



“What’s Under Your Mattress”: Sales associates’ views of consumer understanding

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Introduction

The mattress industry is poignantly aware of the importance of a support system under the mattress to its performance. But is the consumer? The Sleep Specialty Association (SSA) reached out to High Point University for help to survey mattress retailers to evaluate how relevant their promotion “What’s under the mattress” is to their industry. The association shared their questions and we created the survey. The survey assesses sales associates’ impressions of the consumer’s knowledge and interest in bed support systems to better inform the industry and promote satisfied customers.

Methods

Participants

- Email addresses of SSA members were provided by SSA
- Distributed to 3,236 emails soliciting retailers
- 111 responses received/54% were complete
- Participants were invited to enter a drawing for \$25 gift cards

Survey

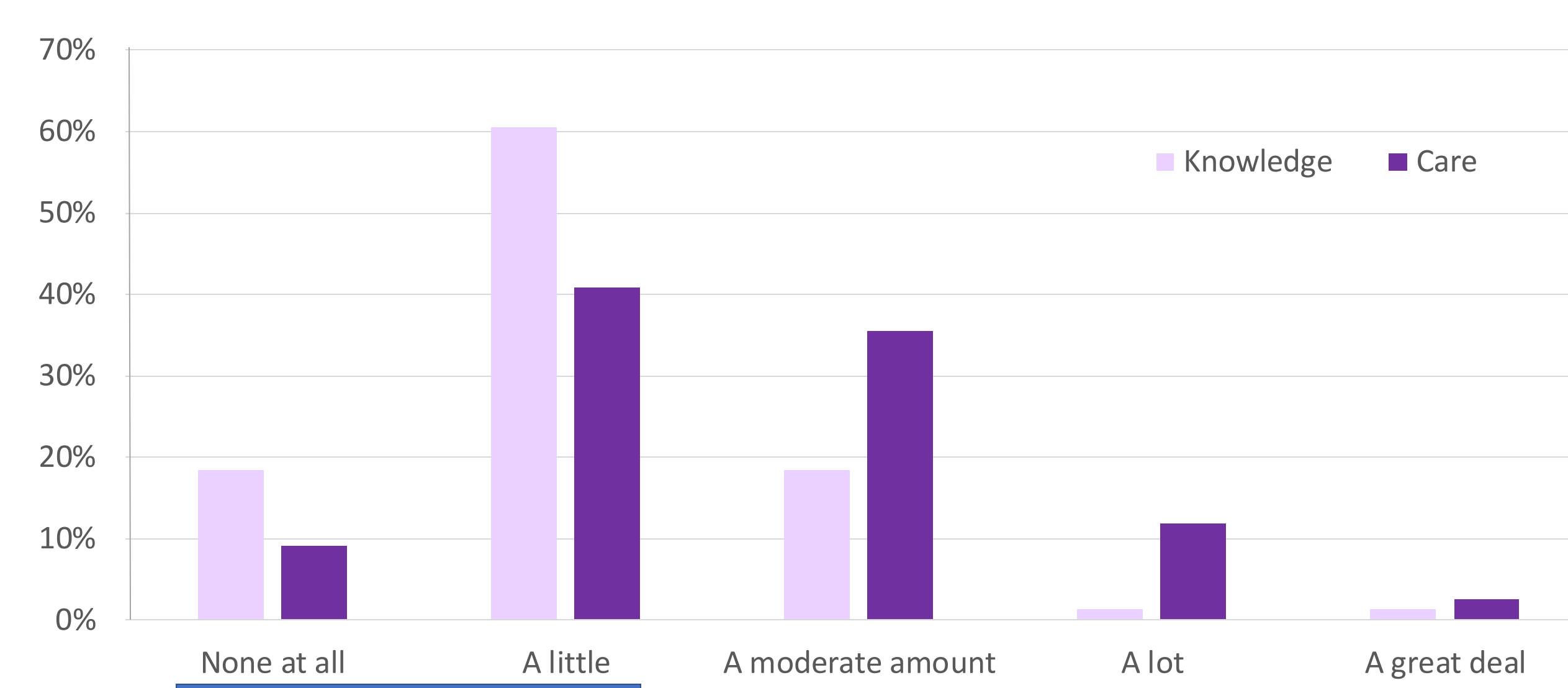
- 17 questions; created by SSA; designed by us
- Solicited retailers’ opinions on customer attitudes towards mattress support systems
- Approved by the IRB of High Point University

