

Podcast Preservation Survey Findings

February 5, 2019

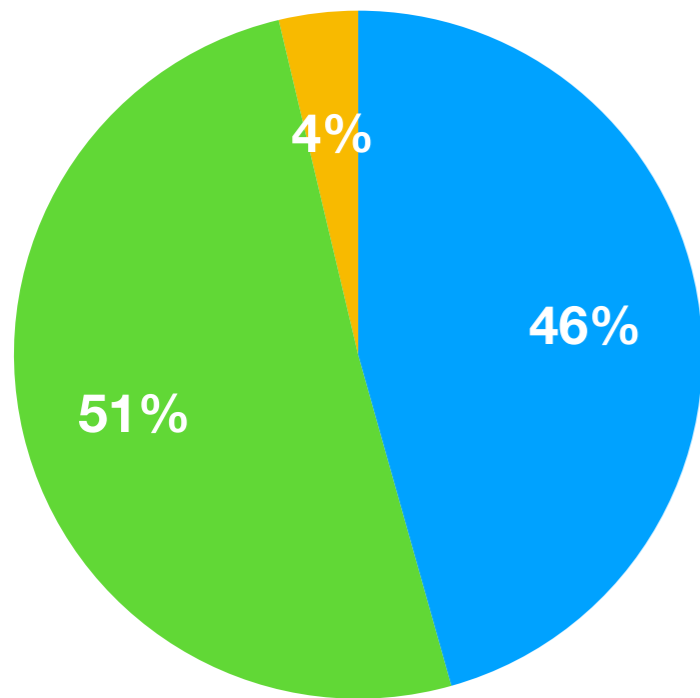
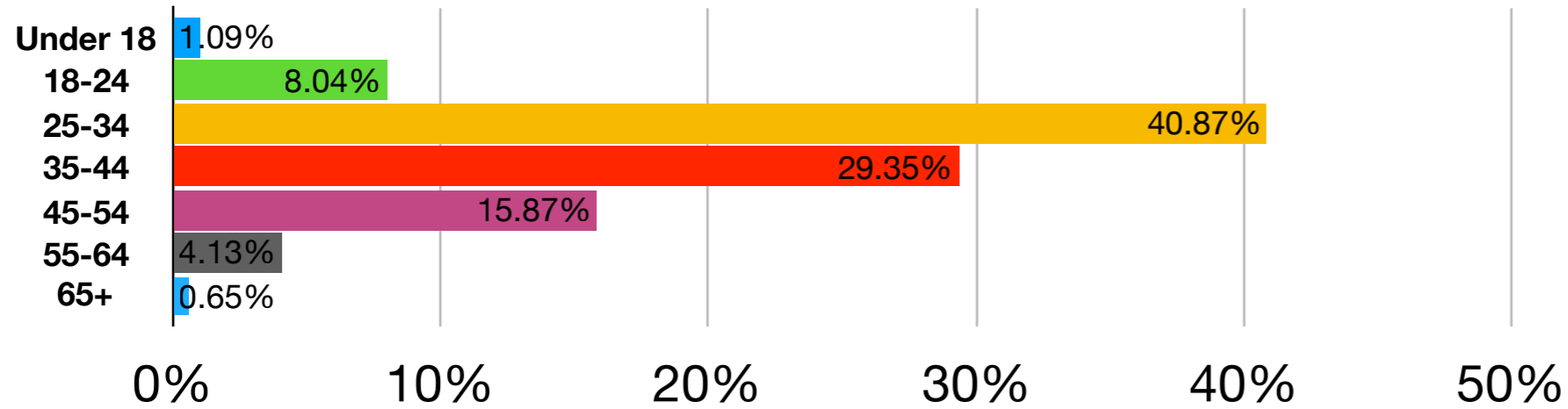


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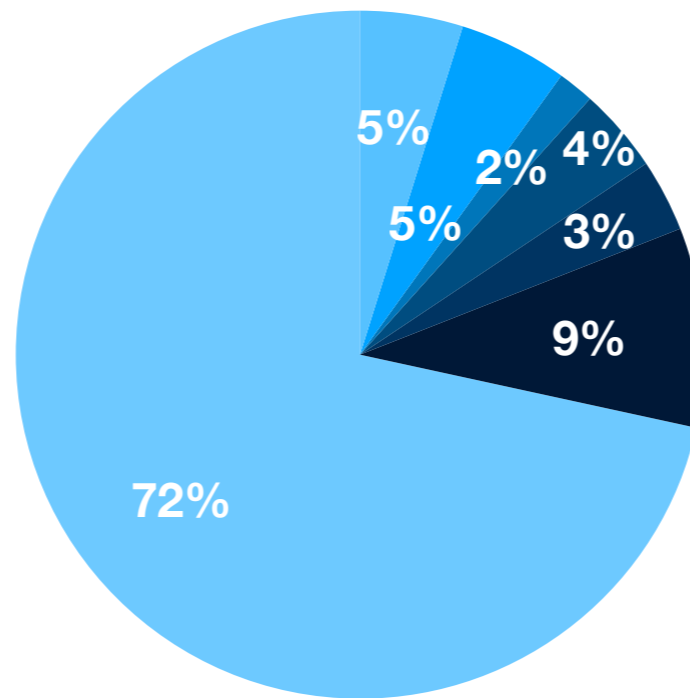


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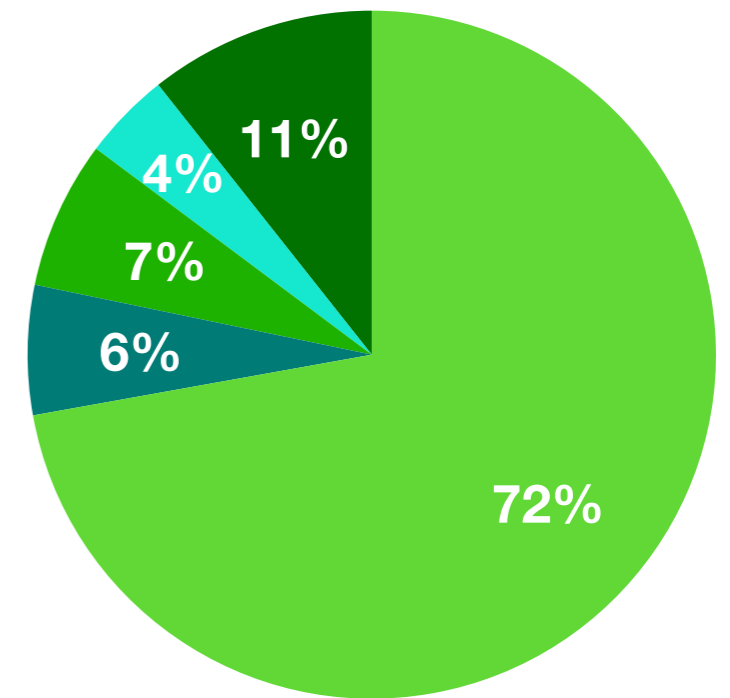
Demographics



- Female
- Male
- Non-binary



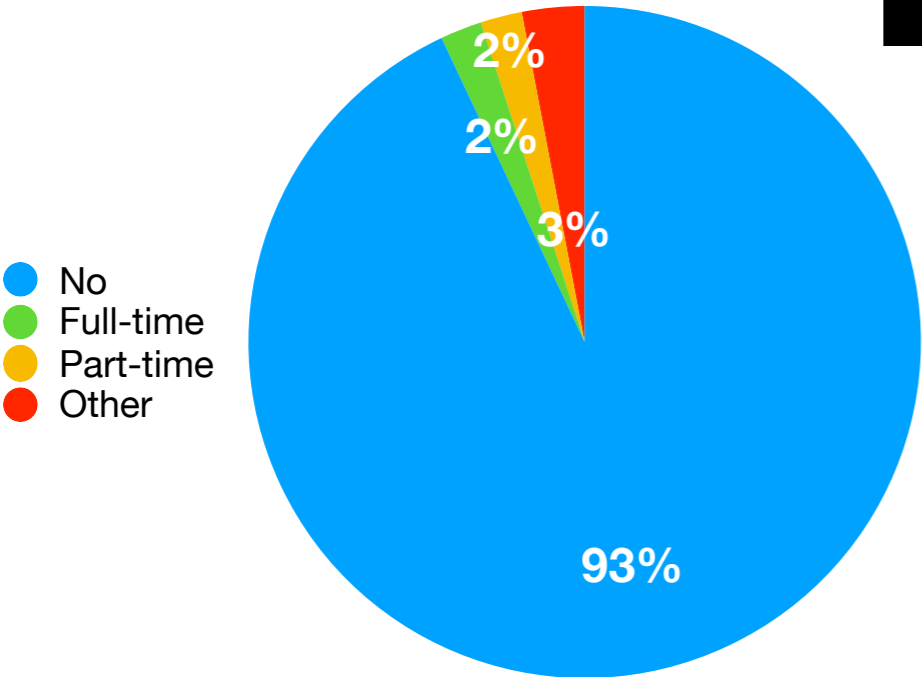
- Asian or Asian American
- Black or African American
- American Indian, Alaska or Hawaii Native
- Another race or ethnicity not listed
- Middle Eastern or North African
- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
- White



