



# Business Travelers: A Multi-Country Survey Report

**VARSHA ARORA**

*Senior Research Analyst*  
*research@skift.com*



# REPORT OVERVIEW

---

In this report we aim to explore business travelers' attitudes towards new ways of working and traveling for business in the evolving environment influenced by the pandemic.

We conducted a survey amongst business travelers from four major business hubs – U.S., UK, Australia, and India to get a global perspective on the travel behavior of corporate travelers.

This data-intensive report presents and analyses the finding from this survey, delving into all major aspects of a business trip – purpose, frequency, duration, travel destination, booking methods, and booking behavior with a key focus on flights and accommodation, and including in-destination travel behavior.

The report provides country-specific perspectives on broader themes like changes in business travel policies, work arrangement, and business travel spending as a result of Covid. It also focuses on how business travelers perceive traveling for business and the impact it has on their personal spending on leisure trips.

Overall, we found that business trips taken in the past six months have increased from before Covid and the majority of travelers are traveling for business development purposes. However, business travel spending is unlikely to reach 2019 levels in the near future as stringent corporate travel policies are being put in place.

Remote work continues to take over work from office. Remote work arrangements are boosting both business and leisure travel and also the use of coworking spaces.

The gap between intent and action for sustainable business travel is narrowing as companies are interested in increasing sustainable business travel, even if it costs more.

Flights were the most used mode of transportation by business travelers and flight timings and duration are key selection criteria. Most business travelers stay in premium hotels and refrain from booking vacation rentals because of their inferior customer service.

# DISCLAIMER

---

This report is produced for Skift Research subscribers, and is **for subscribers' use only**. Subscribers acknowledge that the contents of Skift Research Reports are copyrighted by Skift and that neither Subscribers nor their employers where applicable hereby obtain rights whatsoever in the same. Subscribers shall not directly or indirectly reproduce, download or otherwise distribute (in print, electronic, or intranet format) this report, in its entirety or in part, without prior written permission from Skift.

While the author has made every attempt to ensure that the data and analysis presented in this report is reliable and accurate, Skift Research cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions. Please get in touch if you notice any errors or omissions.

# TABLE OF CONTENT

---

0 1

Business Travel Highlights

---

0 2

Business Travel Perception and Policy

---

0 3

Work Arrangements and their Impact

---

0 4

Business Travel and Sustainability

---

0 5

Booking Trends: Flights

---

0 6

Booking Trends: Accommodation

---

0 7

In-Destination Travel Behaviour

6.

## Booking Trends: Accommodation

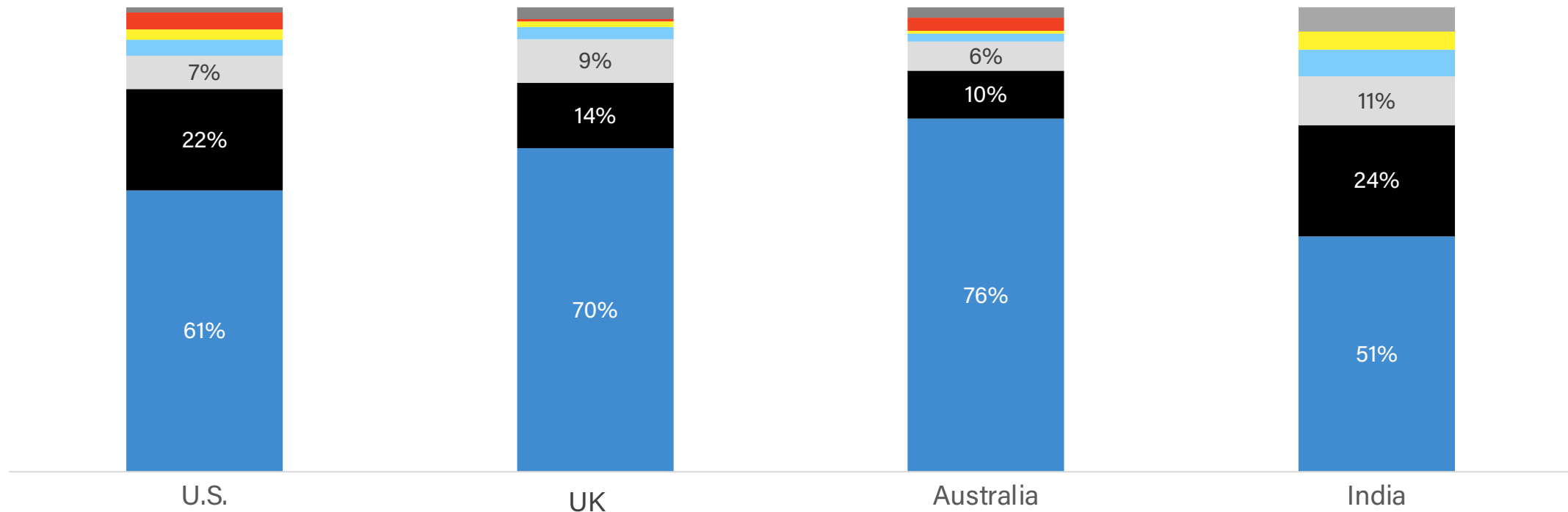


# Most Business Travelers Stay in Hotels

More than half of respondents from the U.S., UK, Australia and India said that they stayed in hotels during their last two business trips. The second most used accommodation type was an all-inclusive resort hotel across all four countries.

