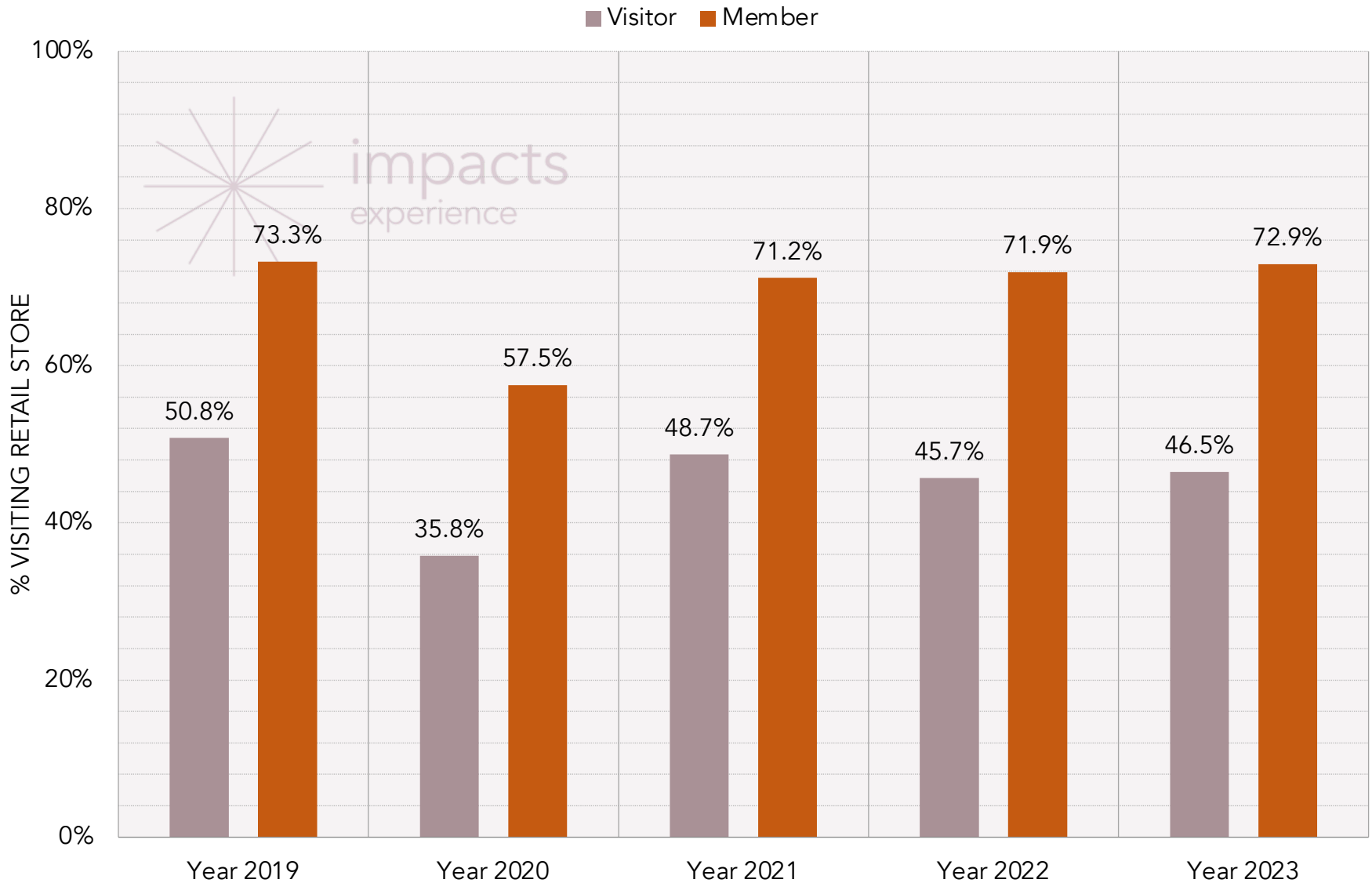
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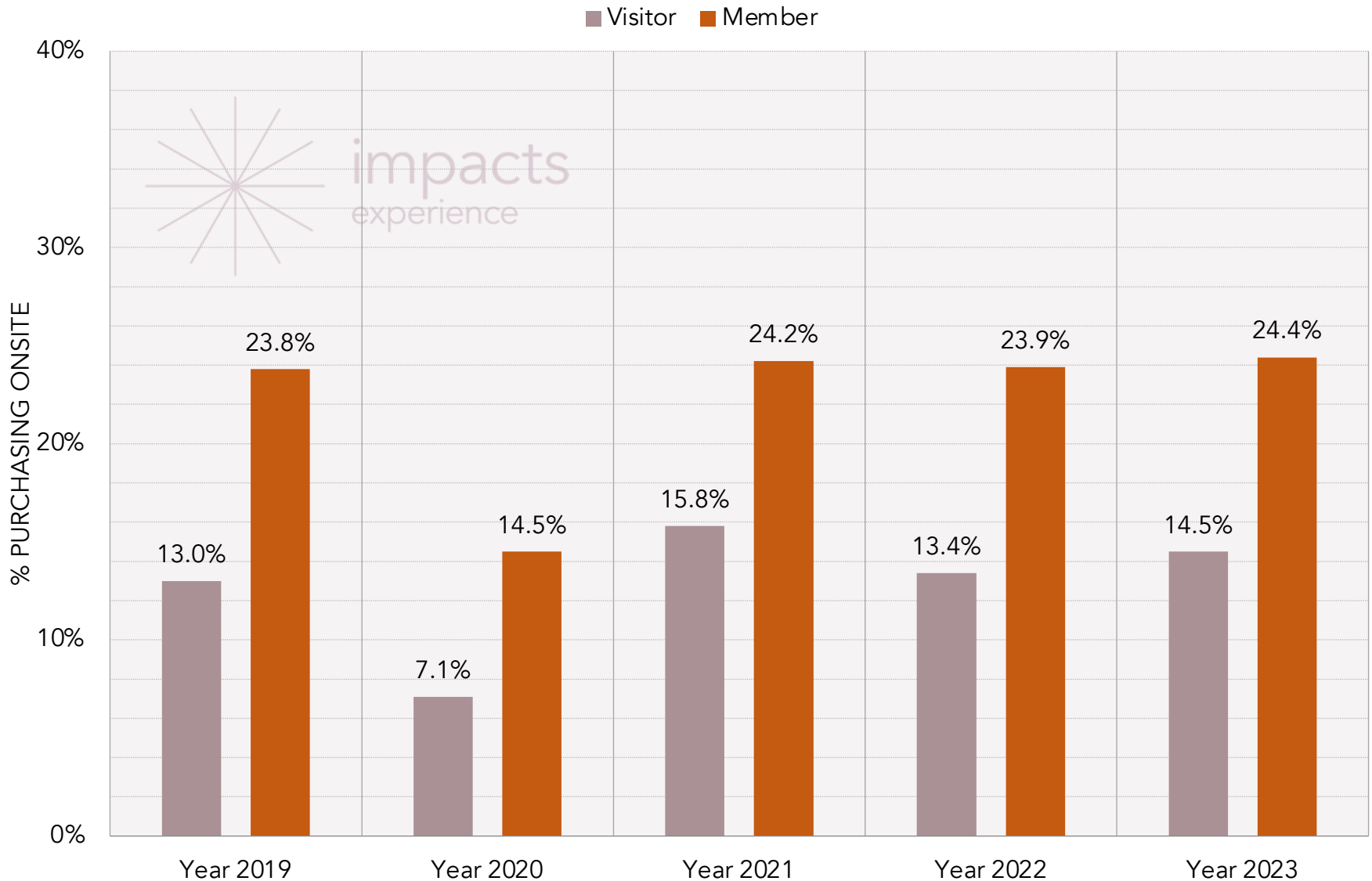
Museum members visit the museum store

