

# 2011 Global Customer Service Barometer

## Market Comparison of Findings

A research report  
prepared for:



echo

GLOBAL RESEARCH PROTECTING BRANDS AND REPUTATION

# Research Method

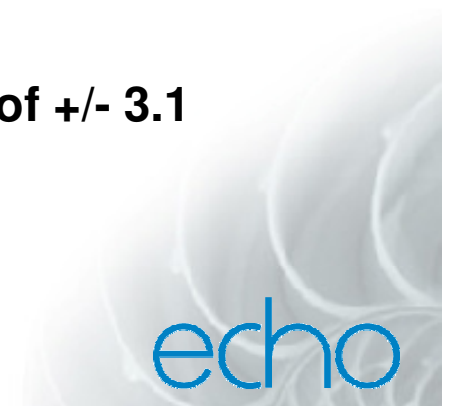


- This research was completed online among a random sample of consumers aged 18+ in: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, India, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, the U.K., and U.S.
- The sample size for each market is as follows:

U.S.	Canada	Mexico	France	Germany
N=1018	N=1060	N=1002	N=1001	N=1000

Italy	U.K.	Netherlands	Australia	India
N=1000	N=1016	N=1007	N=1021	N=1002

- Interviewing was conducted by Echo Research during February and March, 2011.
- Overall the results in each market have a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.



# Most businesses have not changed their attitudes towards customer service

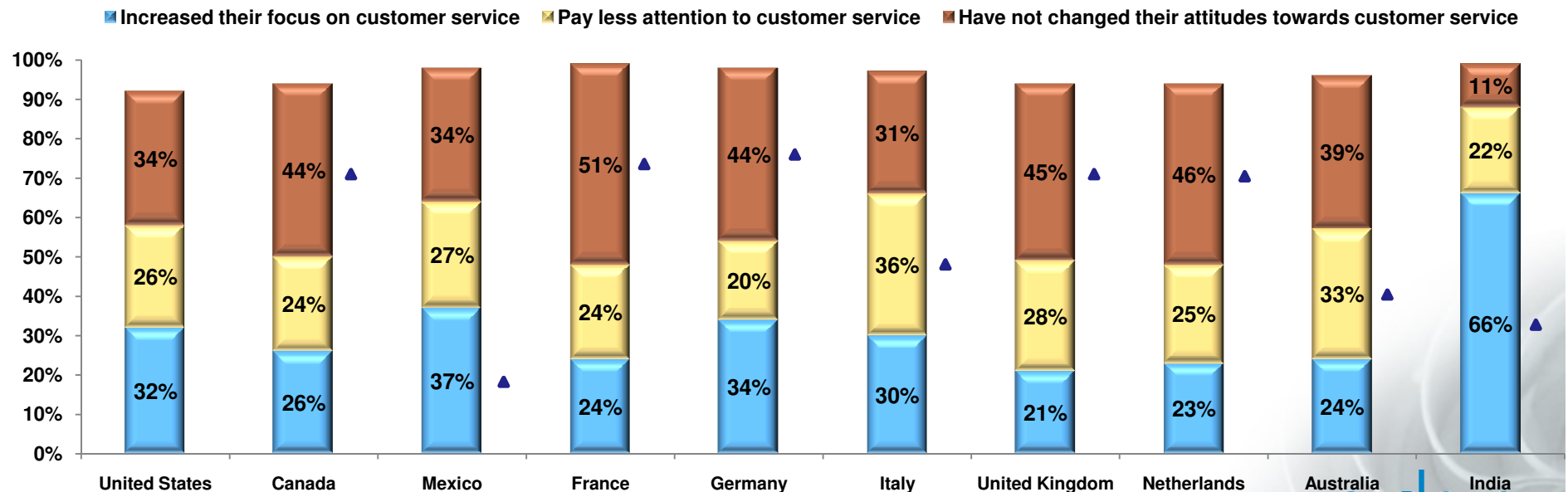


In most markets, fewer than one third of consumers see an 'increased focus on customer service' on the part of businesses in the current economy. However, significantly more consumers in India (66%) and Mexico (37%) give businesses credit for making the extra effort.

In Italy (36%) and Australia (33%), significantly more consumers think that companies are 'paying less attention to customer service' in the current economy compared to other countries.

Consumers in France (51%), the Netherlands (46%), U.K. (45%), Germany and Canada (44% each) are the most likely to say that businesses' 'attitudes towards customer service have not changed.'

**In this current economy do you think that businesses...?**



# Businesses may be meeting, but not exceeding consumers' expectations for customer service

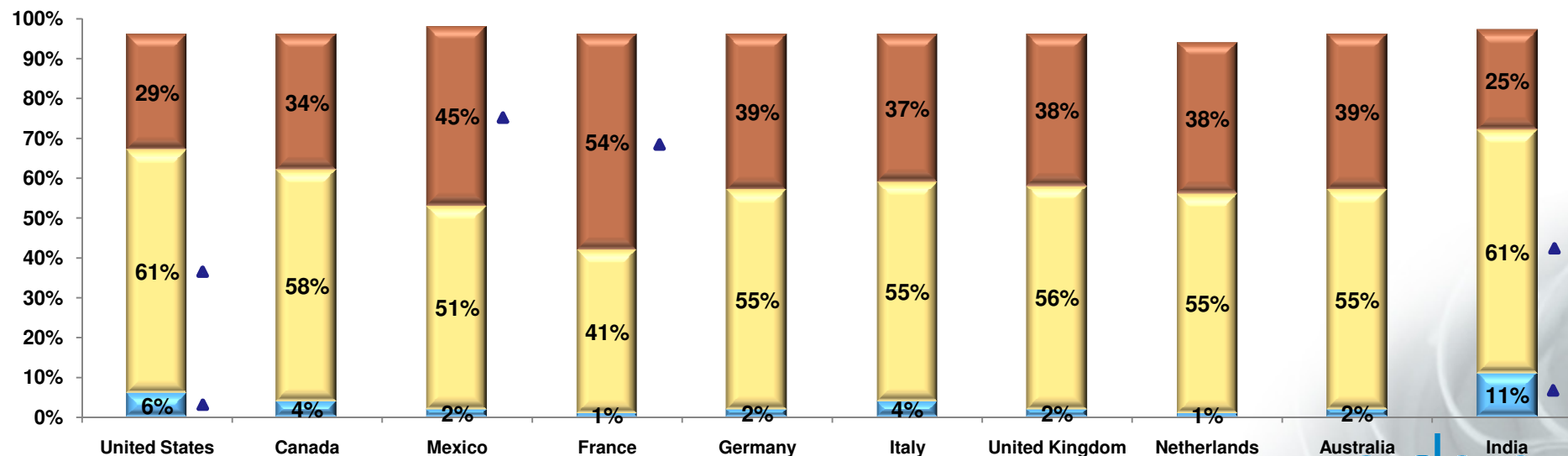


One half to three in five consumers across all markets except France (41%) believe that companies generally 'meet their expectations' for customer service. However, at least one in four consumers in all markets believe that companies usually 'miss their expectations,' significantly higher – roughly half – in France (54%) and Mexico (45%).

With the exception of India (11%), fewer than one in ten consumers across all markets believe that companies generally 'exceed their expectations' for customer service. Those in the U.S. (6%) are more likely to think so.