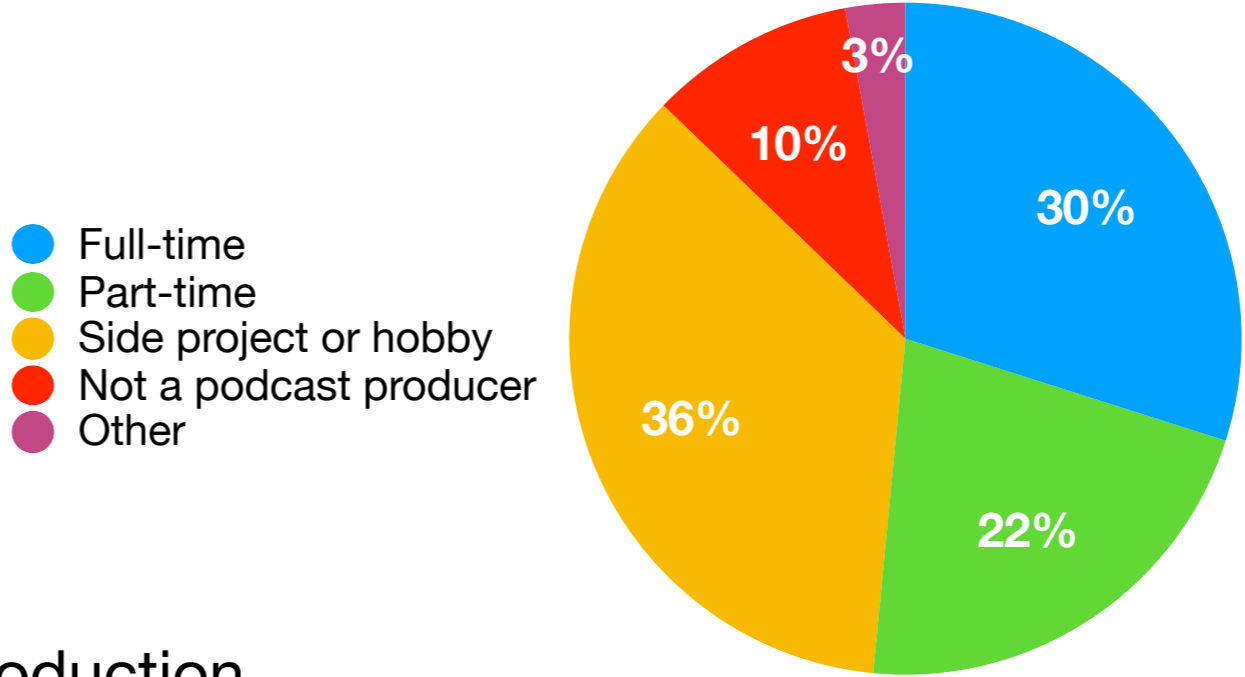
- United States
- Canada
- UK
- Australia
- Other

Occupation(s)

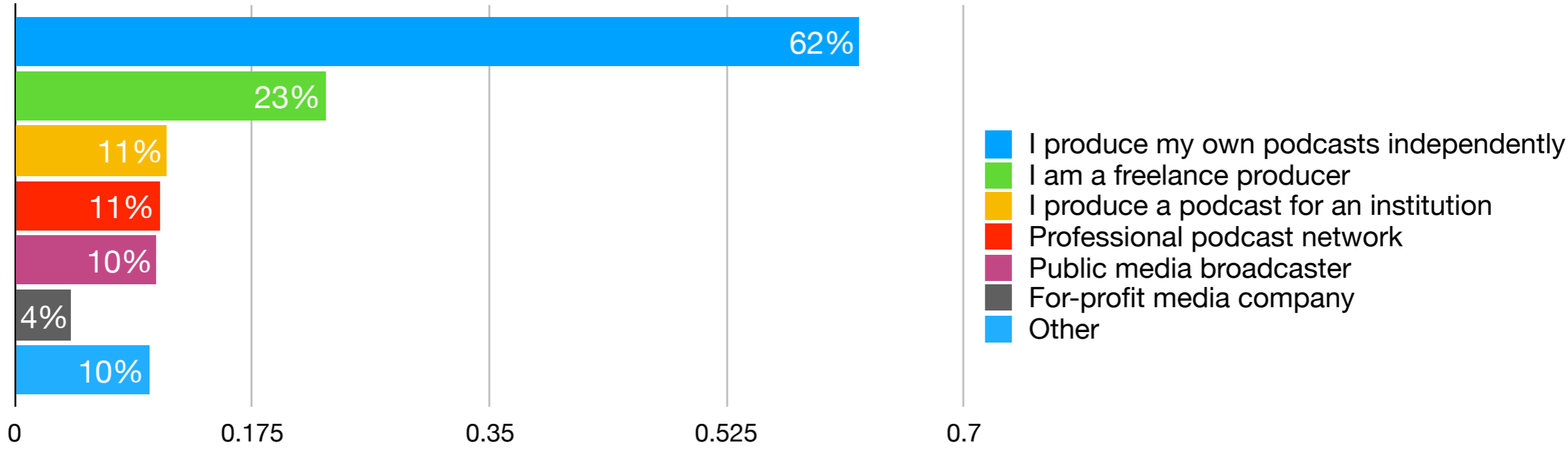
Archivist?