Most recent visit onsite usage, 16 US visitor-serving cultural organizations



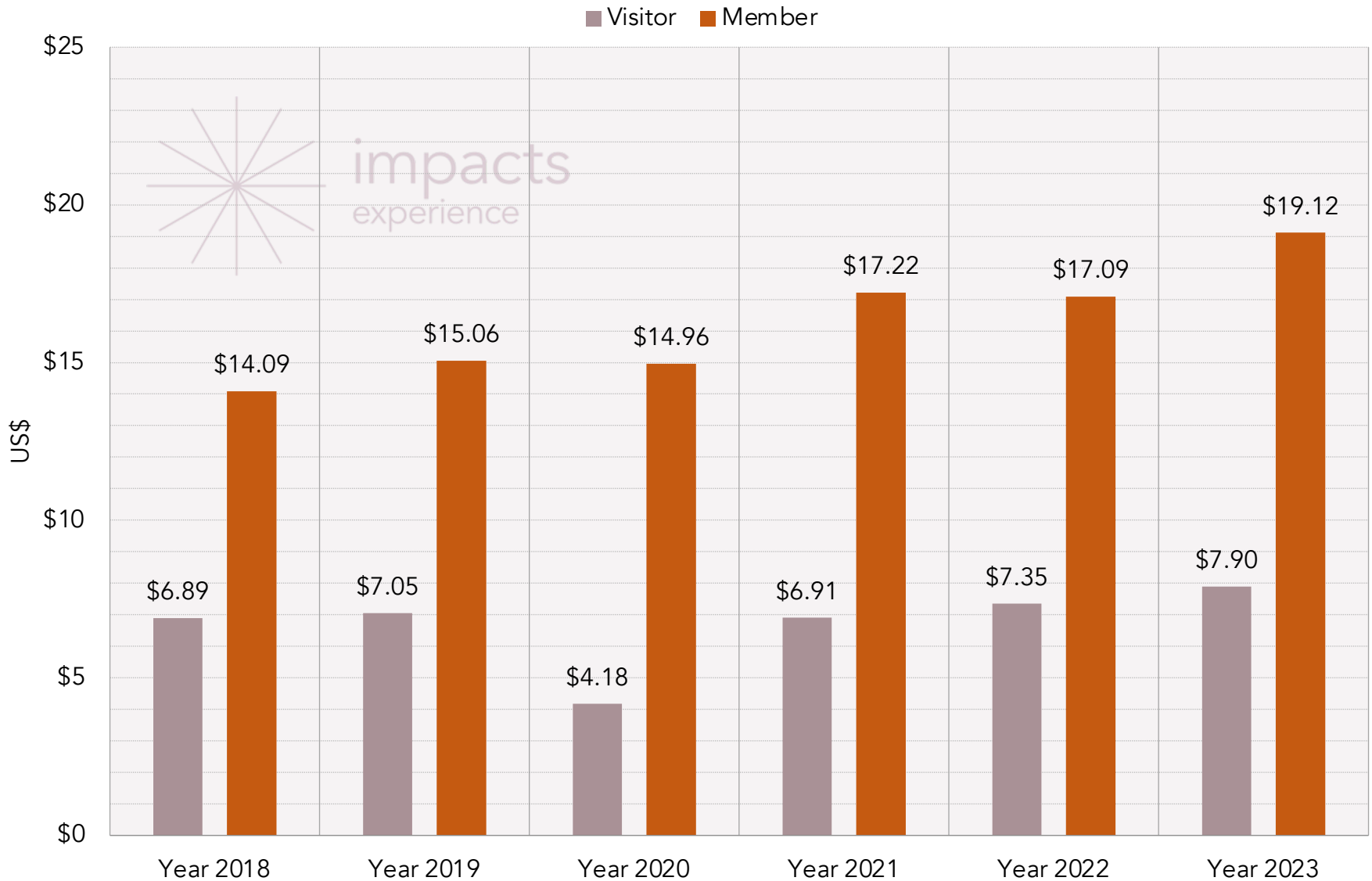
Museum members are more likely to make retail purchases

Most recent visit retail purchase, 16 US visitor-serving cultural organizations



Members spend more per transaction at museum stores

Per transaction onsite spending, 16 US visitor-serving cultural organizations



Support

Members are more likely to visit the museum because of retail, go into the store, make retail purchases, and spend more per transaction.



Uniqueness

Let's look at three **key questions**:

1) **Motivational lens**

What was the primary purpose of your visit to the retail shop?

2) **Physical experience lens**

What contributes most to onsite retail satisfaction?

3) **Emotional lens**

What was the **best thing** about the museum retail experience?



What was the **primary purpose** of your visit to the retail shop?

Motivational lens

“What was the primary purpose of your visit to the [museum retail experience]?”

Lexical analysis by descending frequency of mention, 81 cultural organizations with retail stores, Q1 2024

RANK	DESCRIPTION	INDEX
1	Browse	216.0
2	Souvenir/keepsake	183.4
3	Personal purchase (for self)	171.6
4	Purchase gift for adult	147.9
5	Purchase gift for family member	130.2



Keepsake: Anything kept, or given to be kept, as a token of friendship or affection; **remembrance.**



What **contributes most** to
onsite retail satisfaction?