**In general, would you say the customer service experiences you have with companies usually...?**

■ Exceed your expectations ■ Meet your expectations ■ Miss your expectations



# Consumers believe that businesses are generally not going the extra mile

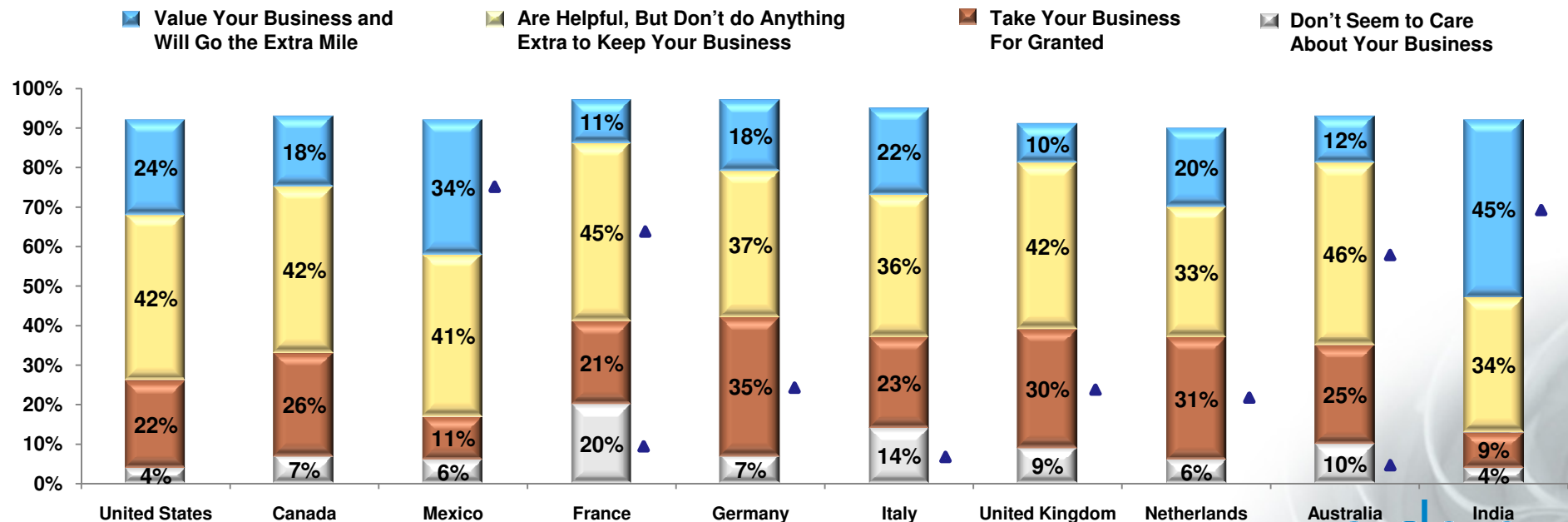


In most markets, two in five consumers or more believe that companies 'are helpful, but don't do anything extra to keep their business.' Consumers in Australia (46%) and France (45%) are the most likely to believe this to be true.

A significantly higher proportion of consumers in India (45%) and Mexico (34%) think that companies 'value their business and will go the extra mile.'

In Germany (35%), the Netherlands (31%) and the UK (30%), more consumers believe that companies 'take their business for granted.' While in France (20%), Italy (14%) and Australia (10%) more consumers think that companies 'don't care about their business.'

## In general, do you feel that companies...?

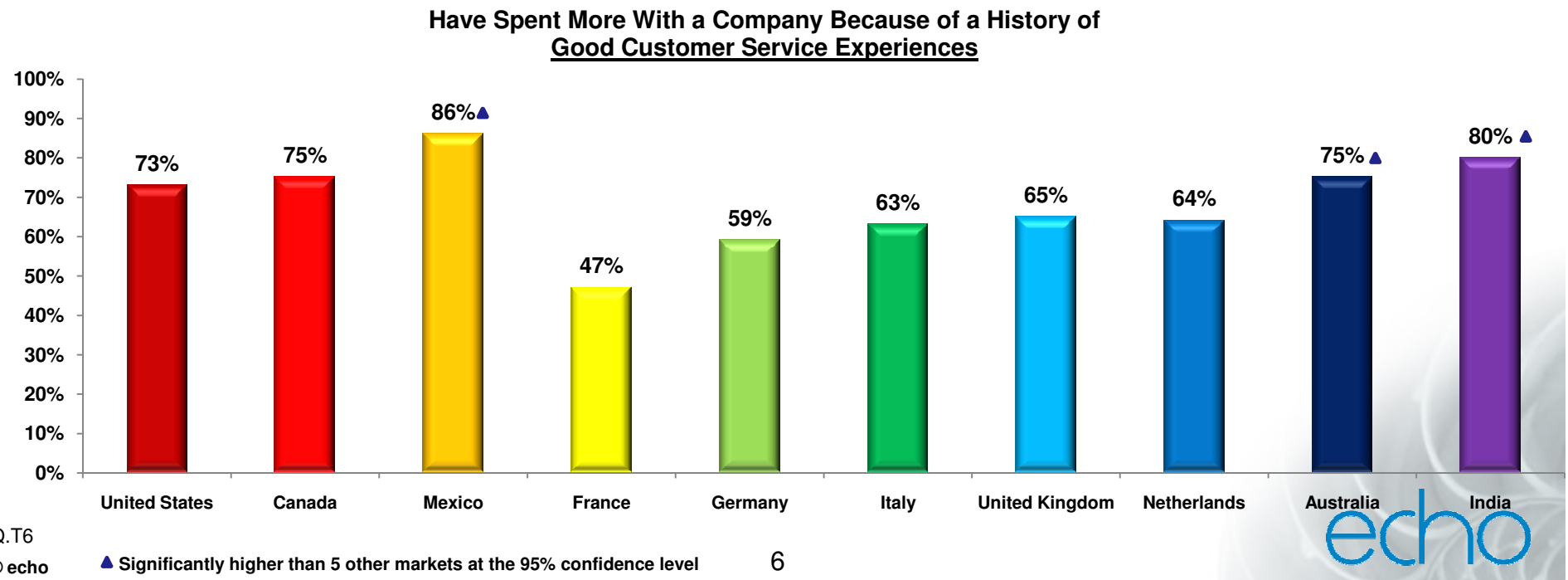


# Consumers have spent more for customer service



With the exception of France (47%), over half of consumers have spent more with a company because of a history of positive customer service experiences.

Consumers in Mexico (86%), India (80%), and Australia (75%) are more likely to have done so compared to those in other countries.

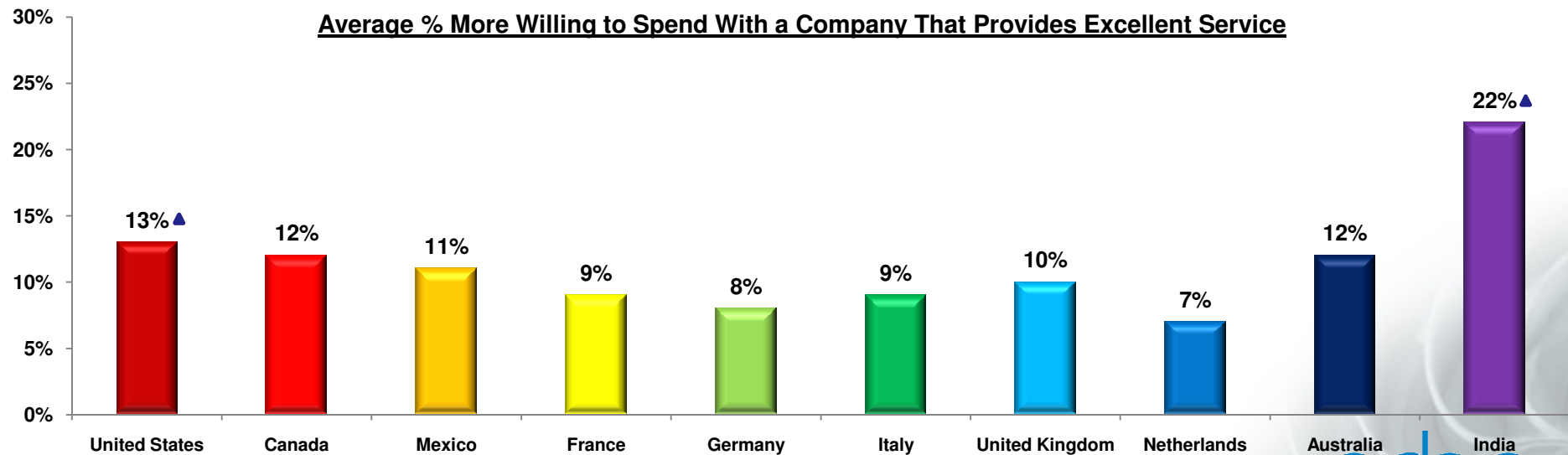
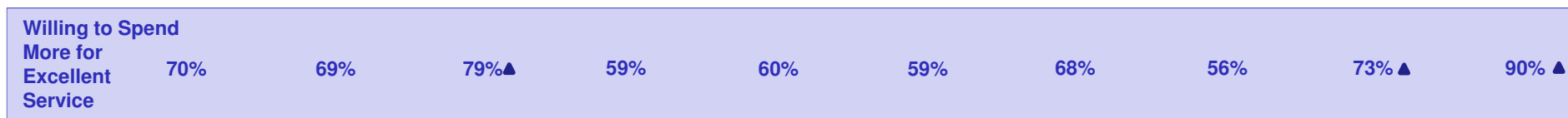