## Accommodation used by travelers for their last two business trips

■ A hotel ■ An all-inclusive resort hotel ■ A bed-and-breakfast inn ■ A hostel ■ Owned timeshare ■ A vacation rental (such as Airbnb) ■ Other

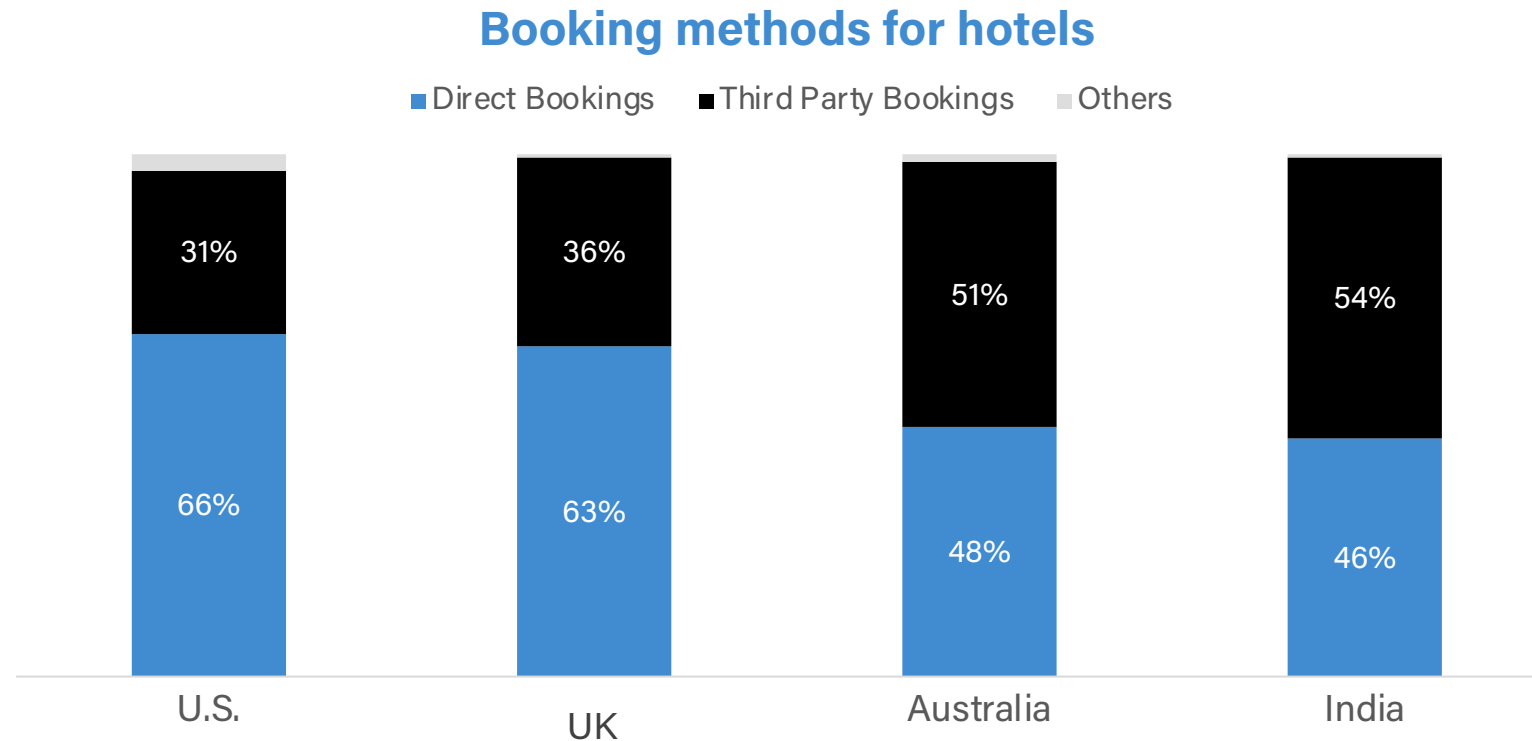


n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445

Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Direct Hotel Bookings Skew Towards the West

- More than half of respondents in the U.S. and UK used direct channels to make hotel bookings for their business trips.
- In Australia, 48% of respondents used direct channels and in India, 46% of respondents used direct channels for hotel bookings.
- Following the same pattern as for flight bookings, the use of channels is relatively more prevalent in the West.

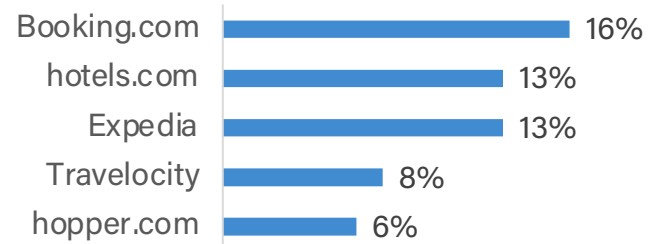


n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445  
Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

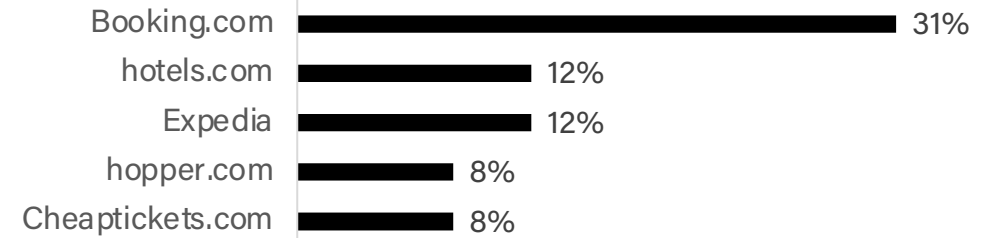
# Booking.com: Top Market Player Across Countries

- Booking.com outranked its main competitor Expedia in all countries, although Expedia has a strong sister brand in hotels.com.
- MakeMyTrip is a strong regional player and tops the chart in India.
- Hopper.com, targeting Millennials and Gen Z travelers through an app-only experience is a surprisingly strong performer for business travel bookings.