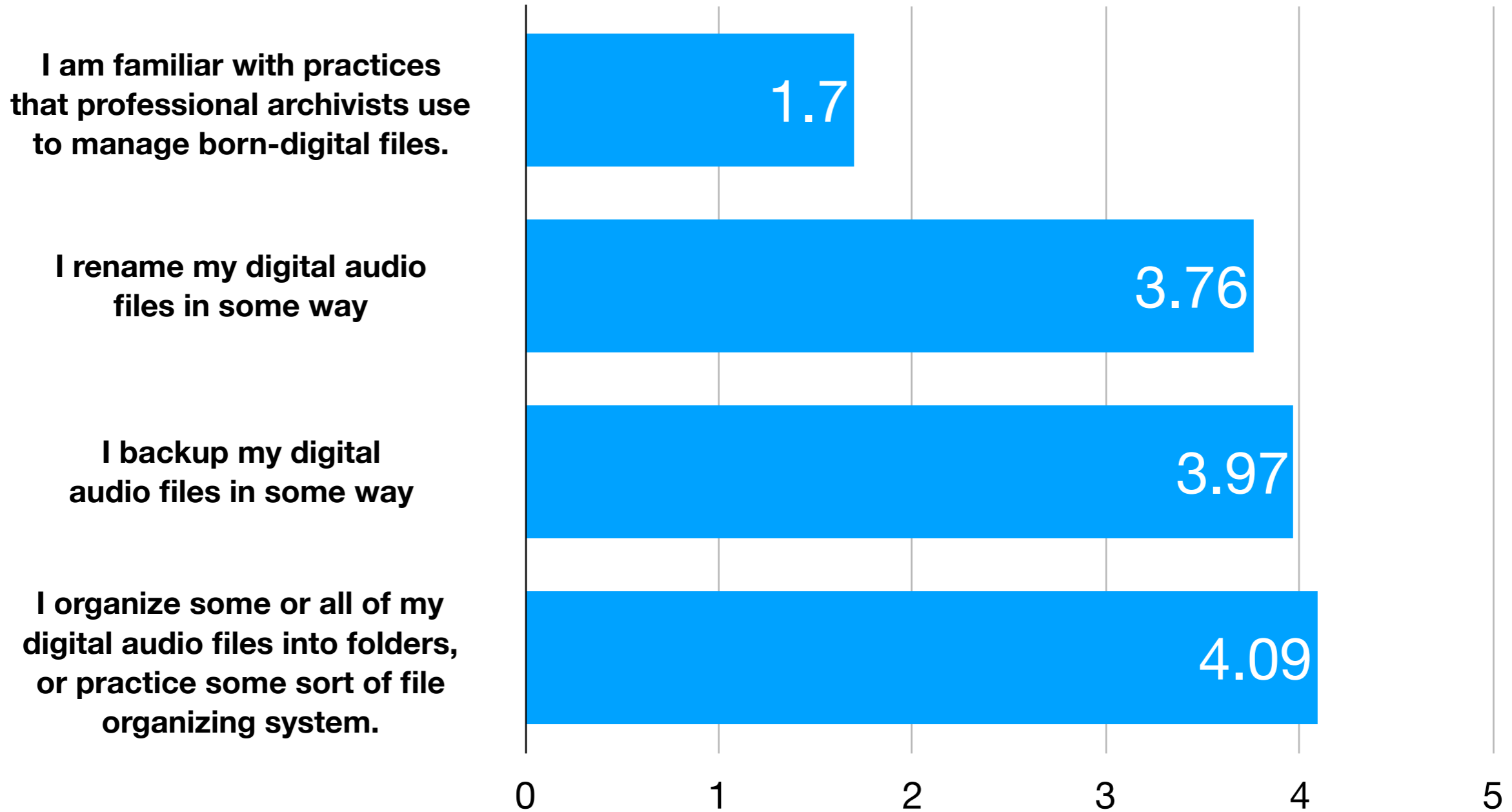
Podcast Producers



Types of Podcast Production

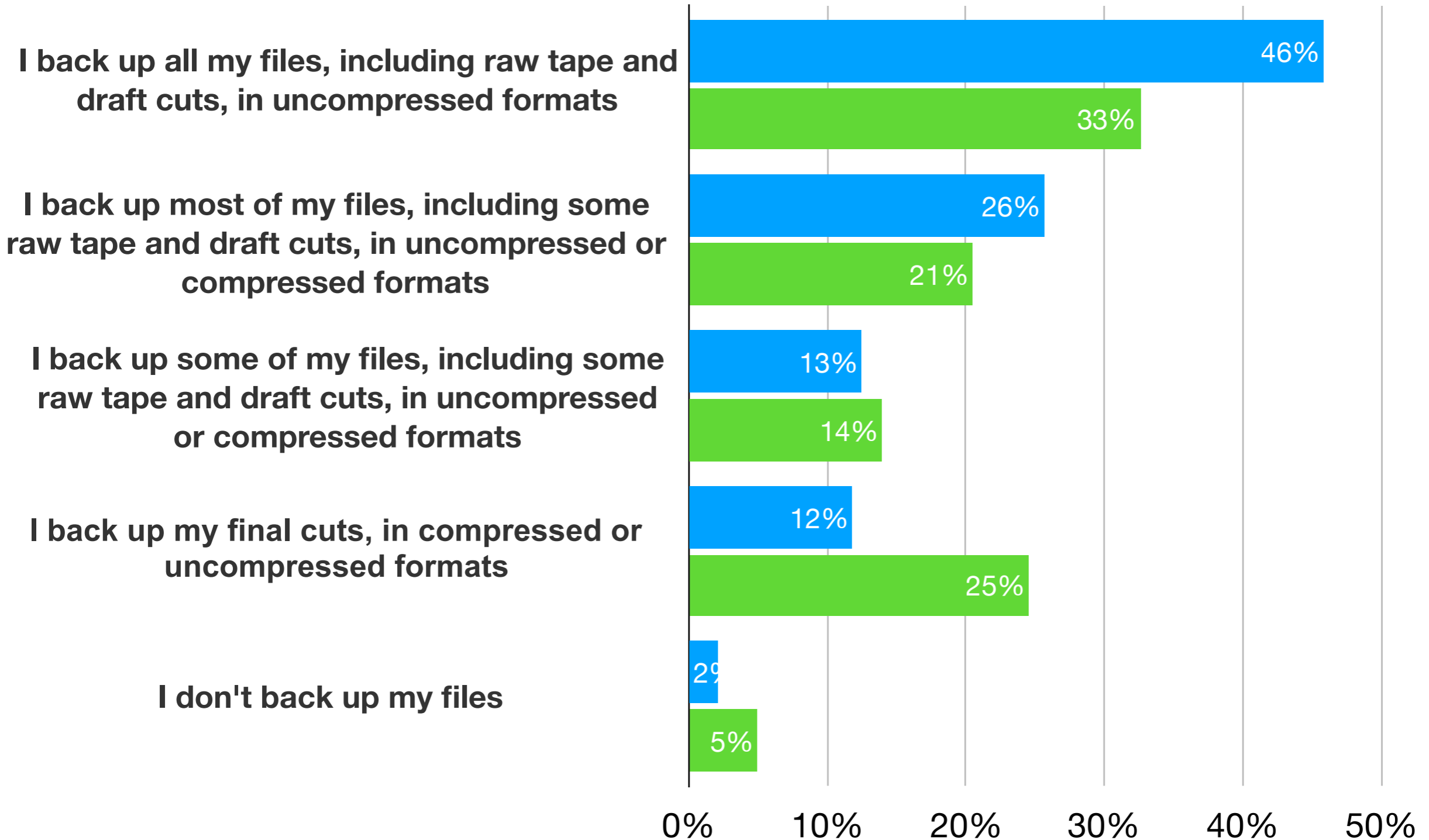


Behaviors

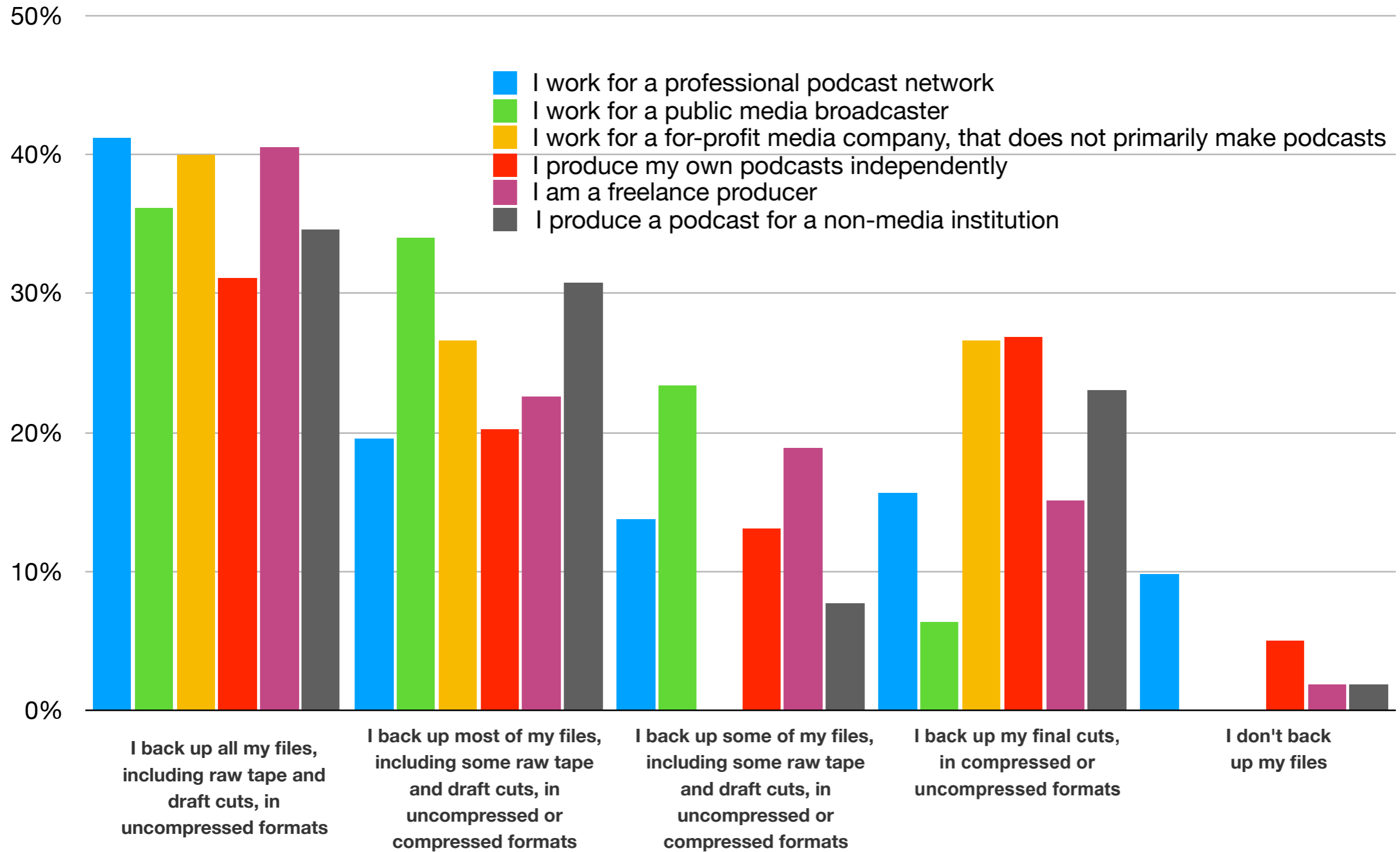


Behaviors