# Consumers will spend more with companies that provide excellent service



Across all markets, over half of consumers indicate that they are willing to spend more with companies that they believe provide excellent service – significantly more consumers in India (90%), Mexico (79%) and Australia (73%) say they are willing to do so.

Consumers are willing to spend the most, on average, in India (22% more) and the U.S. (13% more).



Q.T7

© echo

▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level

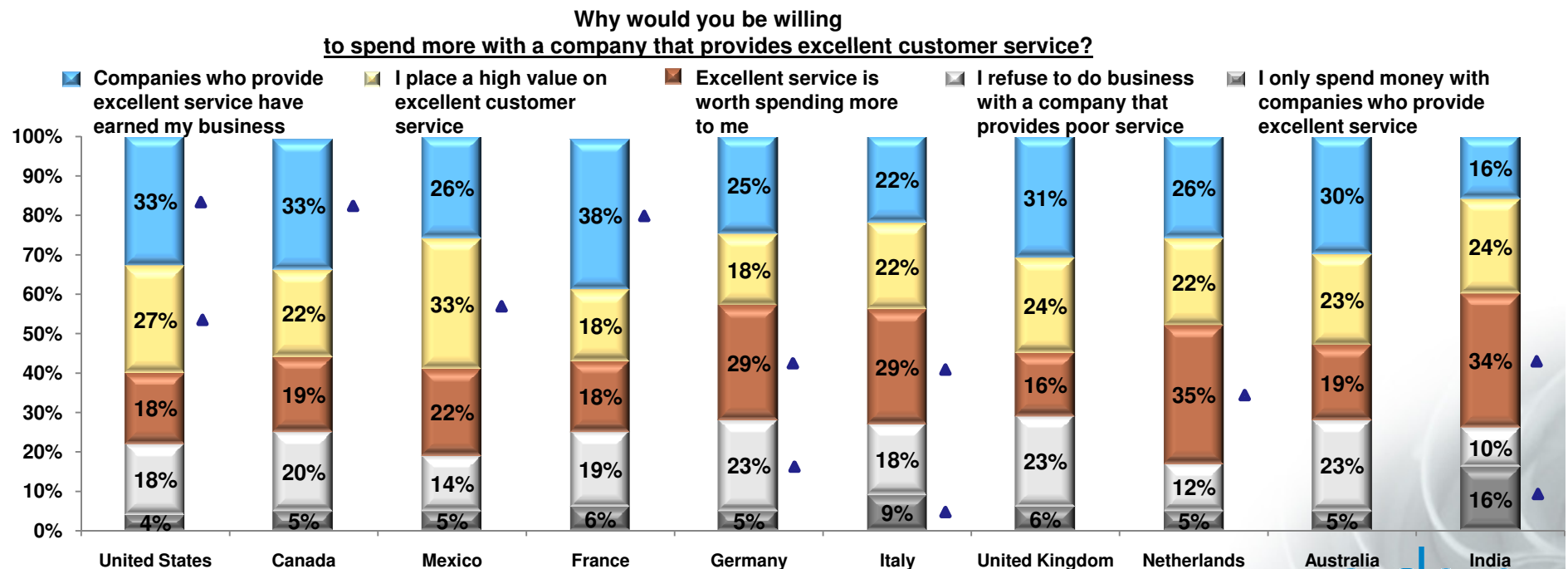


# Those willing to spend more see value in excellent service and believe those companies have earned their business



For reasons why they would be willing to spend more with a company that provides excellent service, consumers in France (38%), Canada and the U.S.(33% each) are most likely to say it is because those companies have earned their business.

Consumers in Mexico (33%) and the U.S. (27%) are more likely to say that it is because they place a high value on excellent customer service. Consumers in the Netherlands (35%), India (34%), Germany, and Italy (29%) are most likely to say it is because excellent service is worth spending more. In Germany (23%), consumers are more likely to refuse to do business with a company that provides poor service. And, consumers in India (16%) and Italy (9%) are most likely to only spend money with companies that provide excellent service.



Q.T7B: Respondents willing to spend more with a company that provides excellent service

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8

Not Shown: 2% or less None of These



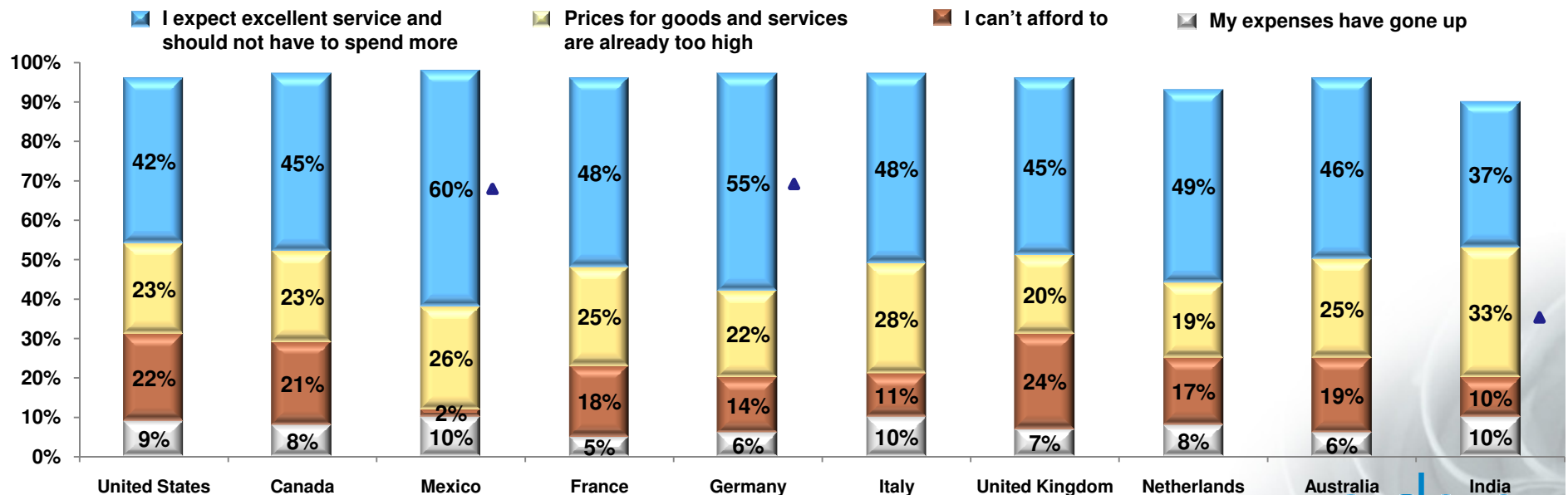
# Some consumers expect excellent service and do not believe they should have to spend more to get it



Greater than one third of consumers who would not be willing to spend more with a company that they believe provides excellent customer service say it is because they expect excellent service and should not have to spend more to get it. Consumers in Mexico (60%) and Germany (55%) are significantly more likely to feel this way.