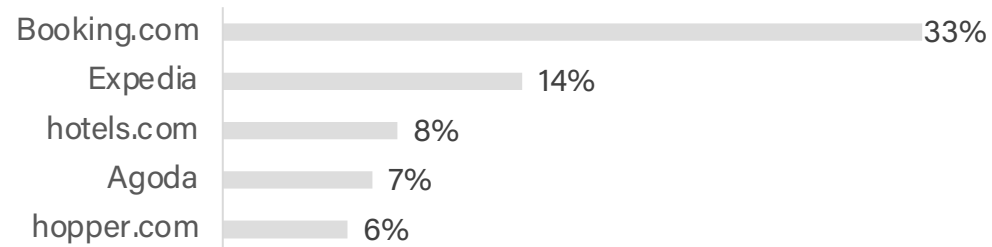
### Top third party websites used for hotel bookings in the U.S.



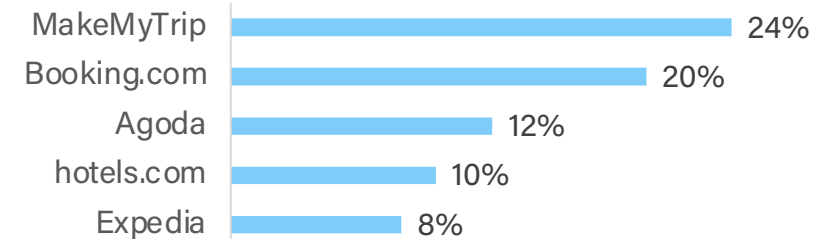
### Top third party websites used for hotel bookings in UK



### Top third party websites used for hotel bookings in Australia



### Top third party websites used for hotel bookings in India



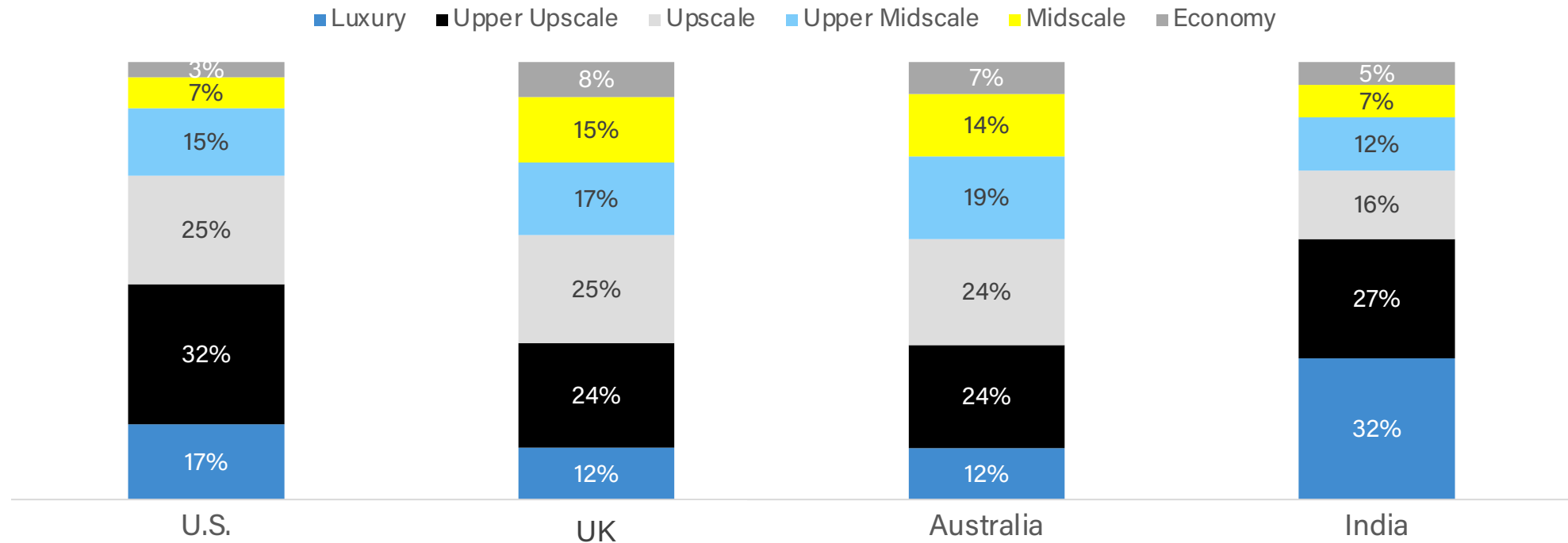
n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445  
Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023



# Business Travelers Stay in Premium Hotels

- At an aggregate level, more than half of the respondents stayed in upscale, upper upscale and luxury hotels during their last two business trips.
- In the U.S. and Australia, upper upscale hotels had the highest share, whereas in the UK, the biggest share of respondents stayed in upscale hotels.
- India is the only market where the highest share of respondents stayed in luxury hotels on their business trips.