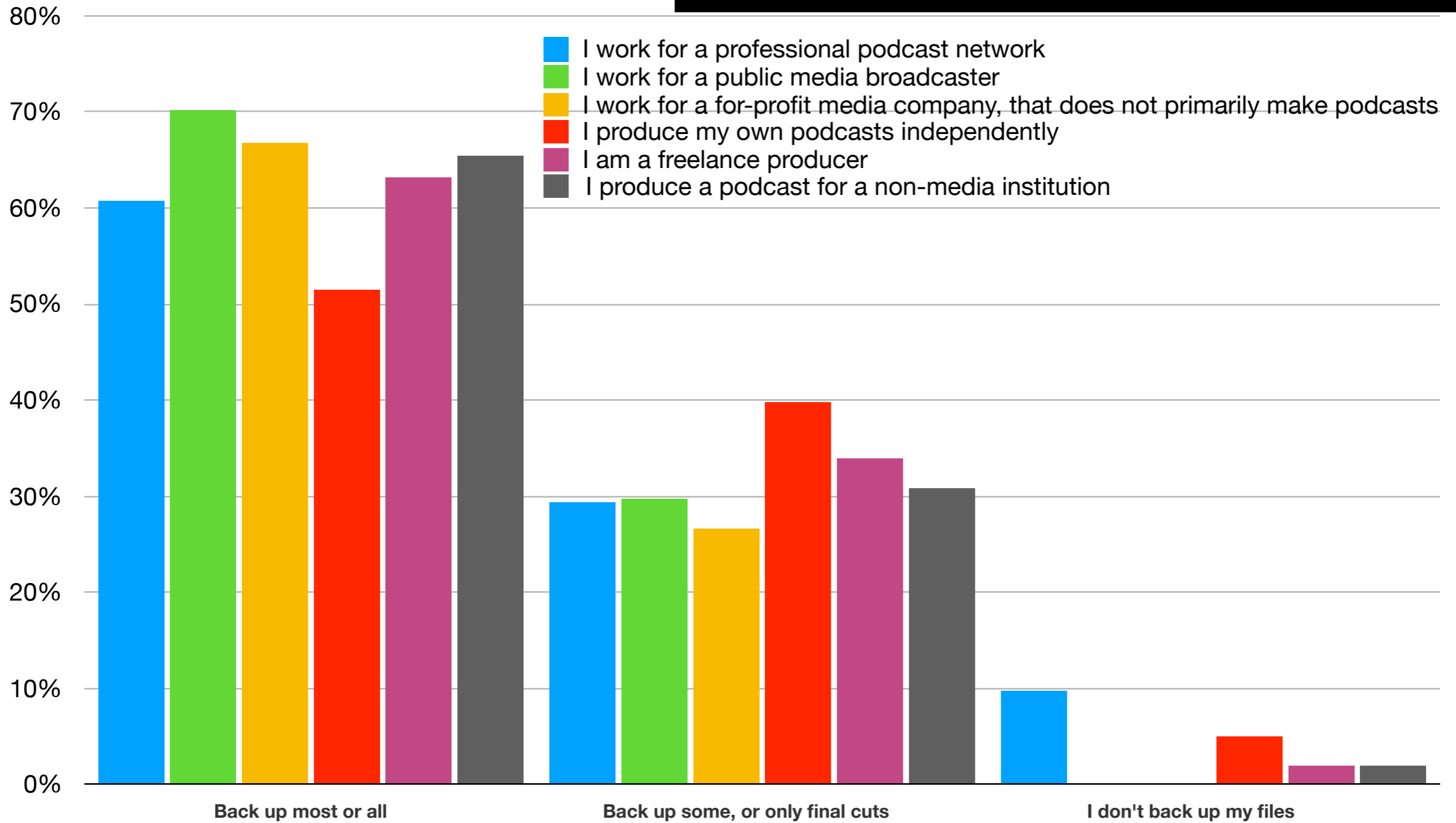
Institutionals
Independents



Behaviors



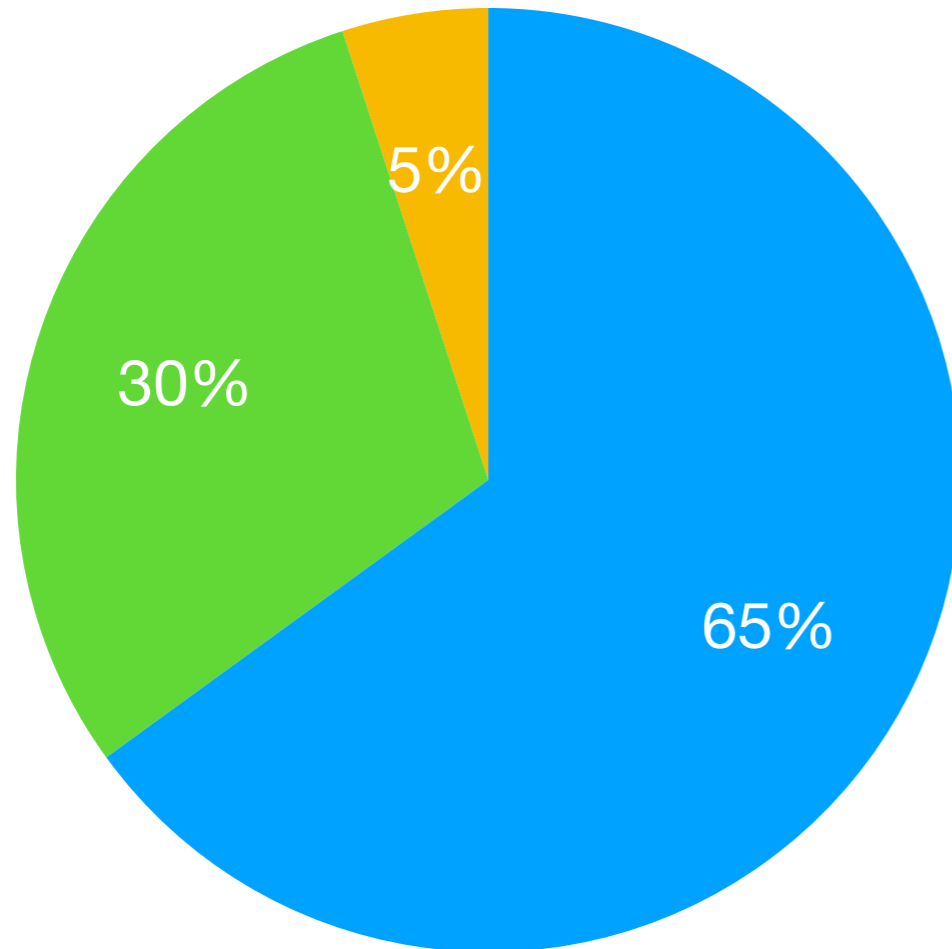
Behaviors



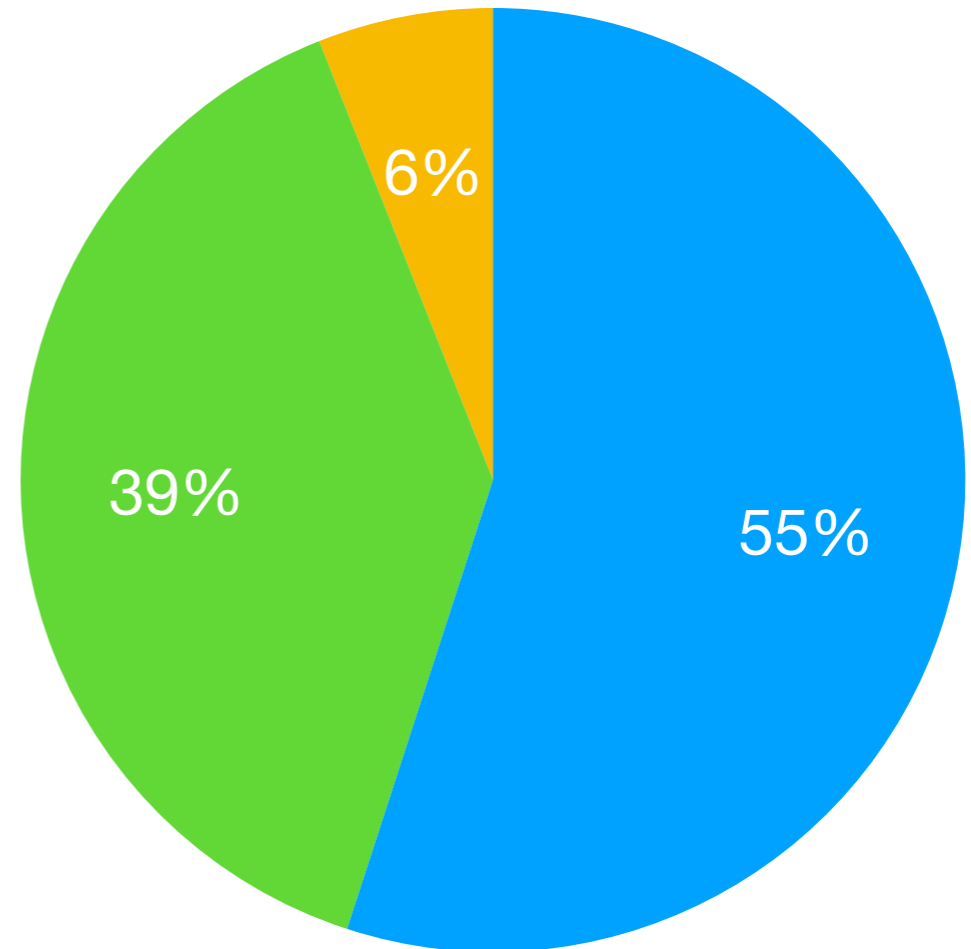
Behaviors

How much of a podcast's files do you preserve?