Physical experience lens

Weighted factors that compromise retail satisfaction

81 cultural organizations with retail stores, EOY 2023

RANK	DESCRIPTION	WEIGHTED VALUE
1	Design elements/aesthetic of the physical space ("atmosphere")	30.78%
2	Quality/uniqueness of merchandise	19.67%
3	Friendly/welcoming staff	9.87%
4	Clean/organized ("tidy")	6.32%
5	Sufficient staff ("no wait to pay" and "easy to find help")	6.01%



A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a white button-down shirt, is leaning over a museum display case. She is looking down at the items inside the case with a focused expression. The background is a museum gallery with wooden paneling and other display cases.

What was **the best thing**
about the museum
retail experience?

Emotional lens

“What are the best things about the [museum retail experience]?”

Lexical analysis by descending frequency of mention
81 cultural organizations with retail stores, Q1 2024

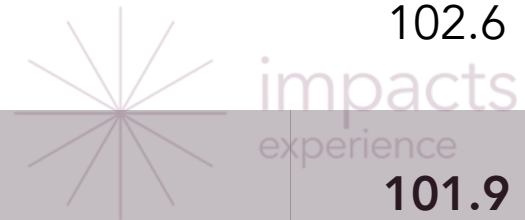
RANK	DESCRIPTION	INDEX
1	Unique merchandise (only available at location)	229.8
2	Supporting the organization	125.6
3	Finding gifts for friends/family (adult)	118.5
4	Finding gifts for child	102.6
5	Friendly/helpful staff	101.9



“What are the best things about the [museum retail experience]?”

Lexical analysis by descending frequency of mention
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Connection