Hotels used by travelers for their last two business trips by chain scale

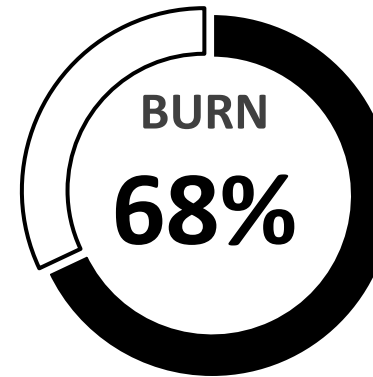
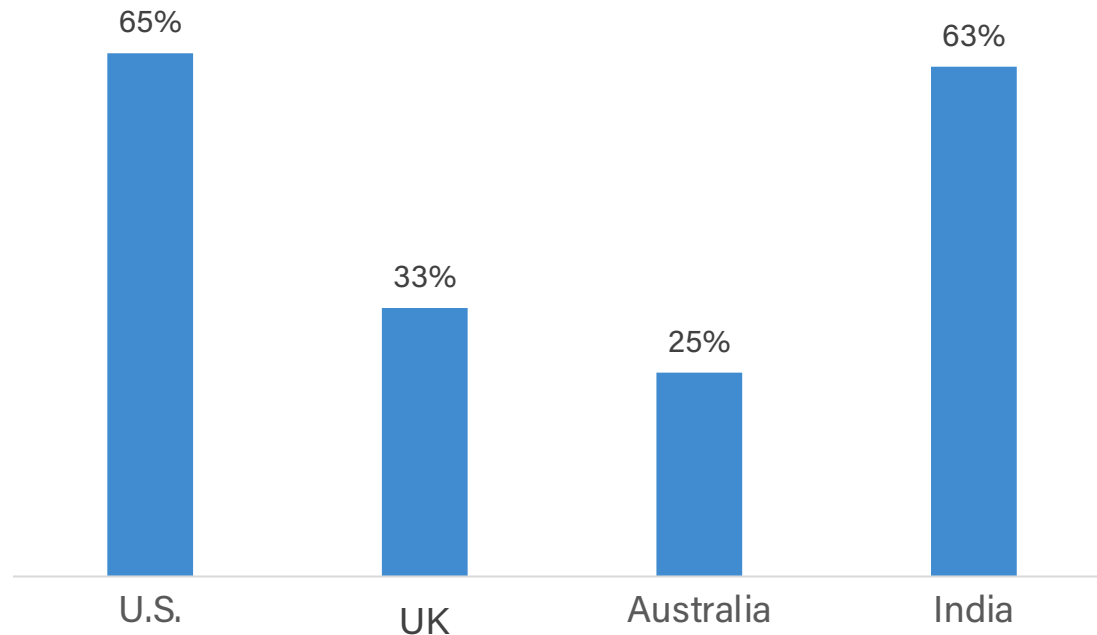


n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445  
 Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Loyalty Points Used Interchangeably

- In the U.S. and India, more than 60% of the respondents were a loyalty member of the hotel they stayed in. However, in the UK, only 33% and in Australia, only 25% were a loyalty member.
- On average, the majority of respondents saved their loyalty points earned on hotel stays for business purposes and use it when booking hotels for personal leisure purposes. Also, 68% of respondents use their already accumulated loyalty points for hotel stays during their business trips.

Percentage of respondents who were a loyalty member of the hotel they stayed in



of respondents, on average, use their (already accumulated) loyalty points for hotel stays during their business trips



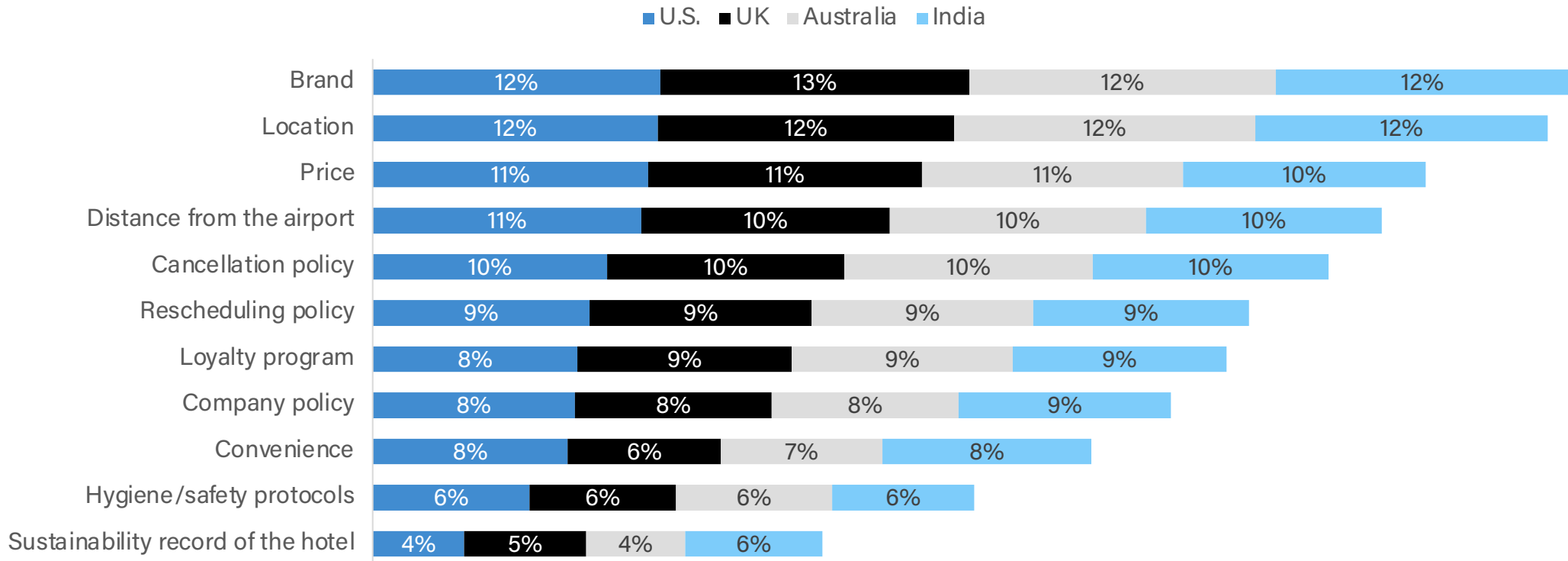
of respondents, on average, save their loyalty points earned on hotel stays for business purposes and use it when booking hotels for personal leisure purposes

n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445  
Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Brand: Prime Factor for Hotel Selection

Given that most business travelers stay in premium hotels, it is less surprising that respondents selected brand as the top factor to guide their hotel selection, followed by location and price.