Institutionals



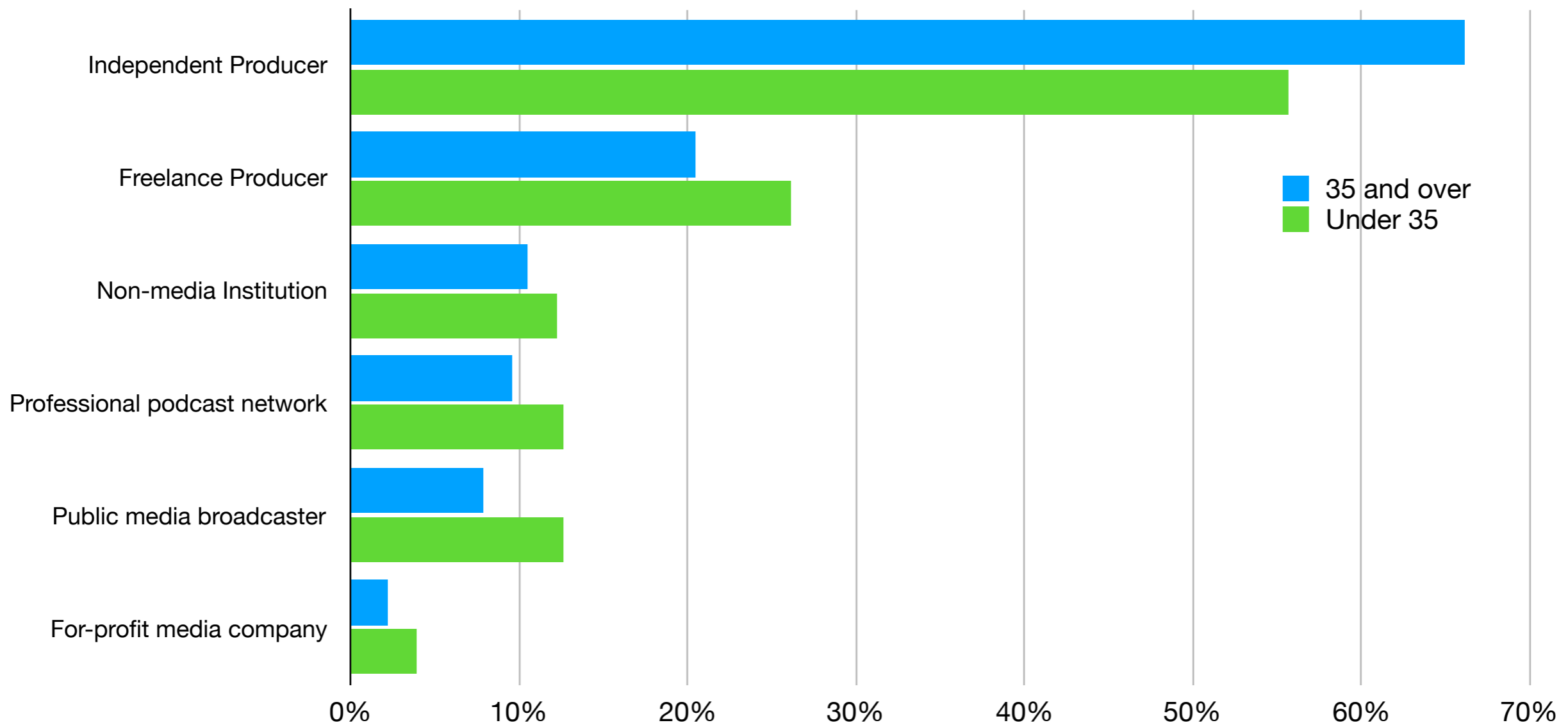
Independents and Freelancers



● Most or all ● Some or final cuts ● None

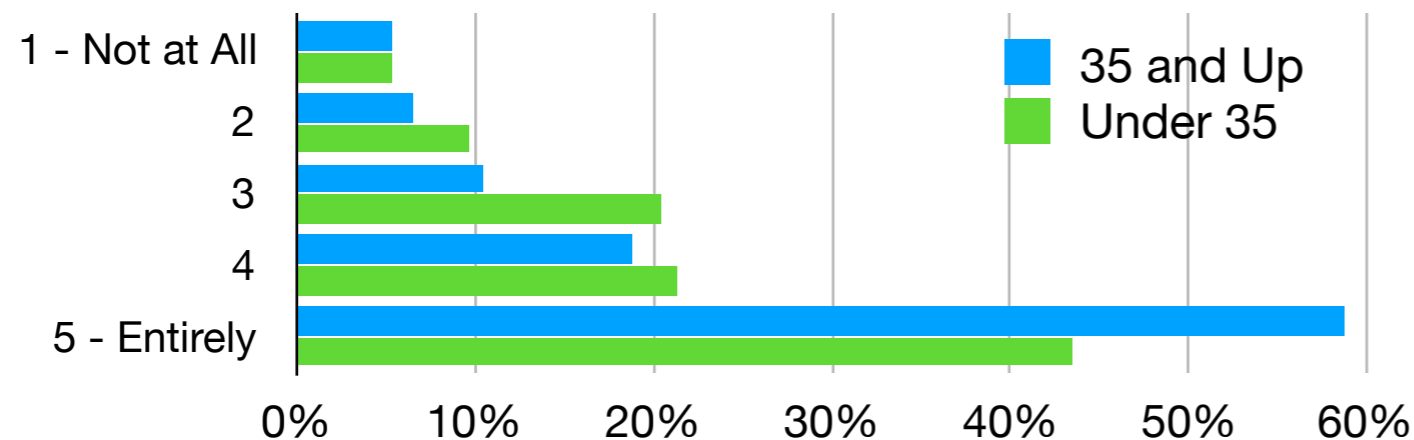
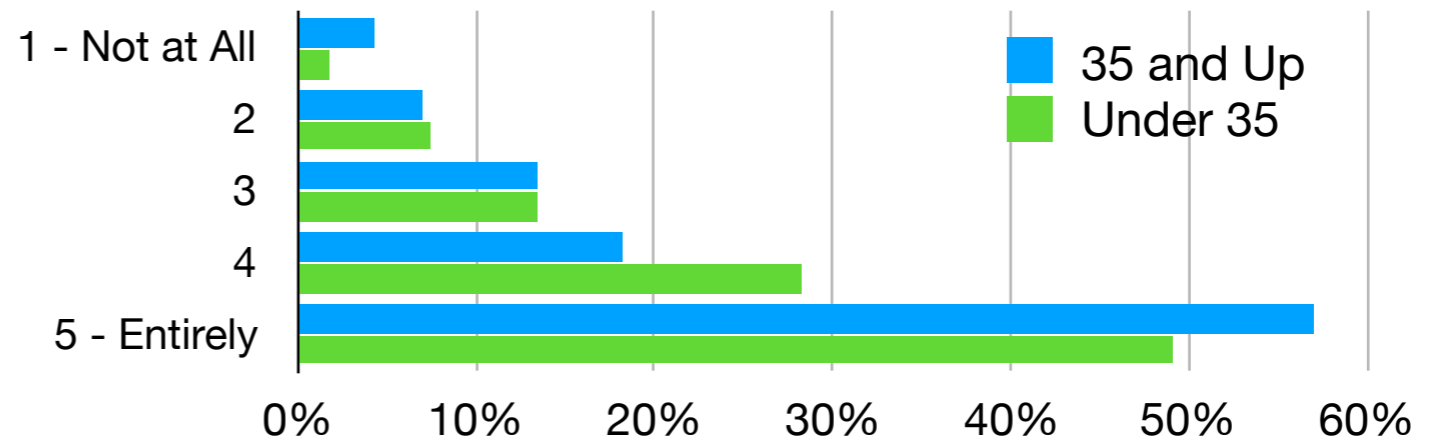
Association - By Age

An interesting and perhaps unexpected finding is that among the respondents, the under-35 cohort was more likely to be employed by an institution of some sort, while 35 and up respondents were more likely to be independent producers