WATERS OF THE WORLD

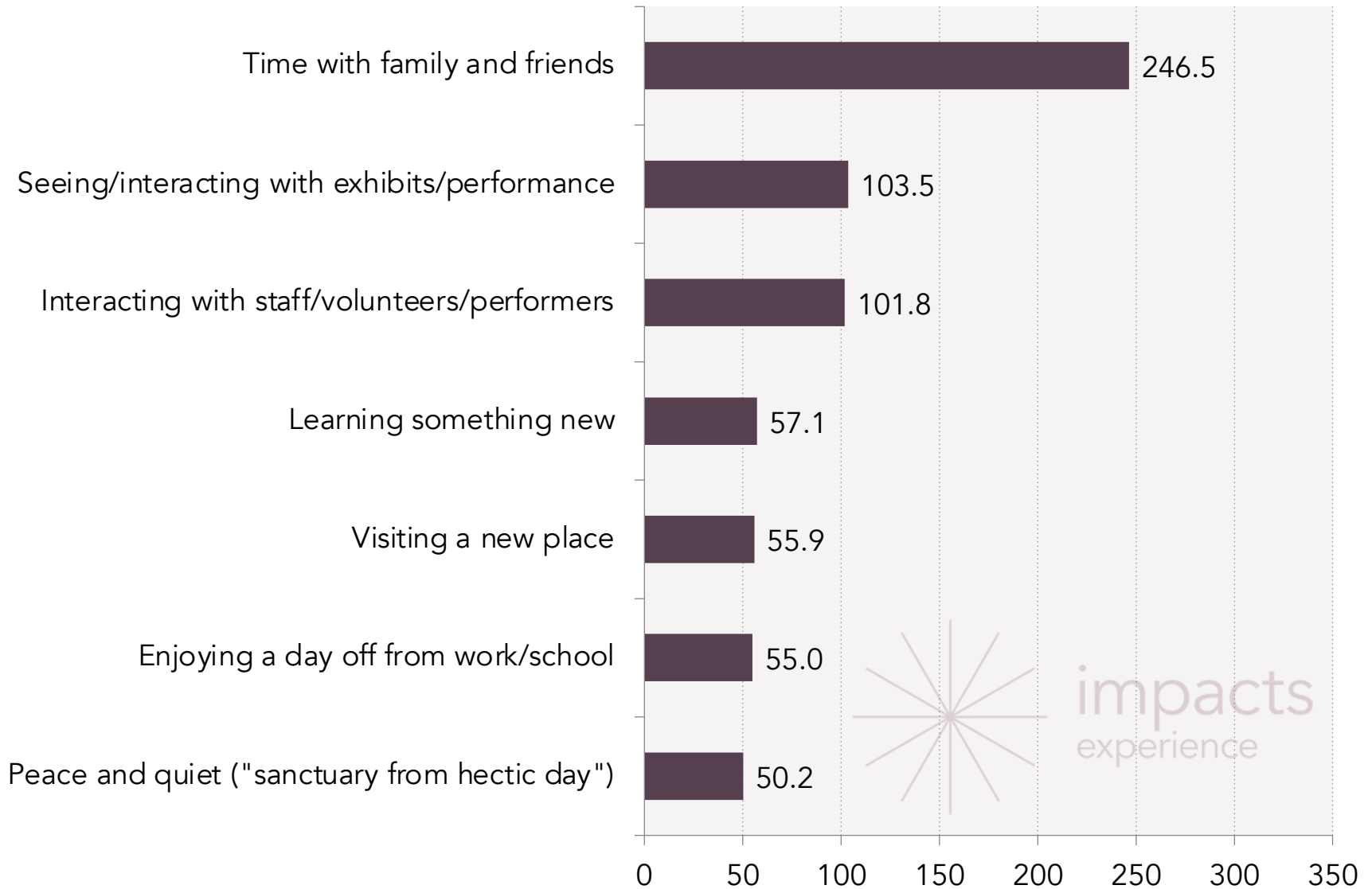




LET'S SHEDD PLASTIC