Procedure

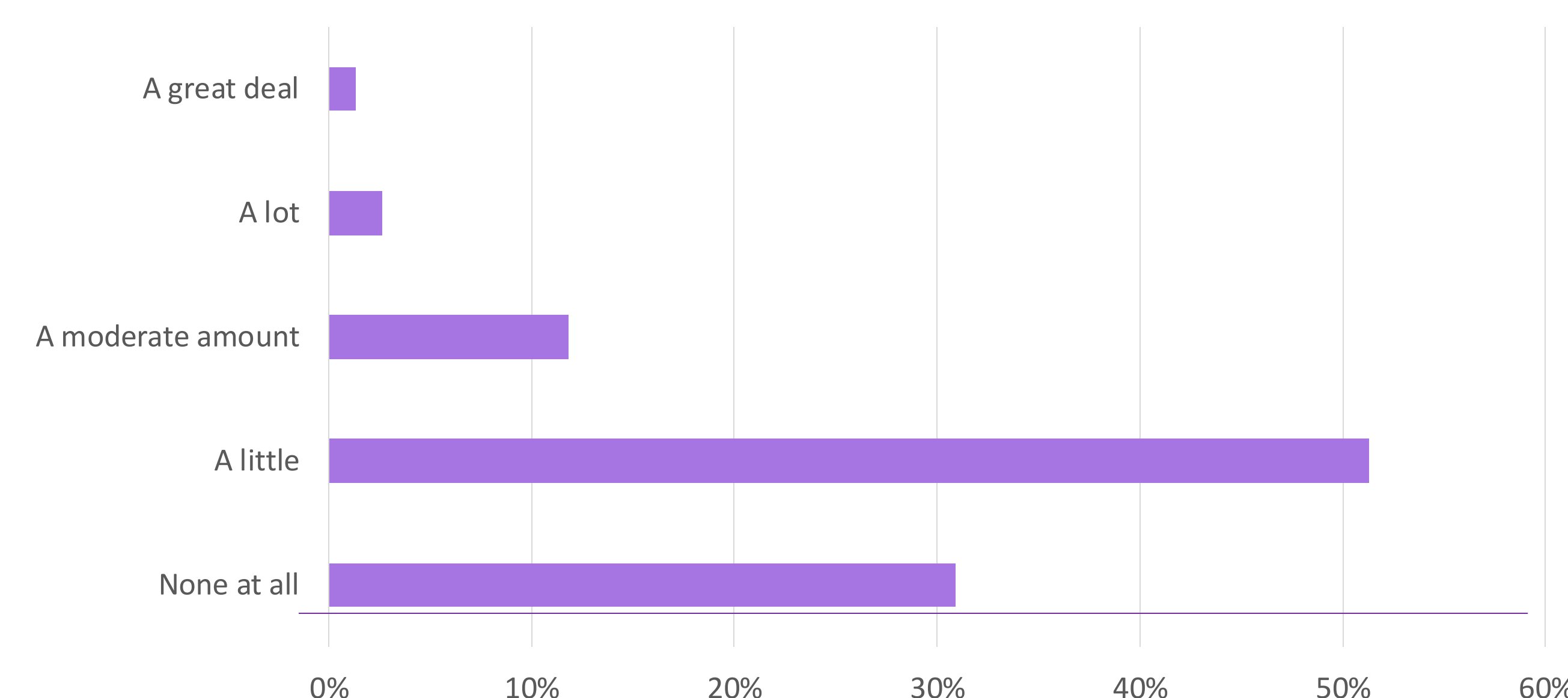
- We created the online survey using Qualtrics
- It was sent to Mattress retailer/sales associates on April 19th, 2018, with reminders on June 6th and July 16th.