Behaviors - By Age

When asked the degree to which they organized their audio files into a system, and while the average was the same between the two groups, there was divergence in the intensity of response at the top end



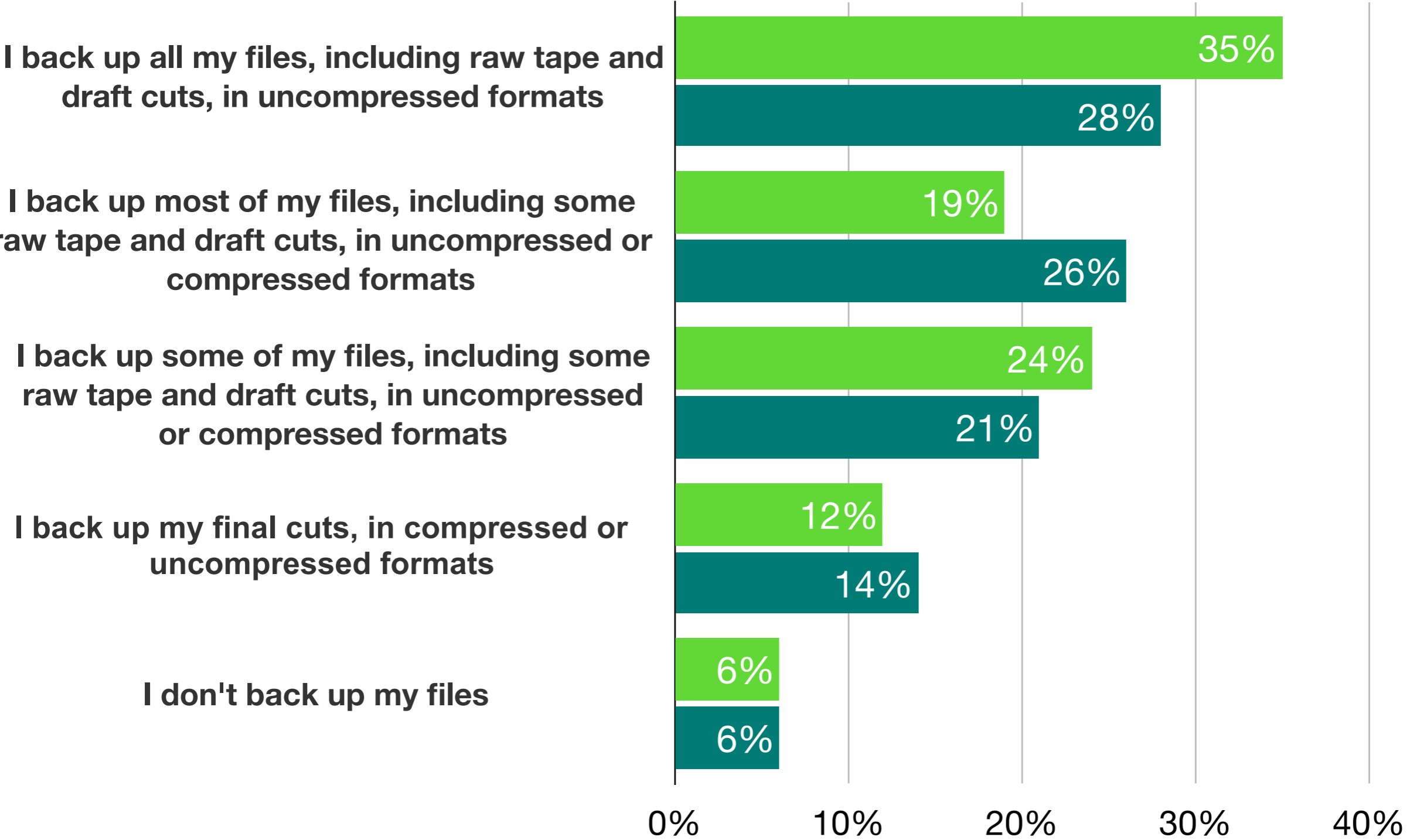
But on the question of backups, there was a clear difference - the average score of under-35s (3.88) was significantly lower than 35 and up (4.20)

Speculatively, this difference may derive from either hard-won experience or the substantial difference in practice of older podcasters who came up in an era before autosave and where storage was at a premium (or both). For younger podcasters who've always had automatic cloud backup and Dropbox instances, perhaps the central urgency of actively backing up has not set in to the same degree.

Behaviors - by Gender

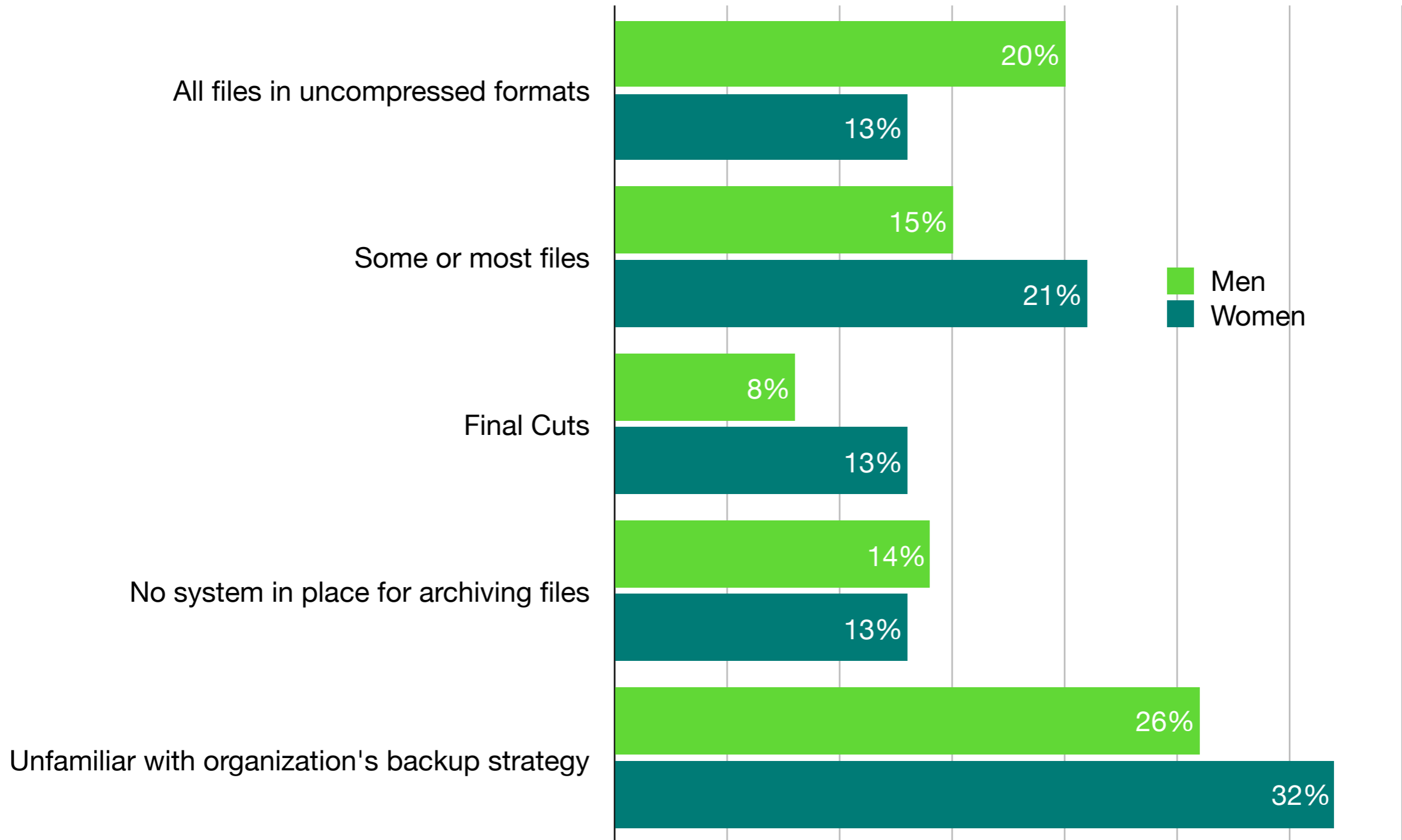
Among respondents, more men than women reported backing up all of their files - though more women back up "most" perhaps suggesting a more structured approach

Men
Women



Among men and women who work for organizations, more men report full preservation policies, while more women report both “some” and final cut preservation - as well as being unaware of organizational policy