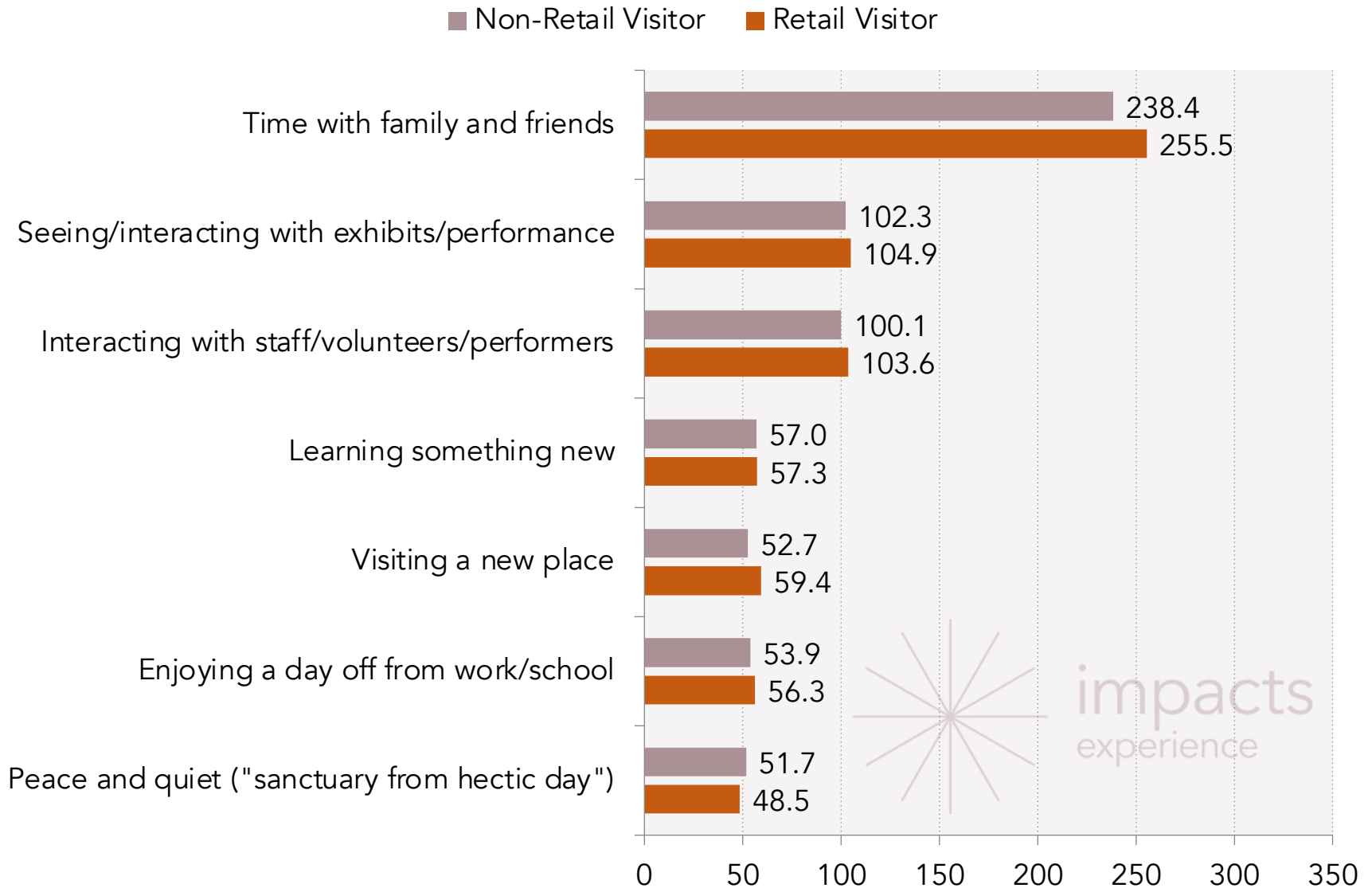
What is the best thing about a visit?