Results

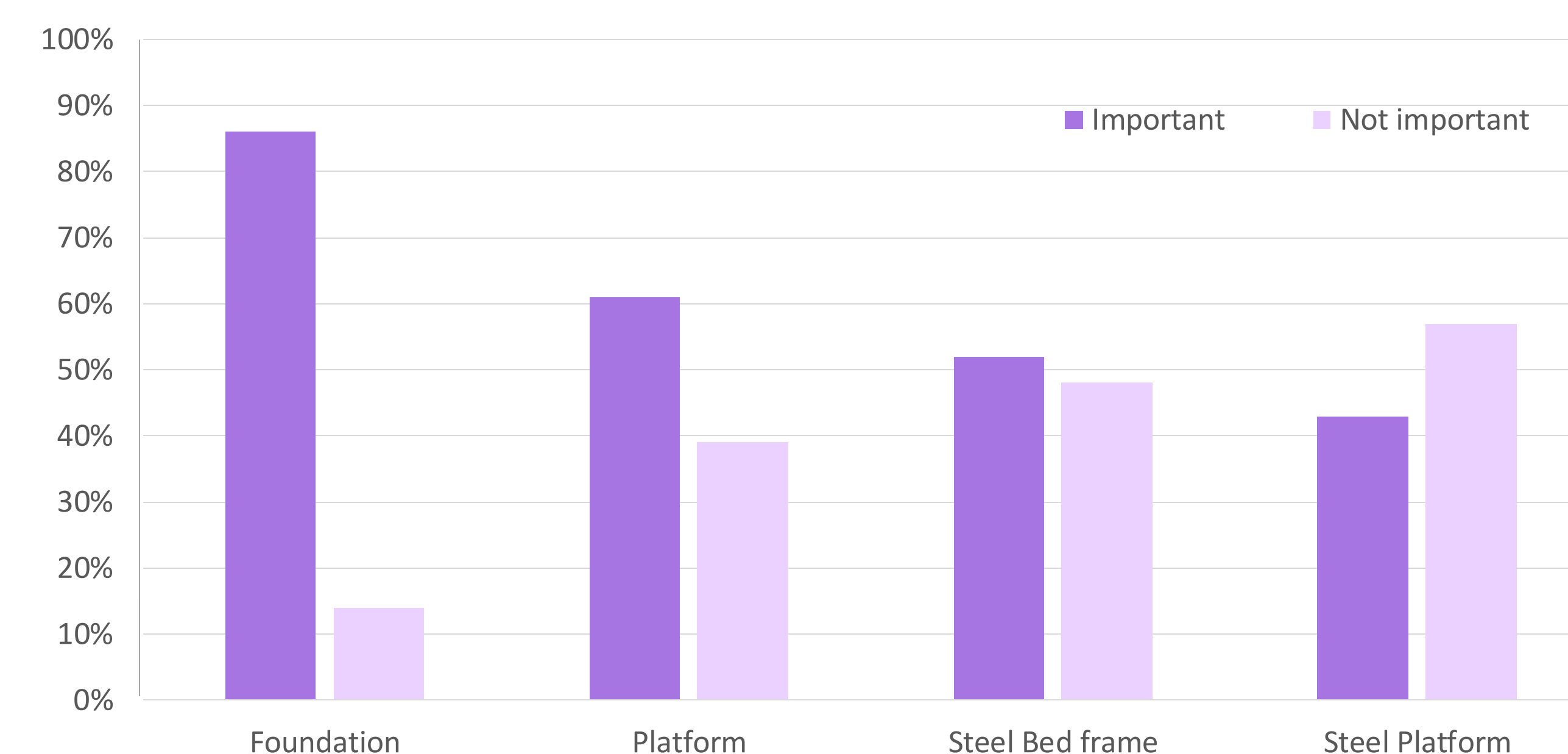
How much customers know and care about mattress support systems