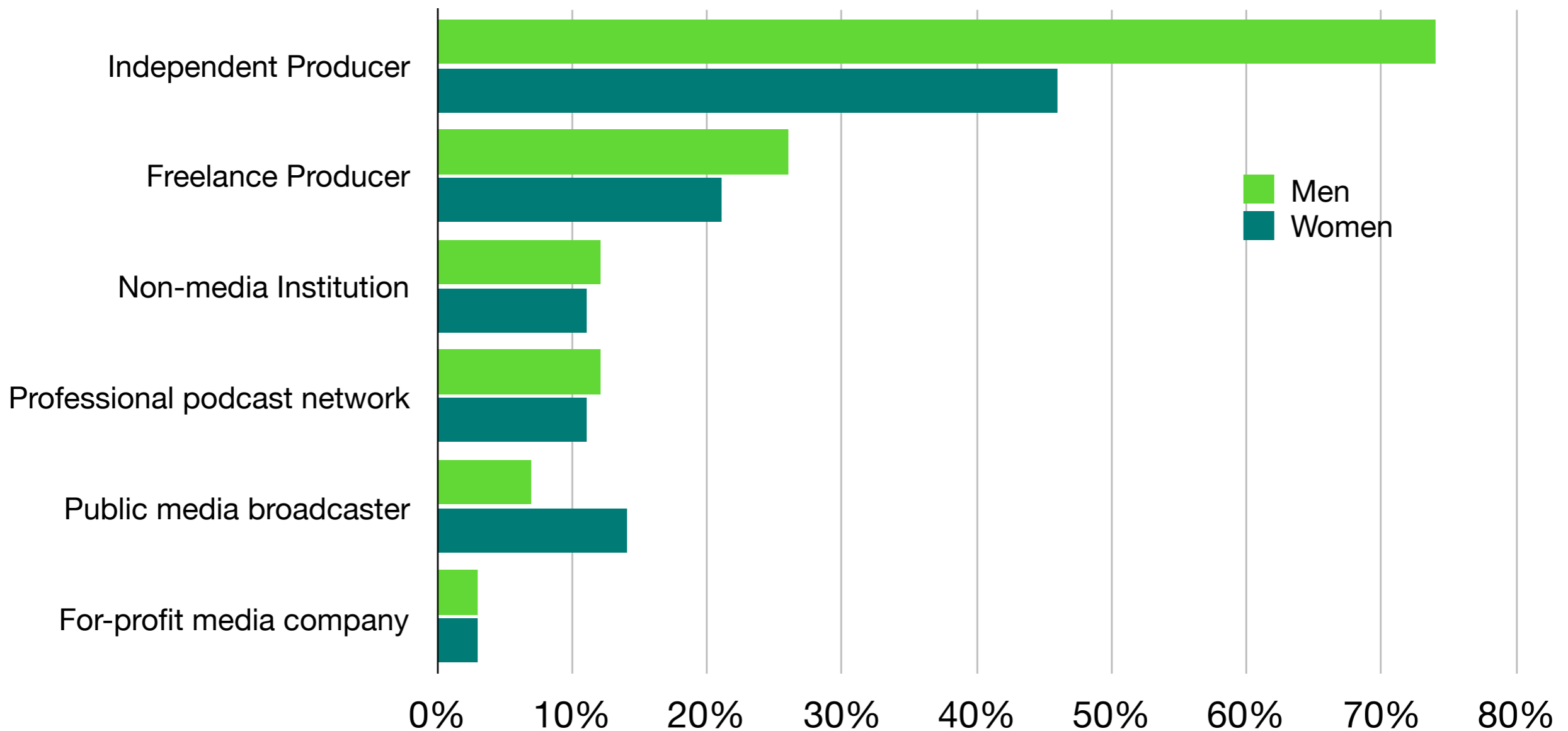
Behaviors - by Gender



Association - By Gender

The men who responded were overwhelmingly more likely to be independent or freelance producers than women (though those statuses were still the top among women respondents).

Women on the other hand were twice as likely to work for public media (14% vs. 7%) as the men in the sample.



Those who back up on the Internet Archive are different!

Internet Archivists

70% produce podcasts independently, as opposed to 49% of the total sample

They also tend to back up on both external hard drives (69%) and cloud storage (65%) - and those who use cloud storage tend to use both Google Drive (67%) and Dropbox (63%)

They feel strongly about the Internet Archive - one says, "All podcasts should have at least their final cut archived at the Internet Archive, as a bare minimum."

Another has made improvements on their own, saying, "I used to only archive raw audio and compressed final cuts. Now, in addition to raw audio and compressed final cuts, I archive each individual track of a final cut (so as to rebuild a multi-track at a later date and make changes, ie for possible updated re-publish), a compressed final cut without any music tracks, and the individual music tracks."

They have broad awareness of institutional issues, as well, as one says, "As someone who works for a public broadcaster, I often worry about whether we're archiving our work properly. Our latest archiving system is relatively new, but I find it difficult to search and retrieve files. Often, I find myself putting final cuts of my work in personal cloud storage because I'm not sure whether I'll be able to find it in our organization's system in a few years."

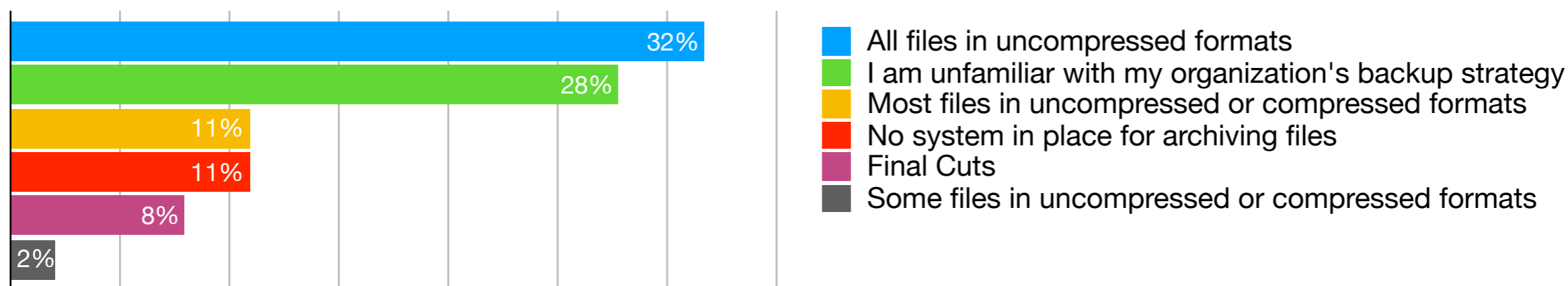
And another pushes for greater public discussion, saying, "I don't think the archiving of digital files is every really discussed among artists who are web-based (musicians, comedians, podcasters, etc). Any basic info somewhere would be extremely helpful."

Even among users who are completists in their preservation practices, organizations don't support that practice

Model Users - Problematic Organizations

27% of respondents back up all their files in uncompressed formats; and of those, 68% work for a larger organization - these are those organizational practices

What's your organization's backup and archival strategy?



This points to a major problem in media organizations - that even for the individuals who are most thorough, over a quarter are unfamiliar with the organizational strategy, and over 10% of those organizations don't even have a backup strategy

One respondent gets to the core of this tension, saying, "I feel like the backups I make I make with the intention that if something happens during a podcast's production - the dreaded coffee spill all over the computer/I get mugged, etc. - I will have another copy. I don't know that I've thought much about storing them for the long term. If I leave my position, I don't think they have a plan in place to maintain the files. I might take some with me (for example, wavs of final episodes) but would I take everything? Probably not."