With what, EOY 2023, 81 visitor-serving organizations with retail stores



What is the best thing about a visit?

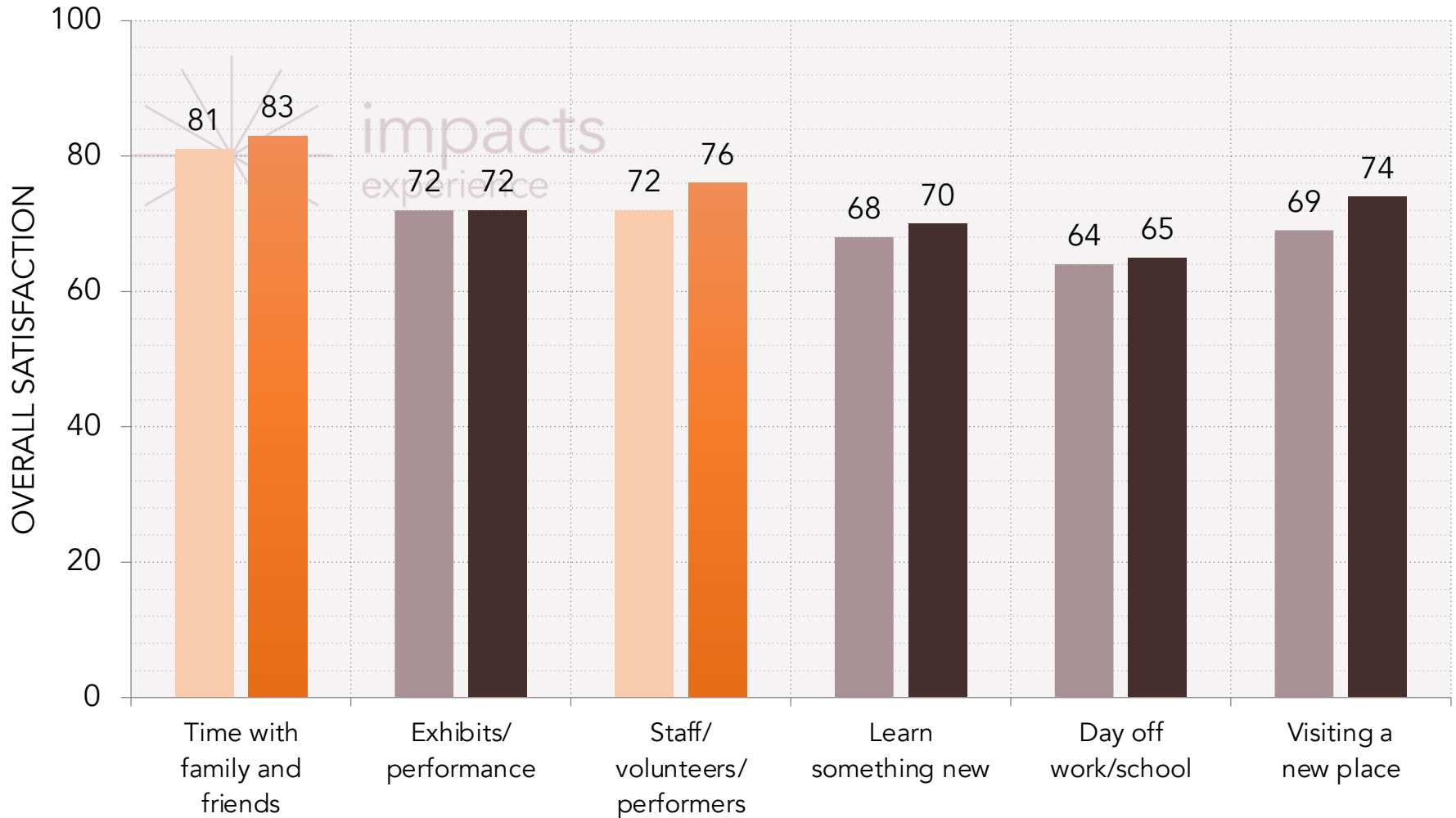
With what, EOY 2023, 81 visitor-serving organizations with retail stores