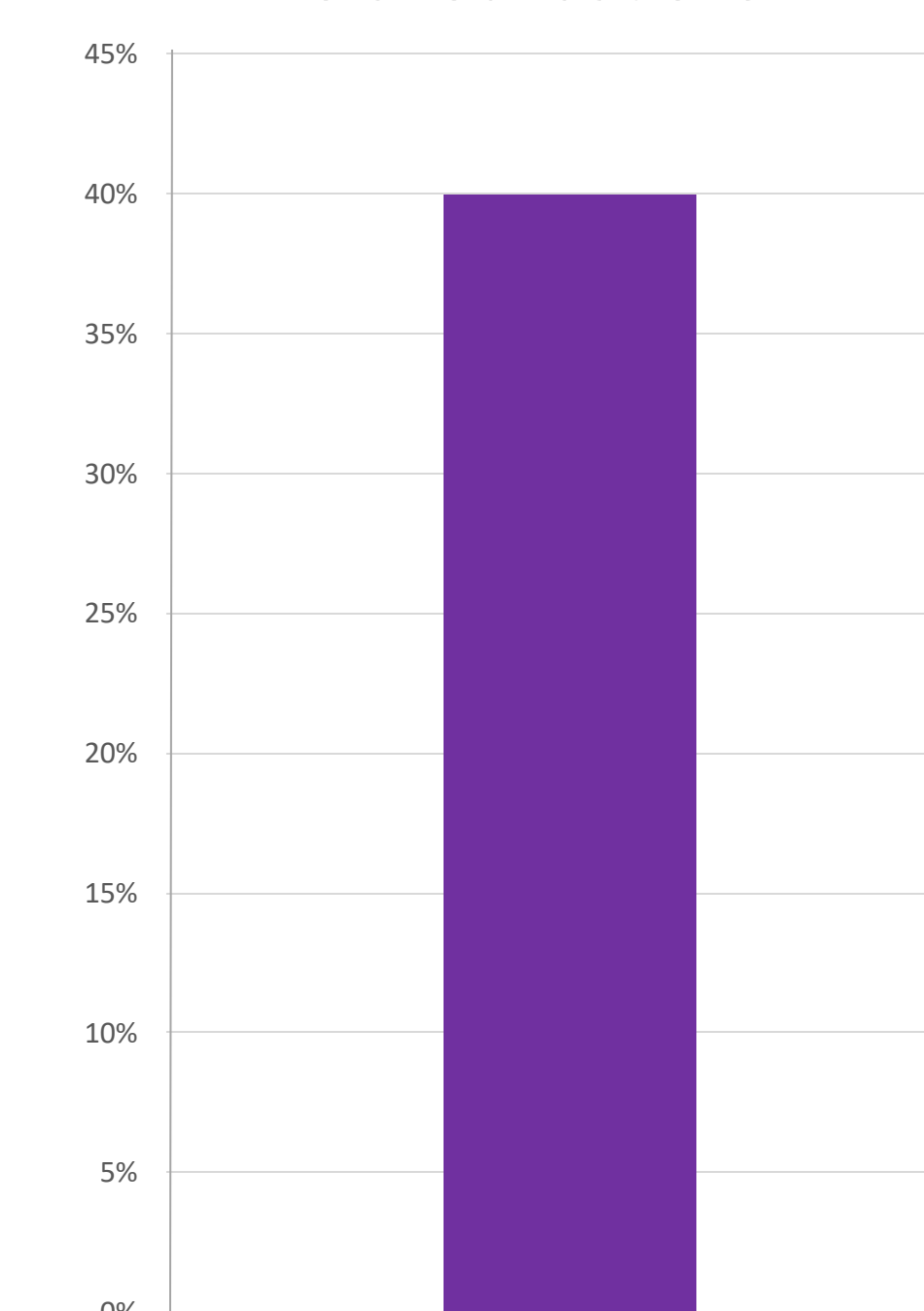
Sales associates’ expectations of customers’ views on the importance of the support system to quality of the mattress