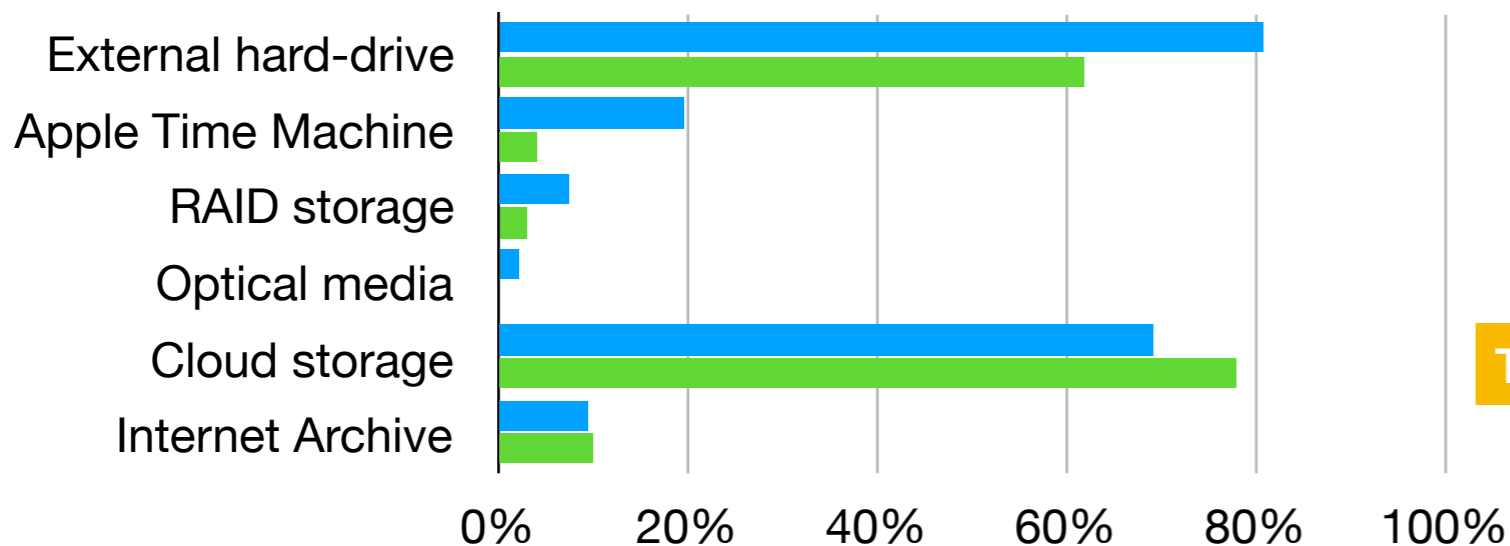
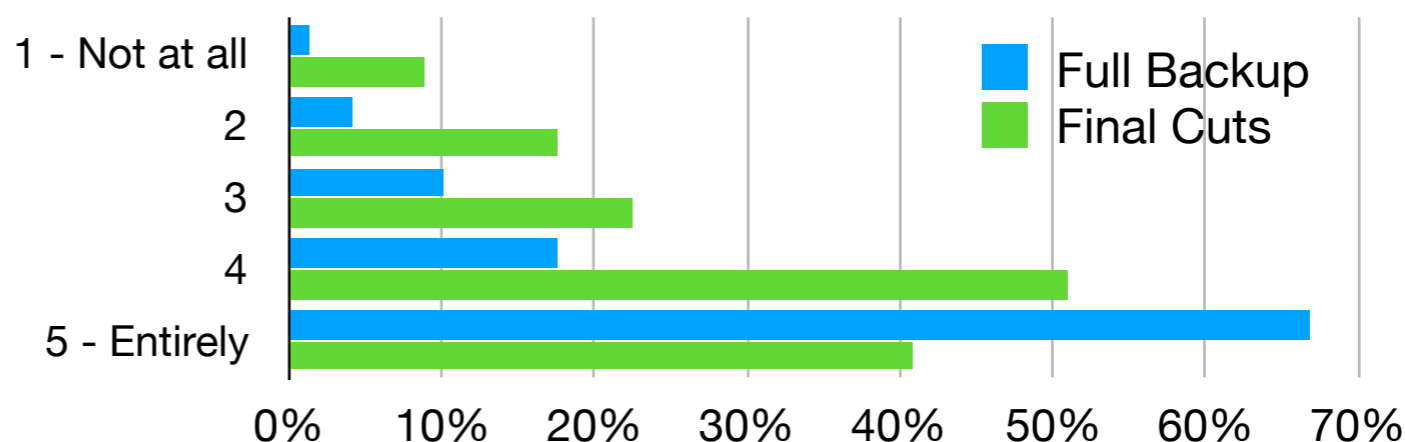
And even some of these completists feel at sea - one says, "I'm a mess, please help! I feel generally lost and know I am not being organized in the best way."

Comparing the samples of those who back up all files in compressed formats (27%) vs. those who only back up final cuts (18%) is revealing

Full Backup vs. Final Cuts

27% of respondents back up all their files in uncompressed formats; and of those, 68% work for a larger organization - these are those organizational practices

When asked the degree to which they organized their audio files into a system, those who make full backups recorded much higher overall scores (4.45) than those who only backup final cuts (4.16)



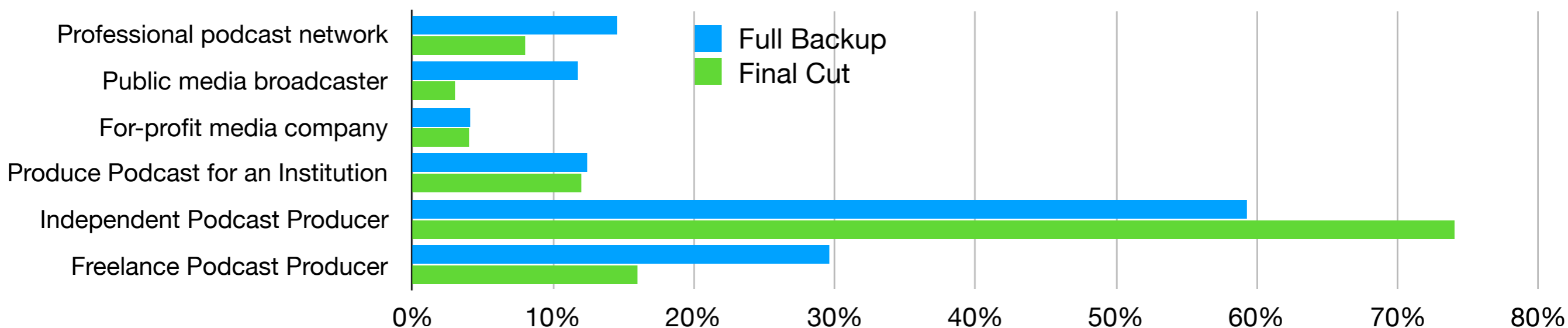
Those who made full backups were significantly more focused on using external hard drives (81%) than final cut users (62%); similarly they used Apple Time Machine far more (20% vs. 4%)

The inverse was true of cloud storage (70% vs. 78%)

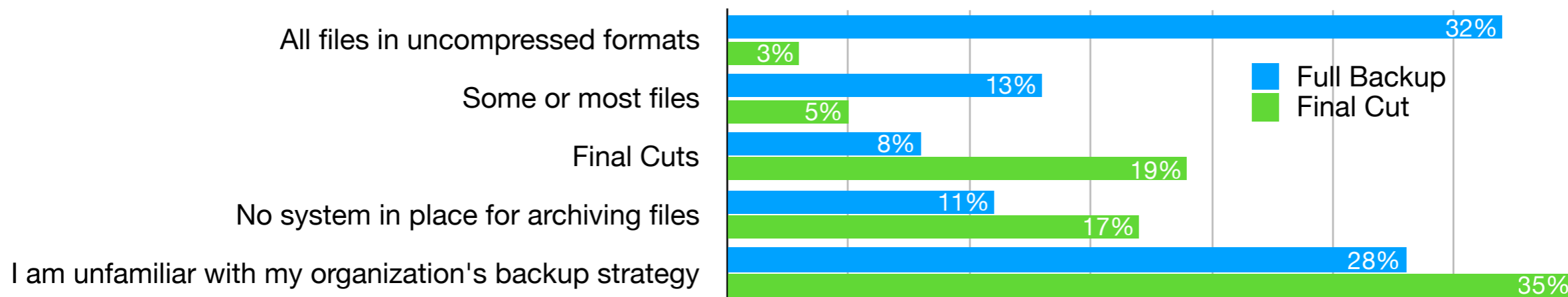
Comparing the samples of those who back up all files in compressed formats (27%) vs. those who only back up final cuts (18%) is revealing

Full Backup vs. Final Cuts

Those who make full backups tend to wear more hats (avg. 1.4 affiliations) than those who only backup final cuts (avg. 1.2), and are more represented in public media, and professional podcast networks, whereas those who only backup final cuts tend to be more often independent podcast producers



Among those who work for an organization, those organizations' strategies and institutional awareness seem to have a strong relationship with individuals' own practices - the contrast is strongest when the policy is in accordance with the users' own practice, and again, it is striking how often both users are unaware of their organizations' strategy



Only a very small share of respondents (<7%) don't back up their files at all. What else can we learn from these outliers?

The Precarious Outliers

A plurality also don't rename their audio files (49%) or organize them into some sort of file system (46%)

For those who have an institutional affiliation, a plurality (47%) also aren't familiar with that organization's backup practices

One of these respondents shows the need for better education around these practices, saying, "We don't manage this well and I would like to get better at it. We work with the KSU library very effectively to manage our print digital files (from newspaper, magazines) but have yet to cross this river."

The small size of this sample is hopeful, and the responses show that along with even the best individual practice, better institutional policies can help close the gap and promote better preservation practices

Other Thoughts

“Releasing all my podcasts with a Creative Commons 4.0 license allows others to download, store, rehost and distribute without any copyright issues. As long as the attribution is not edited out, anyone can do anything with the files. I hope this encourages or allows any archiving or library service, or third party hosting service, to do with them what they want, including commercial exploitation.”

“We have 20 years of audio to back up. Our final cuts are all available online, but we need a better system for backing up raw audio files and sessions. We are looking into cloud storage.”



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