Overall satisfaction by best visit attribute

EOY 2023

■ Non-Retail Visitor ■ Retail Visitor

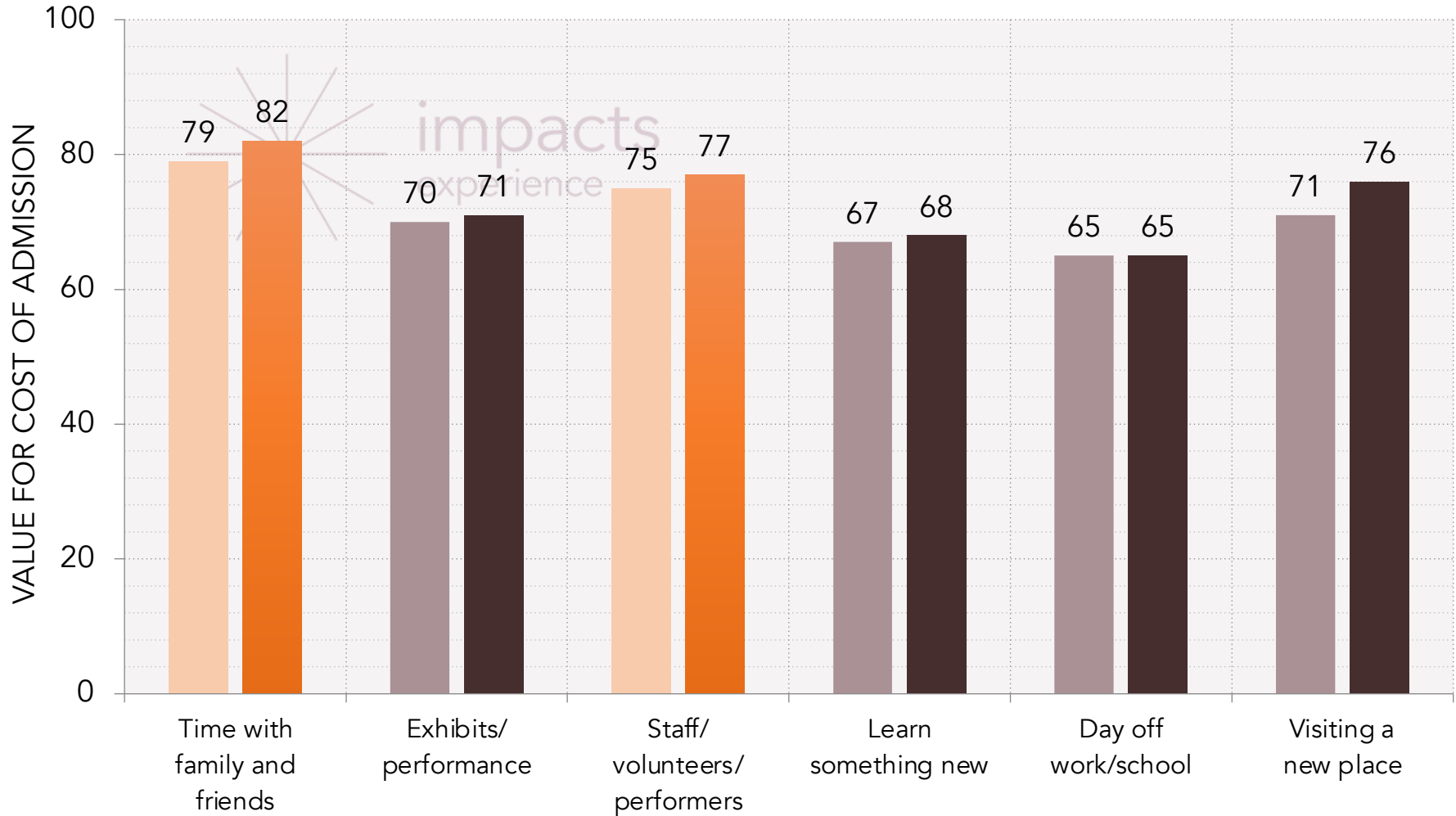


“THE BEST THING ABOUT A VISIT TO A CULTURAL ORGANIZATION”