## Main factors that guide hotel selection for business travelers

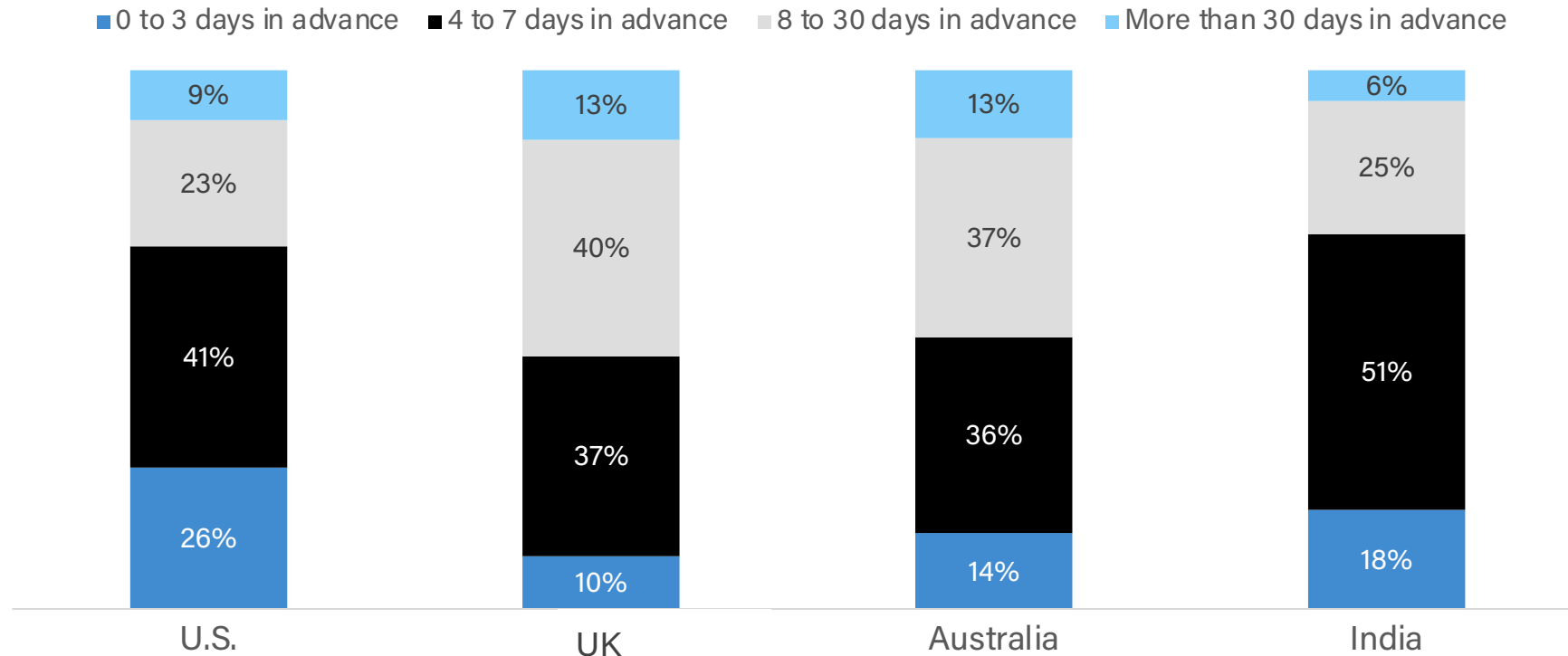


n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445  
Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Similar Booking Windows for Flights and Hotels

Following the same trend as flight booking windows, the U.S. and India are relatively late booking markets compared to the UK and Australia. Most respondents in the U.S. and India book their hotel stays less than 7 days in advance while a larger share of respondents in the UK and Australia book in advance.

## Booking window for hotel bookings

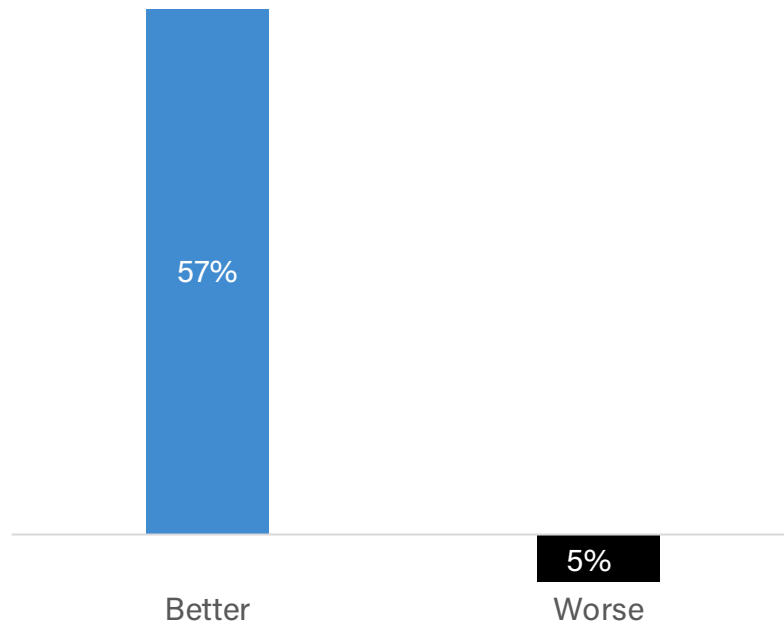


n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445  
Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