Other consumers say that their lack of willingness to spend more comes down to money. One in five or more say that prices for goods and services are already too high – in India it is significantly higher (33%). And, with the exception of Mexico (2%), one in ten or more say that they can't afford to spend more.

**Why would you *not* be willing to spend more with a company that provides excellent customer service?**



Q.T7A: Respondents not willing to spend more with a company that provides excellent service

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▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level





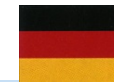







# Most consumers want to resolve their issues by speaking to a real person, either on the phone or face to face



Significantly more consumers in India (92%) would like to resolve their customer service issues by speaking with a real person on the phone. Those most interested in dealing with a person face to face are in India (87%), Australia (85%) and Mexico (83%). Consumers in India (81%) and Italy (74%) are more interested in using a company website or email to address their issues. Online chat/instant messaging is preferred among more consumers in India (73%), Mexico (72%), France, Italy (54% each) and the U.S. (47%). Consumers most interested in resolving issues through text messaging or social networking sites are those in Mexico (39%;41%), Italy (48%;34%), and India (65%; 59%).

**Very/Somewhat Interested in Resolving Customer Service Issues Using the Following Methods**

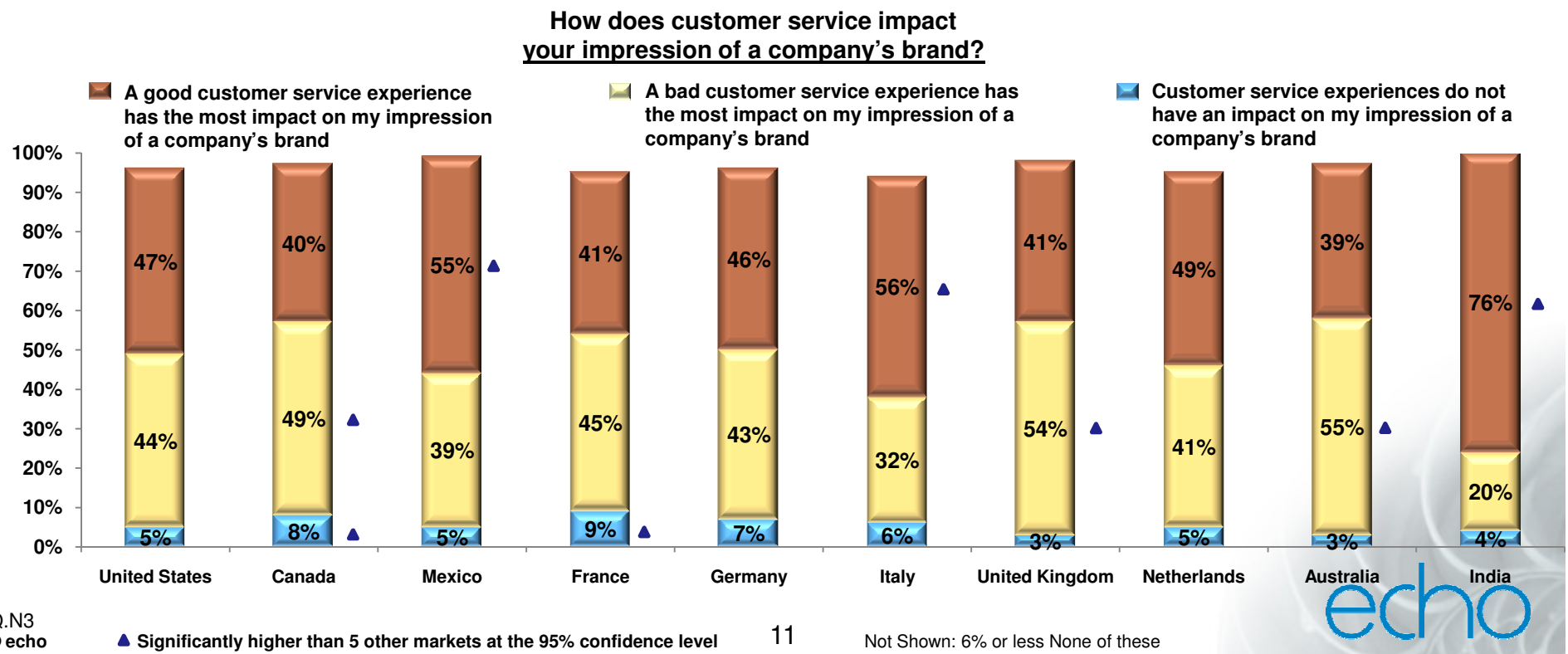
										
	U.S.	Canada	Mexico	France	Germany	Italy	U.K.	Netherlands	Australia	India
Speaking with a 'real' person on the phone	90%	89%	91%	79%	80%	84%	90%	71%	90%	92%
Face to face	75%	80%	83%	78%	57%	76%	79%	72%	85%	87%
Company website or email	67%	65%	71%	71%	73%	74%	72%	60%	68%	81%
Online chat/instant messaging	47%	38%	72%	54%	36%	54%	38%	30%	33%	73%
Text message	22%	17%	39%	22%	17%	48%	26%	11%	22%	65%
Social networking site	22%	20%	41%	21%	21%	34%	19%	17%	19%	59%
Using an automated voice response system on the phone	20%	13%	36%	17%	14%	27%	10%	6%	10%	49%

# Customer service experiences have an impact on consumers' impression of a company's brand



Consumers in India (76%), Italy (56%) and Mexico (55%) are significantly more likely to say that a good customer service experience has the most impact on their impression of a company's brand.

Conversely, consumers in Australia (55%), the U.K. (54%) and Canada (49%) are significantly more likely to say that it is a bad experience with customer service which has the most impact on their impression of a company's brand.



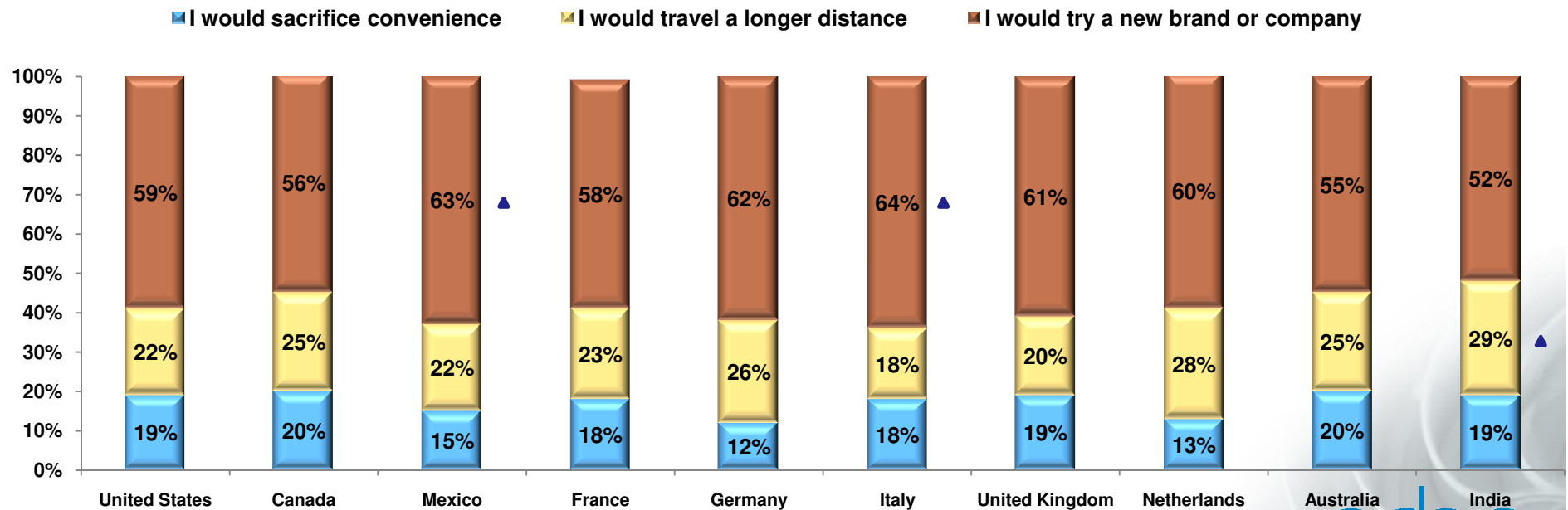
# Consumers will switch brands to get better customer service



Over half of consumers in each market would try a new brand or company in order to get better customer service. Consumers in Italy (56%) and Mexico (55%) are especially likely to say that they would try a new brand or company.