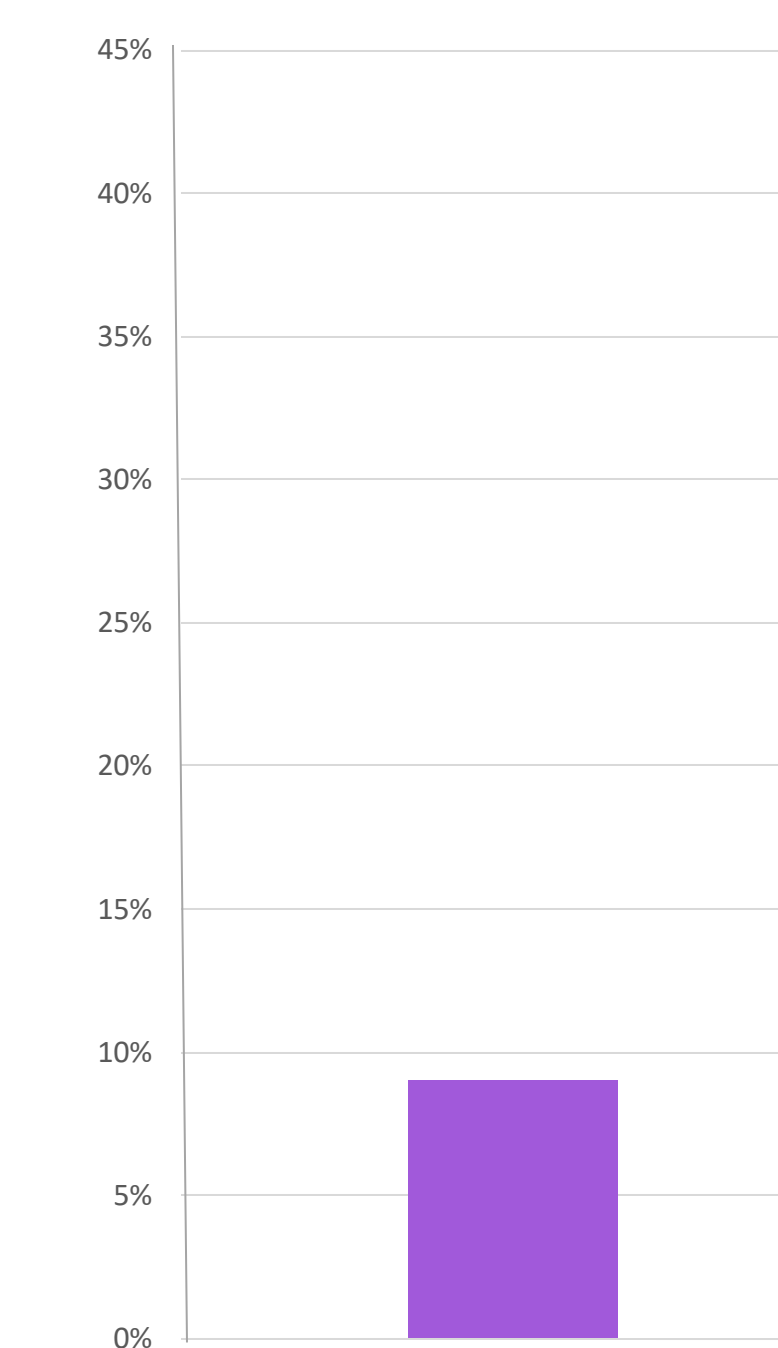
Sales associates' views on how important varying support systems are to the consumer



Percent who use their old foundations



Percent returned mattress



Conclusion

This survey shows that consumers don’t pay enough attention to mattress foundations and their impact on the quality of sleep. Often customers do not want the added expense of replacing a foundation. This is a challenge for retailers. Retailers need to find convincing ways to persuade customers to recognize the foundation’s role in sleep quality. Retailers should talk about foundations at the forefront of the conversation and always talk about the mattress in context of its foundation.

Acknowledgments

This research was conducted in collaboration with Specialty Sleep Association (SSA). This research has given High Point University students the opportunity to hone their research skills. We thank SSA for the opportunity to conduct applied research in a way that matters.