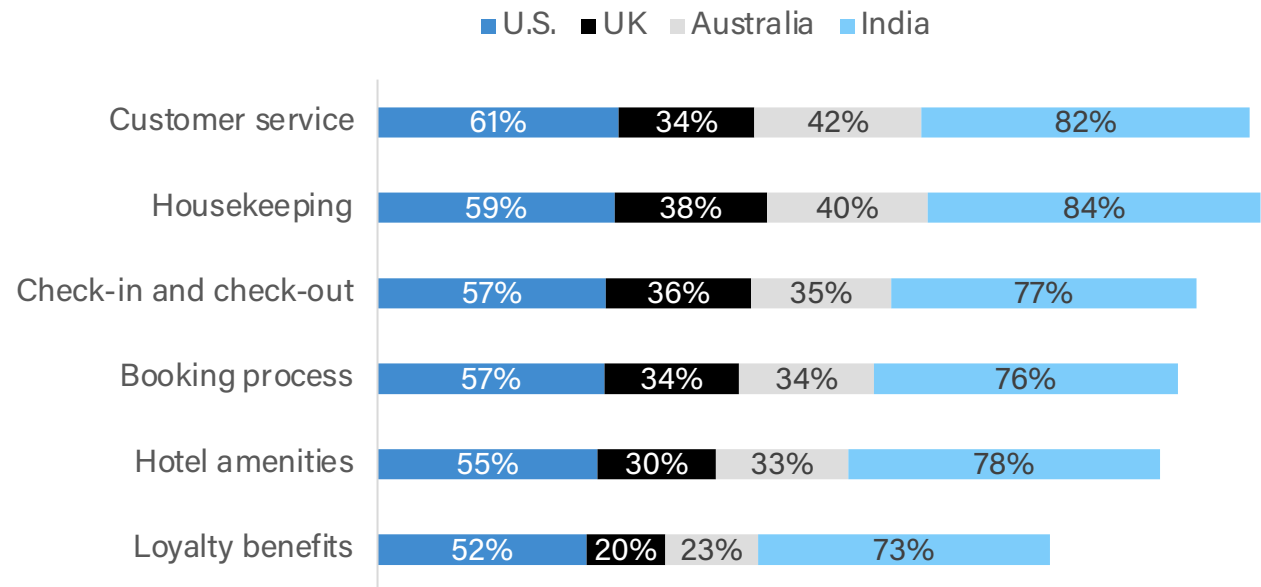
# Overall Hotel Experience Improved Post Covid

- On average, 57% of respondents across the U.S., UK, Australia and India said that their overall hotel experience improved post-Covid, for 5% of them it got worse and for the remaining it was similar to pre-Covid.
- A majority of respondents from the UK and India believed that housekeeping has improved the most as a result of Covid while respondents from the U.S. and Australia reported that customer service underwent the largest improvement post-Covid.

Overall Flight Experience compared to pre-Covid



Percentage of respondents that believed hotel experience improved compared to pre-COVID-19



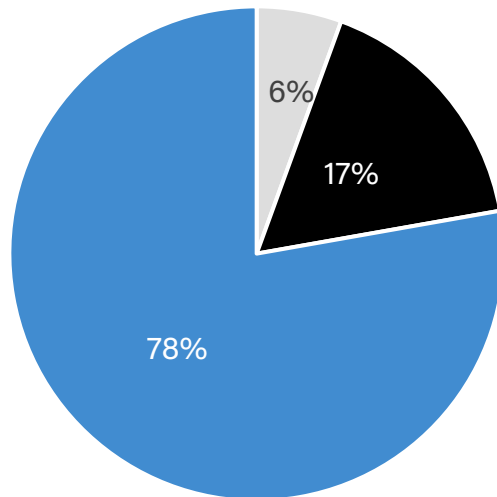
n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445  
 Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Fragmented Vacation Rental Market in India

- Although vacation rentals had a much smaller share of bookings than hotels, it is interesting to investigate the booking platforms.
- Airbnb holds the lion's share in the vacation rental markets in the U.S. and Australia followed by Booking.com. 78% of respondents in both U.S. and Australia used Airbnb to book their vacation rentals.
- However, in India respondents use a number of websites to book their vacation rental stays. Booking.com is the most used website followed by Airbnb.

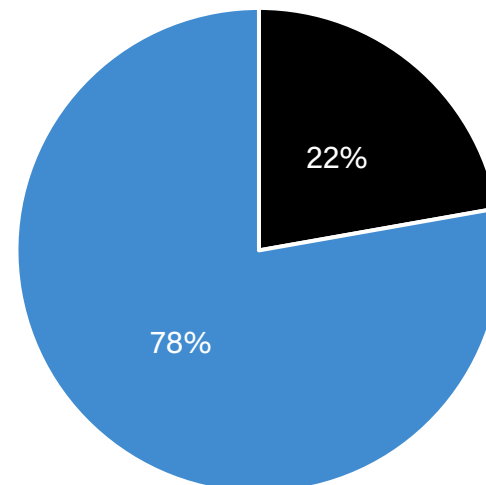
Websites used for vacation rental bookings in the U.S.