Consumers who say they would travel a longer distance for better customer service are most likely in India (29%).

Which of these areas would you be willing to trade-off in order to get better customer service?



▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level



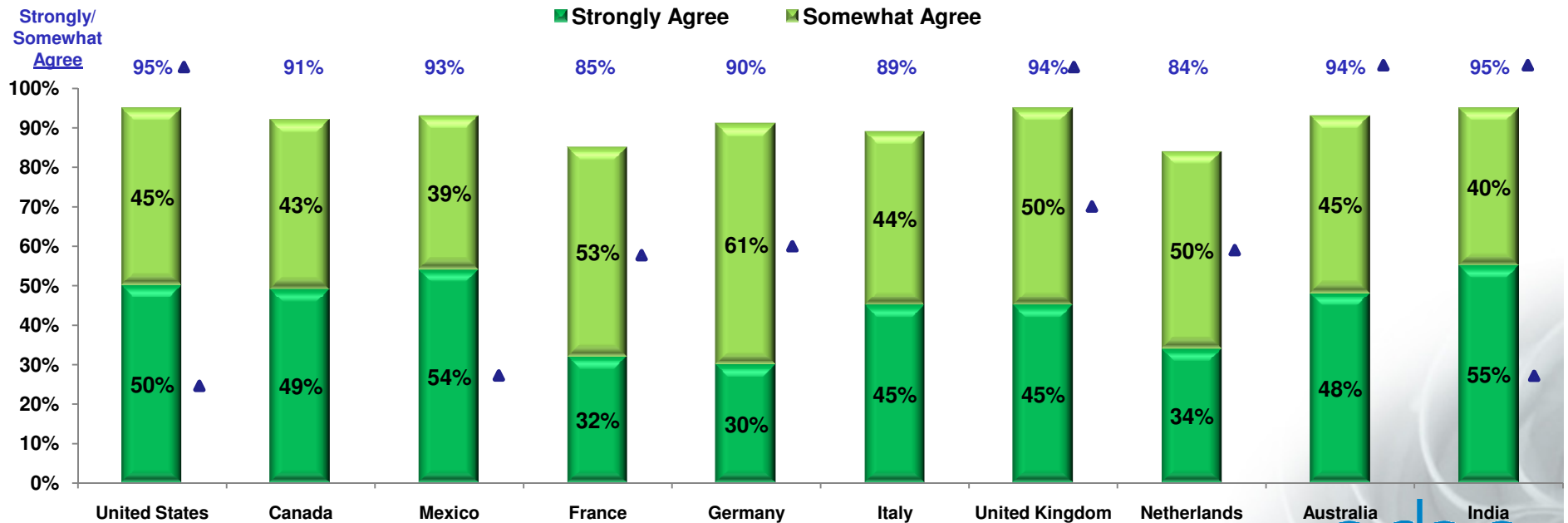
# Good customer service leads to repeat business



In all markets, roughly nine in ten consumers or more agree that they are more likely to purchase a gift for someone from a company after having a good customer service experience – France (85%), and the Netherlands (84%) are the exceptions.

A significantly higher proportion of consumers in the U.S., India (95% each), Australia and the U.K. (94% each) agree that a good customer service experience makes them more likely to purchase a gift for someone else from that same company.

**Having a good customer service experience with a company makes me more likely to purchase a gift for someone from that same company.**



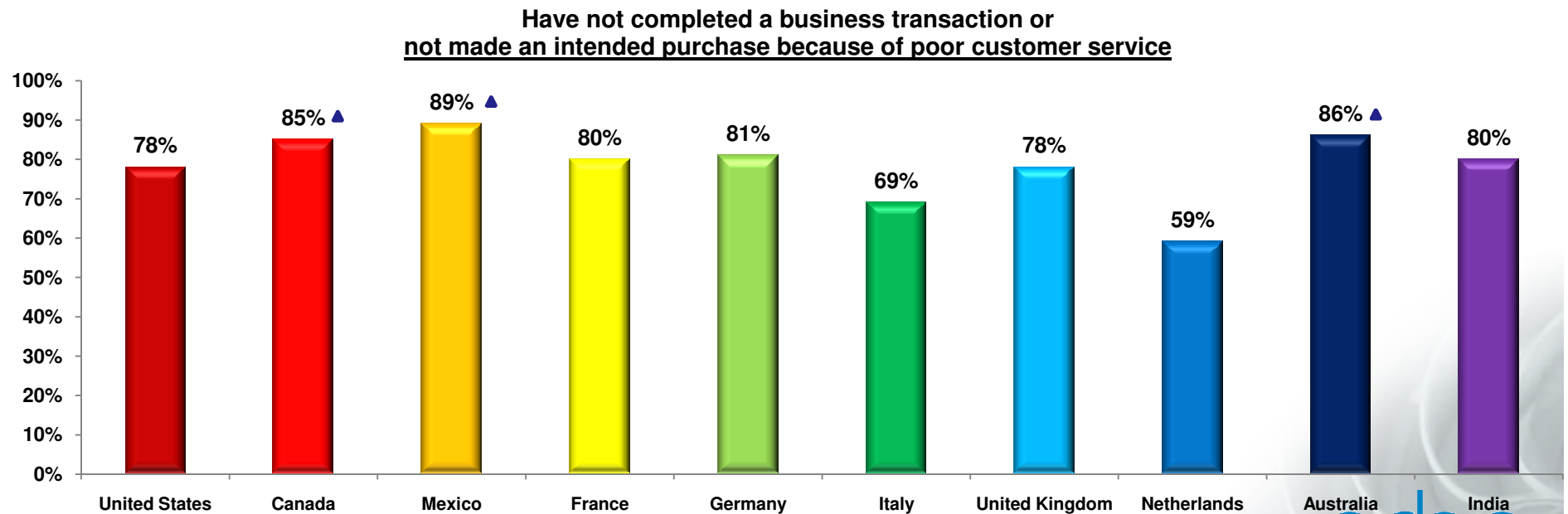
Q.N1  
 © echo ▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level



# Poor service leads to lost sales



Across all markets, the majority of consumers indicate that they have not completed a transaction or made an intended purchase because of poor customer service – significantly more consumers in Mexico (89%), Australia (86%) and Canada (85%) are most likely to agree.