Value for cost by best visit attribute

EOY 2023

■ Non-Retail Visitor ■ Retail Visitor

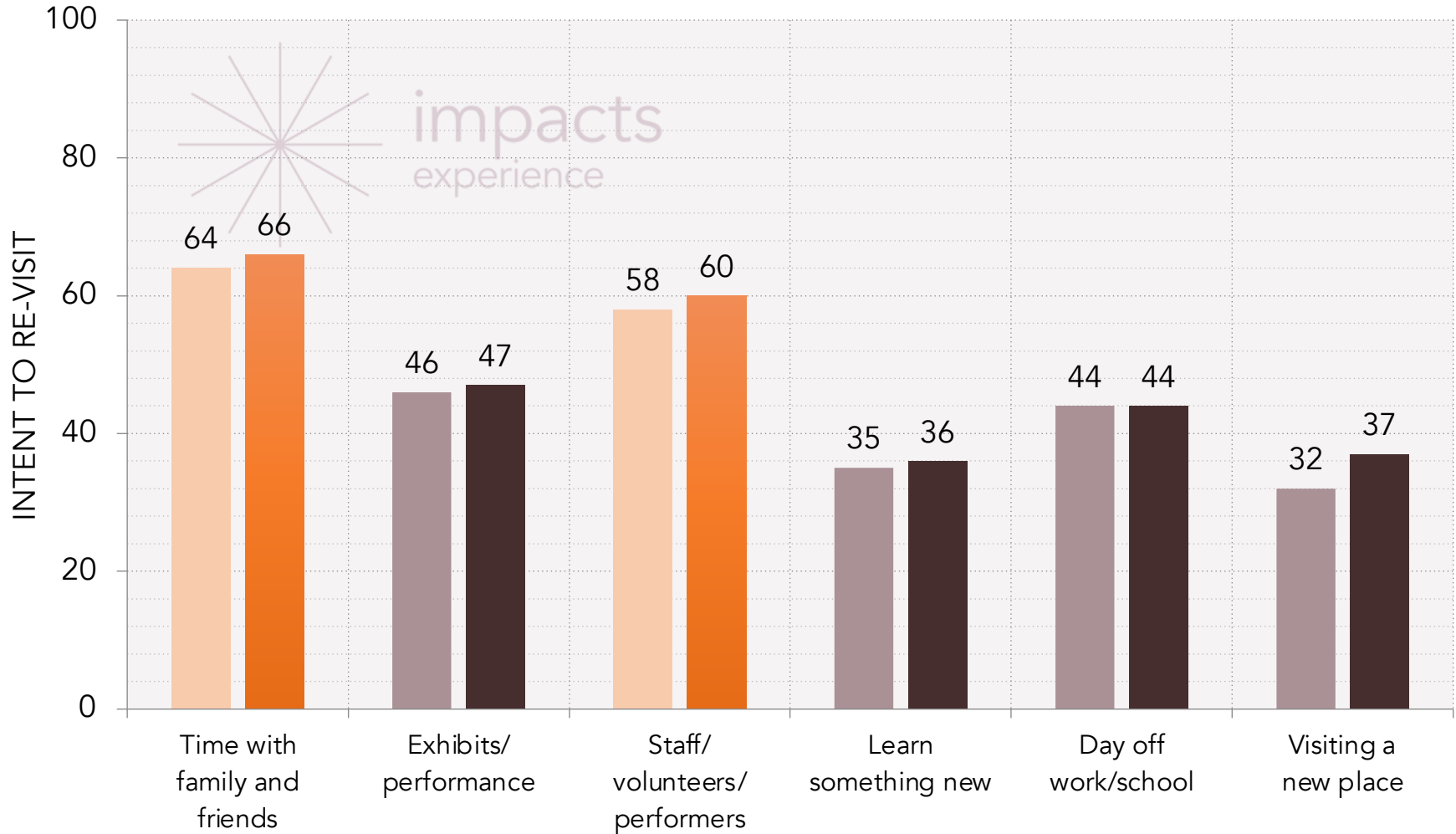


“THE BEST THING ABOUT A VISIT TO A CULTURAL ORGANIZATION”

Intent to revisit within one year by best visit attribute

EOY 2023

■ Non-Retail Visitors ■ Retail Visitors



“THE BEST THING ABOUT A VISIT TO A CULTURAL ORGANIZATION”

Connection

Retail builds a meaningful bridge between our physical and emotional experiences.

Museum retail visitors...

Cultivate **attendance**


Secure **support**

Underscore your
museum's **uniqueness**

Make meaningful **connections**



Some may say retail experiences are primarily about **"things."**



Retail experiences
are about **people.**



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Connect with us!

Thank you!

Contact

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