■ Vrbo ■ Booking.com ■ Airbnb



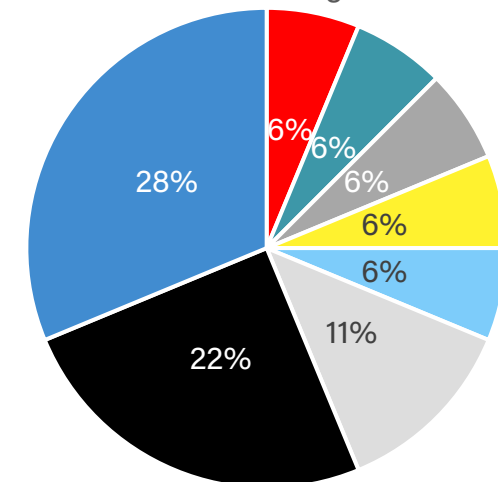
Websites used for vacation rental bookings in Australia

■ Booking.com ■ Airbnb



Websites used for vacation rental bookings in India

■ Other ■ Agoda Homes ■ Turnkey  
 ■ Rentavilla ■ Expedia ■ Homeaway  
 ■ Airbnb ■ Booking.com



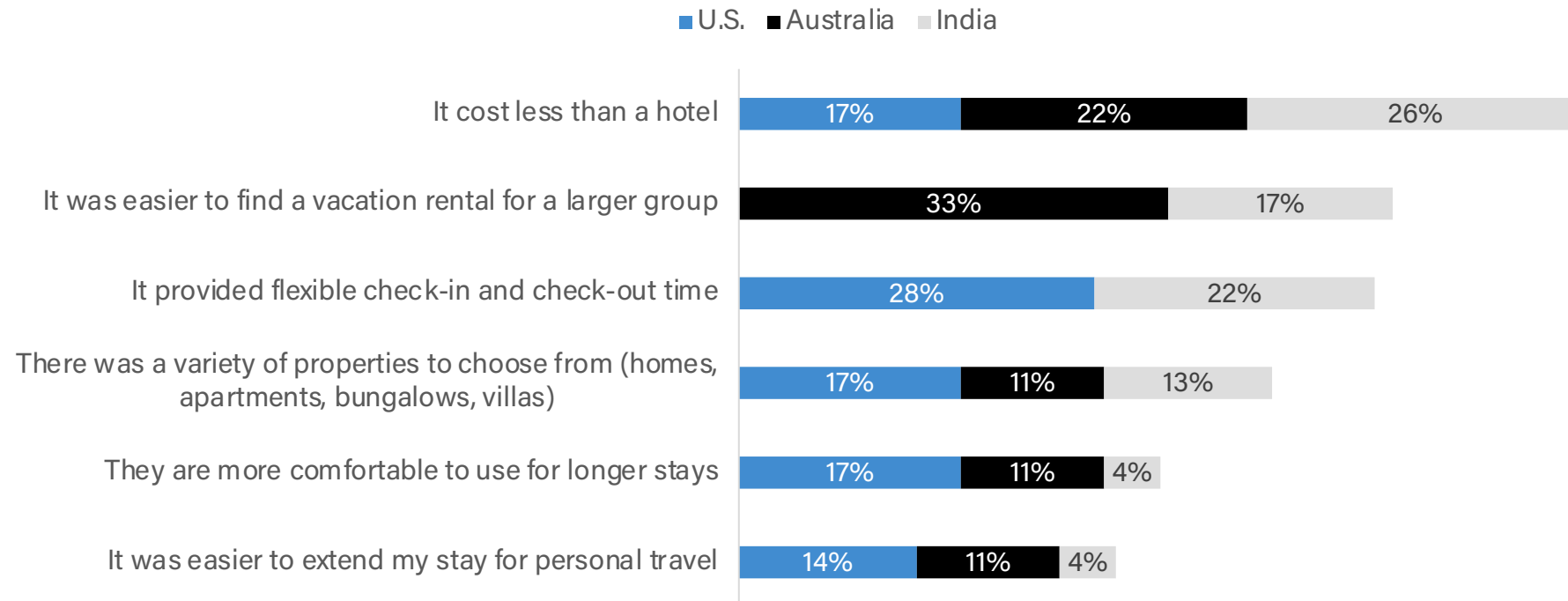
Note: Data for UK is not used as the sample size for business travelers using vacation rentals in the country was very small.  
 n: U.S.= 29, Australia= 9, India= 23

Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Lower Price: Selling Point of Vacation Rentals

- Respondents who chose to stay in vacation rentals over other types of accommodation selected its competitive pricing as the key reason for booking vacation rentals.
- Ease of finding vacation rentals which can accommodate larger groups was highlighted as another key reason for selecting vacation rentals

## Reasons for choosing a vacation rental



Note: Data for UK is not used as the sample size for business travelers using vacation rentals in the country was very small.