Q.N9

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▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level

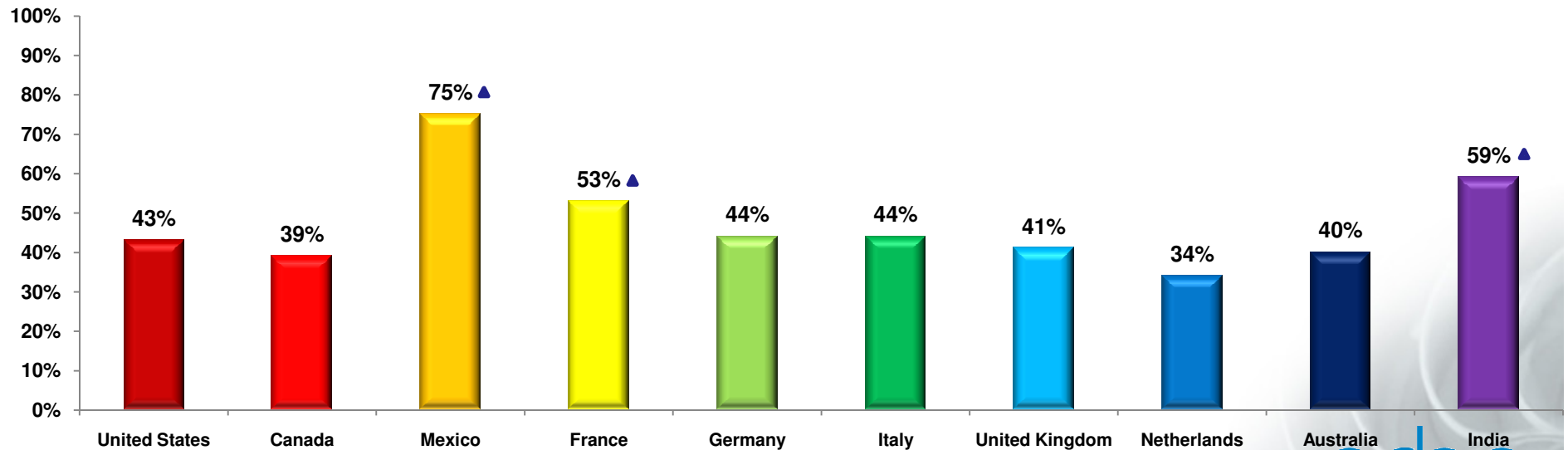


# Poor service leads to lost sales online as well



To a lesser extent, consumers have also cancelled online purchases because of poor service as well. In most markets, roughly two in five consumers report doing so. However, significantly more consumers in Mexico (75%), India (59%) France (53%) say that they have cancelled an online purchase or shopping experience because they were not satisfied with the service provided. Only 34% in the Netherlands have done so.

**Have cancelled an online purchase or shopping experience because you were not satisfied with the service experience**



Q.N10

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▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level



# Consumers are likely to tell others about their good customer service experiences

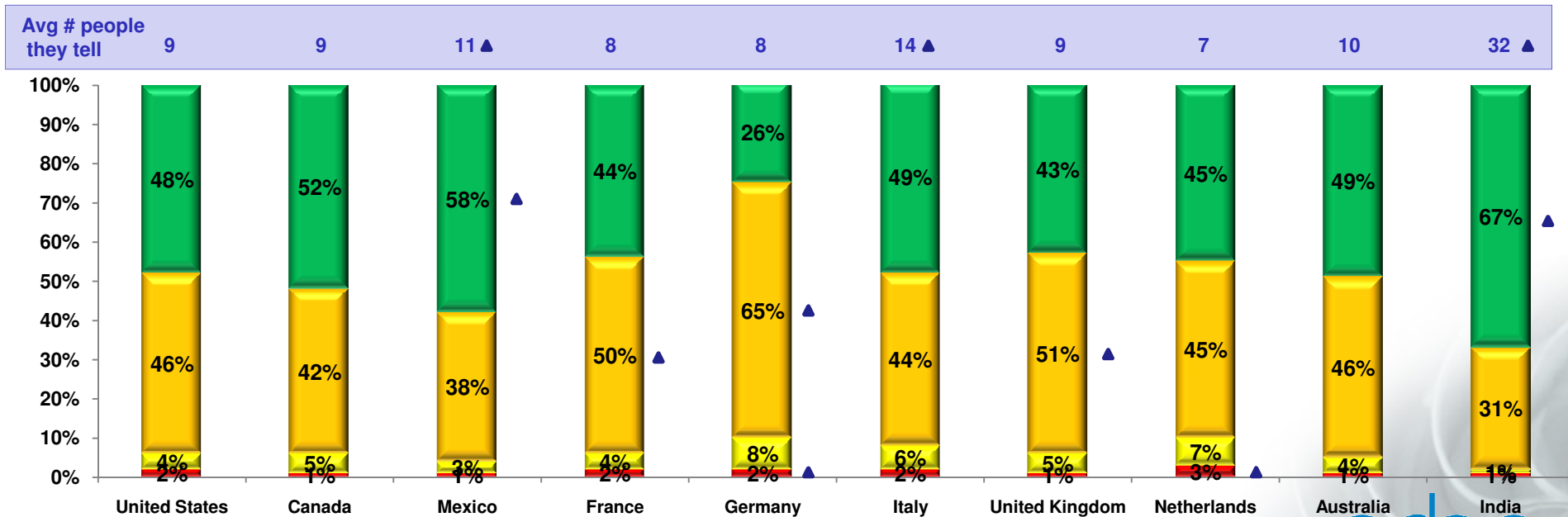


With the exception of Germany (26%), greater than two in five tell other people about their good customer service experiences all of the time.

Consumers in the Netherlands and Germany are the least likely to tell others about their good service experience (each 10% rarely/never) and tell the fewest number of people (7 and 8 people on average, respectively). On the other hand, consumers in India tell the most people (32 on average) about their good experiences, and do so most frequently (67% all the time).

How often do you tell other people about your *good* customer service experience?

■ All the time ■ Sometimes ■ Rarely ■ Never



Q.N6/6a

© echo ▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level



# Consumers are *more* likely to tell others about their *poor* customer service experiences

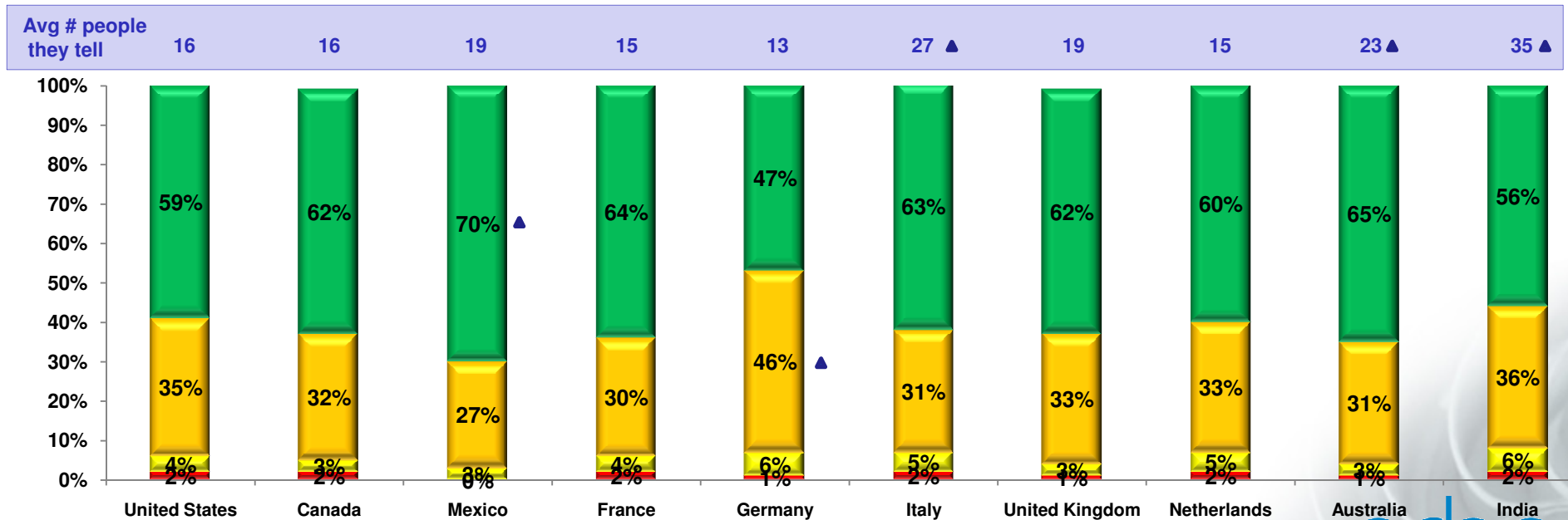


Significantly more, three in five or greater, tell other people about their poor customer service experiences all of the time – with the exception of Germany (47%) and India (56%). Consumers in Mexico do so most frequently (70% all the time).