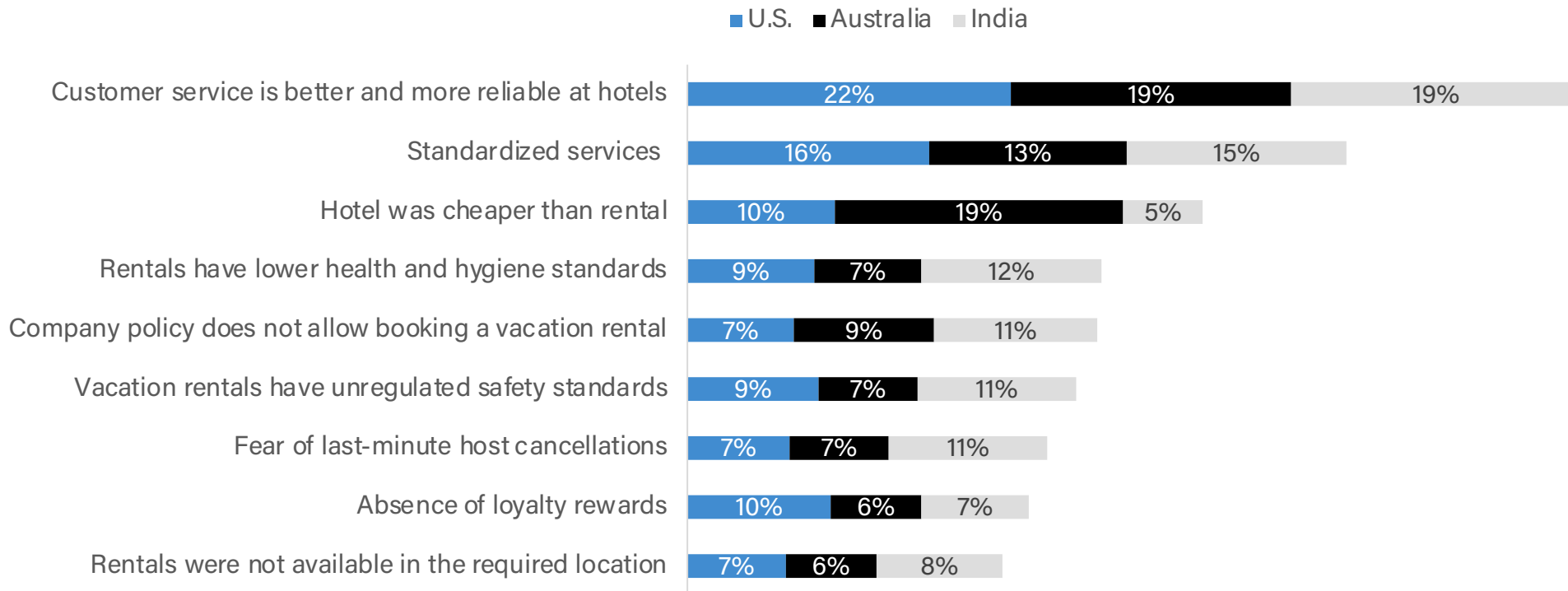
n: U.S.= 29, Australia= 9, India= 23

Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Inferior Customer Service Pulls Away Travellers

Respondents across the four countries in purview stated that standardized and better service at hotels is what makes them choose hotels over vacation rentals. Price point of hotels was selected as another important deciding factor.

## Reasons for not choosing a vacation rental



Note: Data for UK is not used as the sample size for business travelers using vacation rentals in the country was very small.

n: U.S.= 507, UK= 458, Australia= 414, India= 445

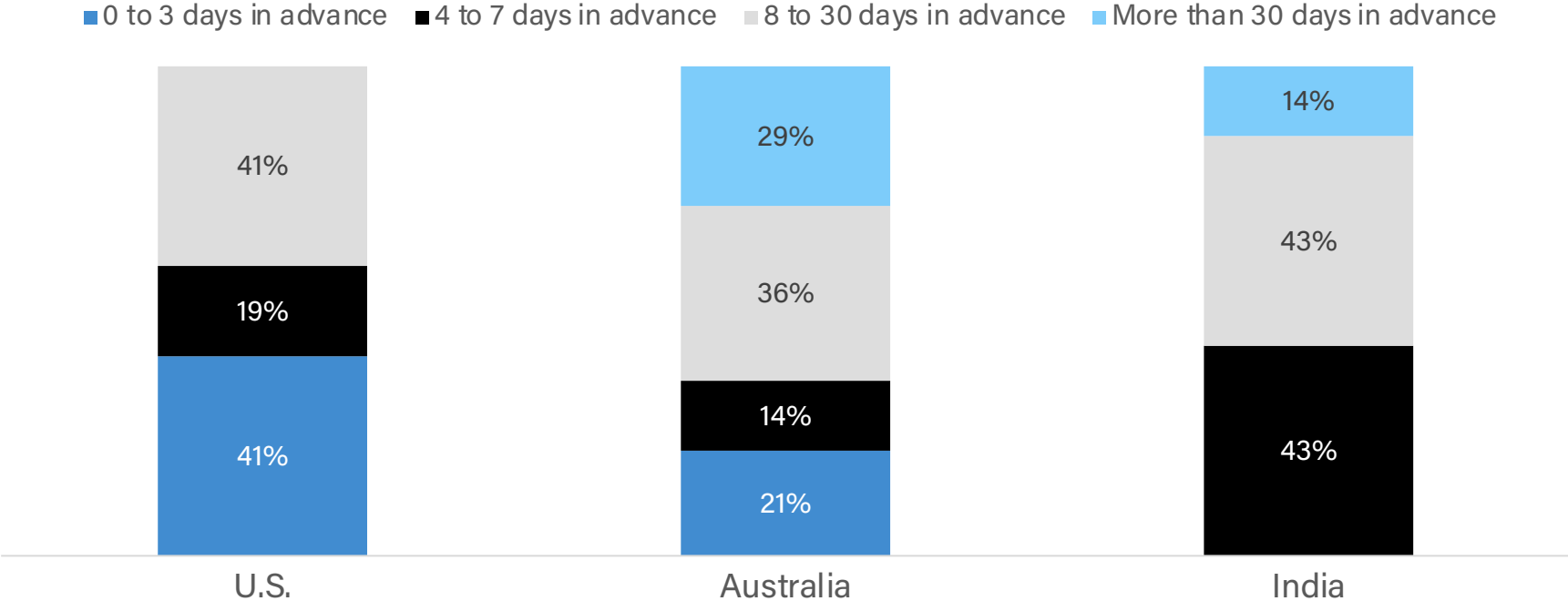
Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023



# Vacation Rental Booking Windows Vary By Country

- 41% of respondents from the U.S. said that they booked their vacation rentals 0 to 3 days in advance. However, the same share of respondents said that they booked vacation rentals 8 to 30 days in advance hinting that the booking window of vacation rentals in the U.S. are spread out to a large extent.
- The majority of respondents from Australia and India booked at least 8 days in advance making them comparably early booking markets

## Booking window for vacation rental bookings



Note: Data for UK is not used as the sample size for business travelers using vacation rentals in the country was very small.  
n: U.S.= 29, Australia= 9, India= 23

Source: Skift Research, April 2023. Survey fielded in March 2023

# Thank you

For more insights and information to Skift Research please reach us at  
[research@skift.com](mailto:research@skift.com)



**Varsha Arora**  
Senior Research Analyst