Consumers in India, Italy, and Australia tell the most people (35, 27, and 23 on average, respectively) about their poor experiences.

How often do you tell other people about your *poor* customer service experience?

■ All the time   ■ Sometimes   ■ Rarely   ■ Never



Q.N6b/6c

© echo ▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level













# Customer service professionals play a major role in providing an excellent experience for the consumer



Roughly two thirds of consumers in the U.S. and Canada are most likely to say that in their best experience, the customer service rep was able to solve the problem - while in the Netherlands, under two in five said this was a factor in making it a good experience. Those in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and India are most likely to say that addressing their issue in a timely manner was a factor. Consumers in Canada and Mexico are most likely to say that a rep taking accountability makes for a good customer service experience, while those in Mexico, Italy, Australia, and India are most likely to cite a customer service rep's follow-up after the issue was resolved.

**In the *best* customer service experience you've ever had with a customer service professional dealing with an issue or concern, the representative...**

										
	U.S.	Canada	Mexico	France	Germany	Italy	U.K.	Netherlands	Australia	India
Was able to solve the issue	66%	63%	59%	55%	53%	48%	57%	37%	56%	56%
Was friendly and listened to my concerns	65%	64%	55%	55%	51%	40%	59%	36%	62%	60%
Addressed my issue or concern in a timely manner	63%	65%	60%	53%	21%	34%	49%	26%	57%	58%
Made me feel like they valued my business	59%	61%	42%	37%	48%	30%	49%	27%	56%	51%
Went above and beyond in addressing my issue	53%	51%	58%	16%	45%	25%	39%	41%	47%	35%
Took accountability for dealing with the issue	43%	47%	53%	34%	32%	37%	37%	32%	45%	44%
Followed up when the issue was resolved	41%	38%	51%	30%	18%	47%	34%	14%	45%	48%

Q.N4

© echo

 Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level

Not Shown: 11% or less None of these



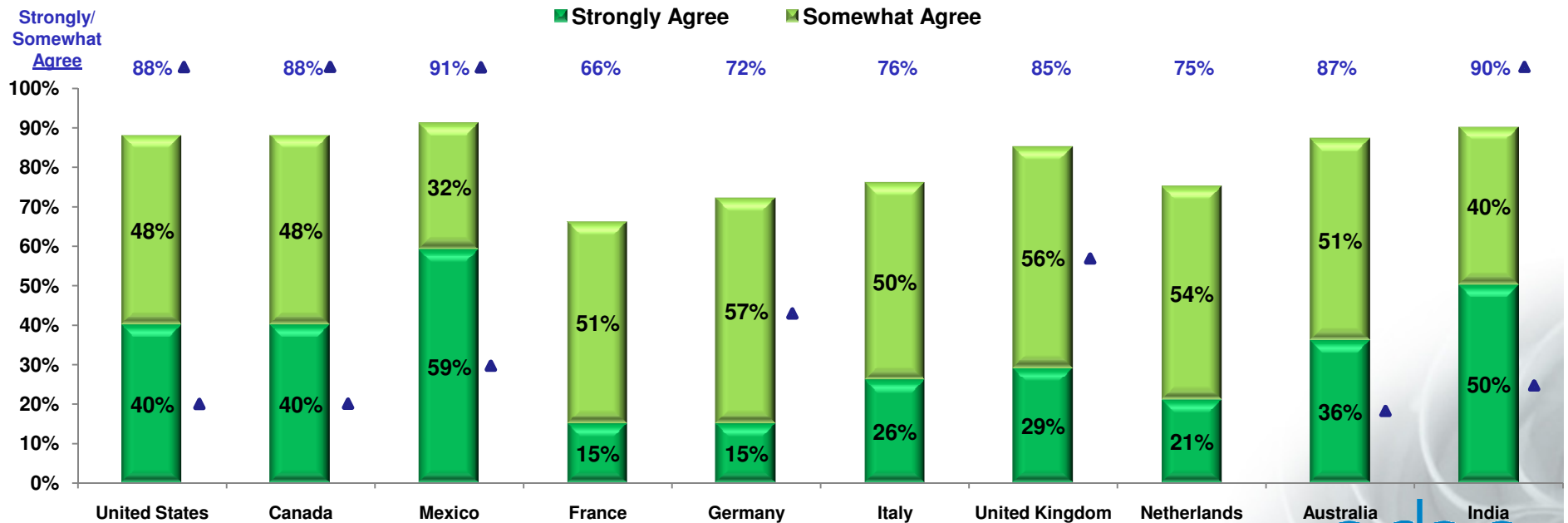
# Customer service reps may need to work a little harder to provide good service



In most markets, seven in ten consumers or greater agree that when they treat a customer service professional in a friendly and respectful manner they usually get better service in return – with the exception of France (66%).

However, service professionals may have some work to do: across markets, half of consumers only somewhat agree that this is the case, with the exception of Mexico (32%) and India (40%).

**When I treat a customer service professional in a friendly and respectful manner, I usually get better service in return.**



Q.N7

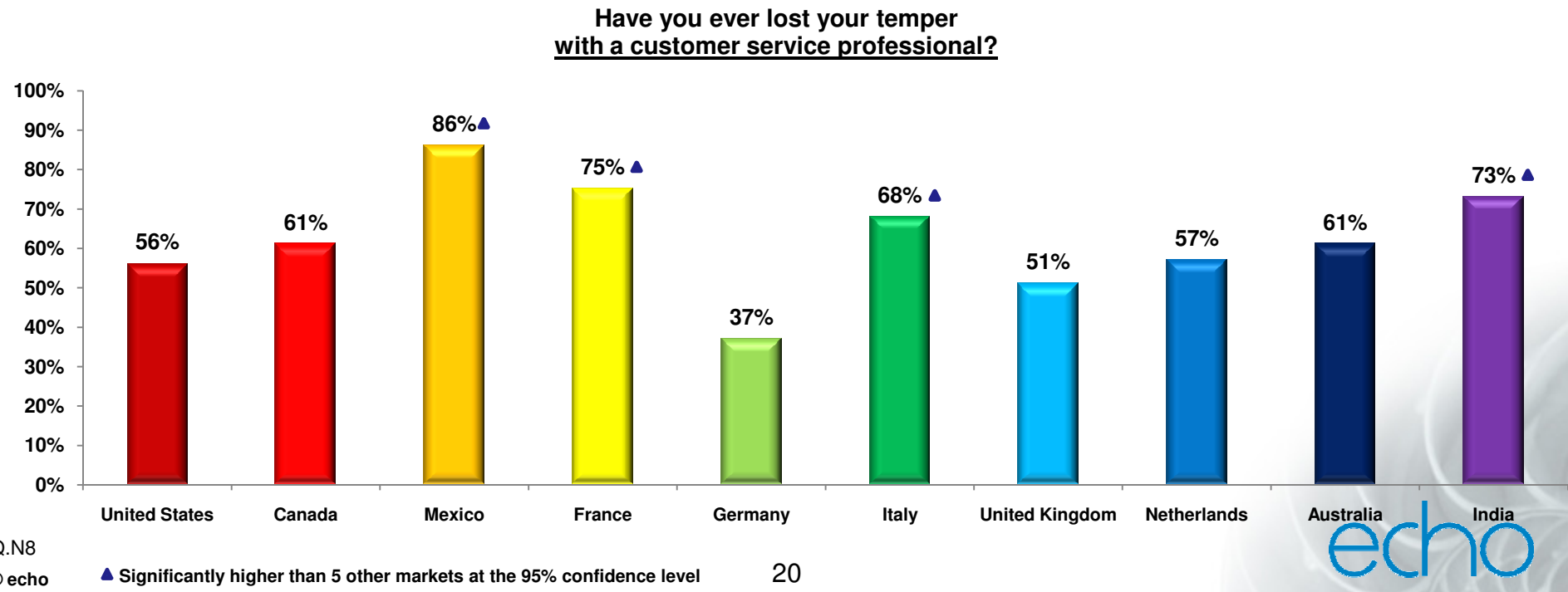
© echo ▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level



# Consumers lose their temper with customer service representatives



Across all markets, with the exception of Germany (37%), at least half of consumers admit to having lost their temper with a customer service representative – significantly more consumers in Mexico (86%), France (75%), India (73%), and Italy (68%) are most likely to agree.













# Consumers who lose their temper express themselves in a variety of ways




Among those who lost their temper with a customer service professional, consumers in the U.S., Canada, U.K. Australia, and India were most likely to say they insisted on speaking to a supervisor. Consumers in Mexico were most likely to hang up the phone. Consumers in Canada, Mexico and France were most likely to threaten to switch to a competitor, while those in Mexico and India were most likely to demand to know the service professional's name. Consumers most likely to use profanity were in the U.S. and Canada.

**Which of the following have you done when you lost your temper with a customer service professional?**

										
	U.S.	Canada	Mexico	France	Germany	Italy	U.K.	Netherlands	Australia	India
Insisted on speaking with a supervisor	74%	64%	49%	52%	48%	37%	69%	33%	64%	63%
Hung up the phone	44%	41%	61%	29%	34%	29%	38%	42%	44%	39%
Threatened to switch to a competitor	39%	43%	31%	51%	38%	33%	39%	18%	36%	35%
Demanded to know the customer service professional's name	31%	26%	40%	24%	34%	30%	32%	33%	27%	41%
Used profanity	16%	16%	13%	2%	7%	7%	8%	8%	12%	11%
Stormed out of the store	13%	15%	35%	13%	10%	15%	12%	3%	17%	19%

Q.N8a Respondents who have lost their temper with a customer service professional

© echo  Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level





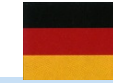
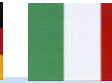






# Consumers are annoyed by typical scripted responses used by customer service professionals




Consumers in Mexico and France are especially annoyed when they are asked to hold or to call back at a another time (42% and 49%, respectively). In the Netherlands, consumers do not like to hear that their call has progressed in the queue and will be attended to by the next available operator (32%). Consumers in the U.S., Canada, U.K., Australia, and India do not like to hear, “your call is important to us, please continue to hold.”

**Which of the following phrases frequently used by customer service professionals do you find most annoying?**

										
	U.S.	Canada	Mexico	France	Germany	Italy	U.K.	Netherlands	Australia	India
<i>We're sorry, but we're experiencing unusually heavy call volumes. You can hold or call back at another time.</i>	27%	27%	42%	49%	27%	31%	30%	25%	24%	15%
<i>We're unable to answer your question. Would you please call this number so that you can speak with a representative from another team</i>	27%	27%	31%	26%	32%	26%	25%	27%	26%	23%
<i>Your call is important to us, please continue to hold.</i>	26%	26%	11%	2%	6%	10%	28%	3%	26%	34%
<i>Can you please repeat your account information?</i>	7%	6%	4%	5%	2%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%
<i>Let me check with my supervisor.</i>	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	6%	4%	5%	3%	8%
<i>Your call has progressed in the queue and will be attended to by the next available operator.</i>	5%	6%	7%	12%	24%	19%	8%	32%	13%	14%

Q.N13

© echo

 Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level

22

Not Shown: 9% or less None of these

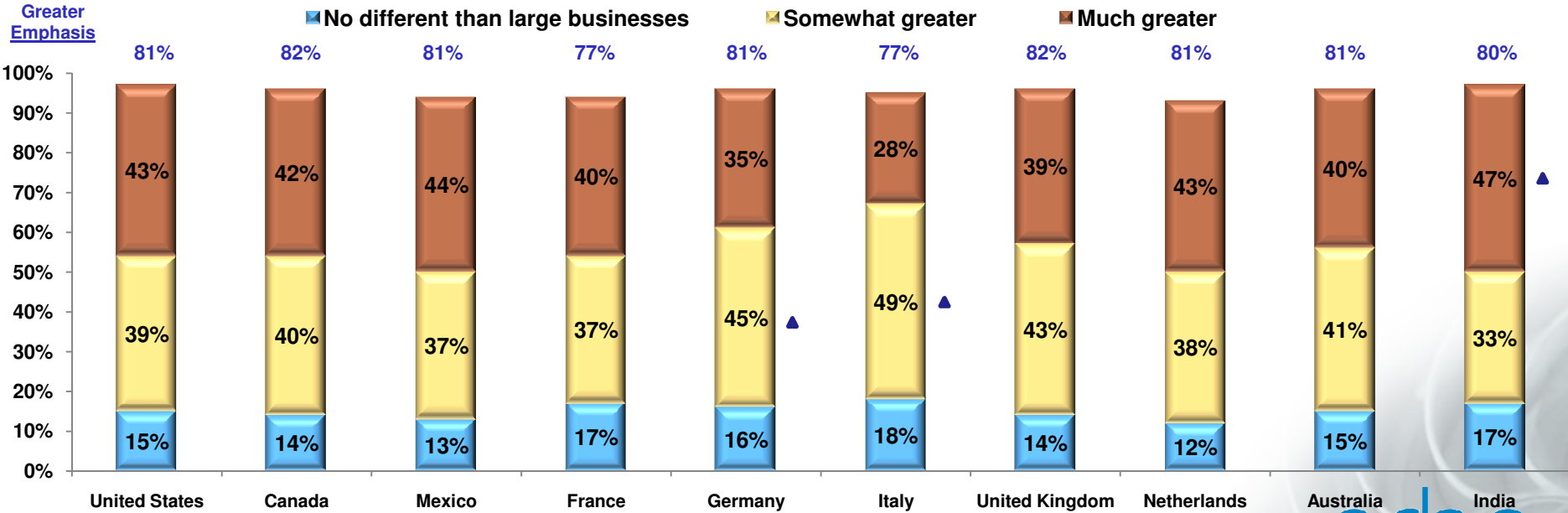


# Small businesses do customer service better than large businesses



In nearly all markets, the majority of consumers believe that small businesses place a greater emphasis on customer service than large businesses. Consumers are most likely to agree with this idea in Canada (82%), the U.S. (81%) and India (80%).

**Compared to large businesses, do you think the emphasis small businesses place on customer service is...?**



Q.N12  
© echo

▲ Significantly higher than 5 other markets at the 95% confidence level

Not Shown: 7% or less None of these













# Negotiating with a customer service professional is preferred over other difficult interactions



Consumers in most countries indicate that negotiating with a customer service representative is preferred over spending the holidays with the in-laws, asking their boss for a raise, giving a public speech, or telling someone else's kids to behave in a store.

Slightly more in the U.S., Canada, and Italy prefer spending time with their in-laws over negotiating with a customer service professional.

**Rank the following interactions in order of preference from "1" most preferred to "5" least preferred.**

										
<b>Ranked 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> most preferred.</b>	U.S.	Canada	Mexico	France	Germany	Italy	U.K.	Netherlands	Australia	India
Negotiating with a customer service professional	58%	58%	54%	59%	71%	47%	68%	62%	64%	57%
Spending the holidays with in-laws	63%	62%	32%	52%	39%	52%	50%	46%	49%	40%
Asking your boss for a raise	35%	31%	50%	37%	31%	48%	35%	45%	37%	50%
Giving a public speech to hundreds of people	25%	29%	42%	24%	28%	35%	24%	27%	27%	32%
Telling someone else's kids to behave in a store	20%	20%	23%	28%	31%	18%	24%	21%	24%	21%