



The Accessibility Divide in the Mobile Phone Market

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Inclusive Technologies



<http://bit.ly/MobileAccess2017>



CACP is an R&D policy unit at the Georgia Institute of Technology, with a focus on advanced communications. CACP is the home of the Wireless RERC which aims for a transformative future that will increase inclusion of people with disabilities.

Our process:

Research • Accessible Product Development • Neutral Authority to Inform Policy

Study Aim

Provide evidenced-based regulatory recommendations regarding the state of mobile phone accessibility.

- The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) 2018 biennial evaluation of the impact of regulations that implement the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA).
- Requested stakeholder “input on the state of accessibility of “mobile” or wireless services, including basic phones and feature phones (collectively referred to herein as non-smartphones), as well as smartphones.”
- 2017 Mobile Phone Accessibility Review.

Why?

Policy

- Proposed rules
- Final rules

Industry guidance and standards

- Tech development
- Business practices

The market

- Accessibility features in mainstream wireless technologies

The user experience

- Improved access to and utility of devices and services
- Increased adoption and decreased abandonment





Mobile Phone Accessibility Features

214 Mobile Phones evaluated
Presence of 26 features



Accessibility by Provider Type

Five Lifeline Carriers
Four Wireless Carriers
One Prepaid Carrier



Accessibility by Phone Type

Smartphone
Non-smartphone



Accessibility by Type of Disabilities

Visual Disabilities
Hearing Disabilities
Cognitive Disabilities
Mobility Disabilities



Carrier Type

Lifeline
Tier 1



WEA-Capability

Methods

Study Limitations

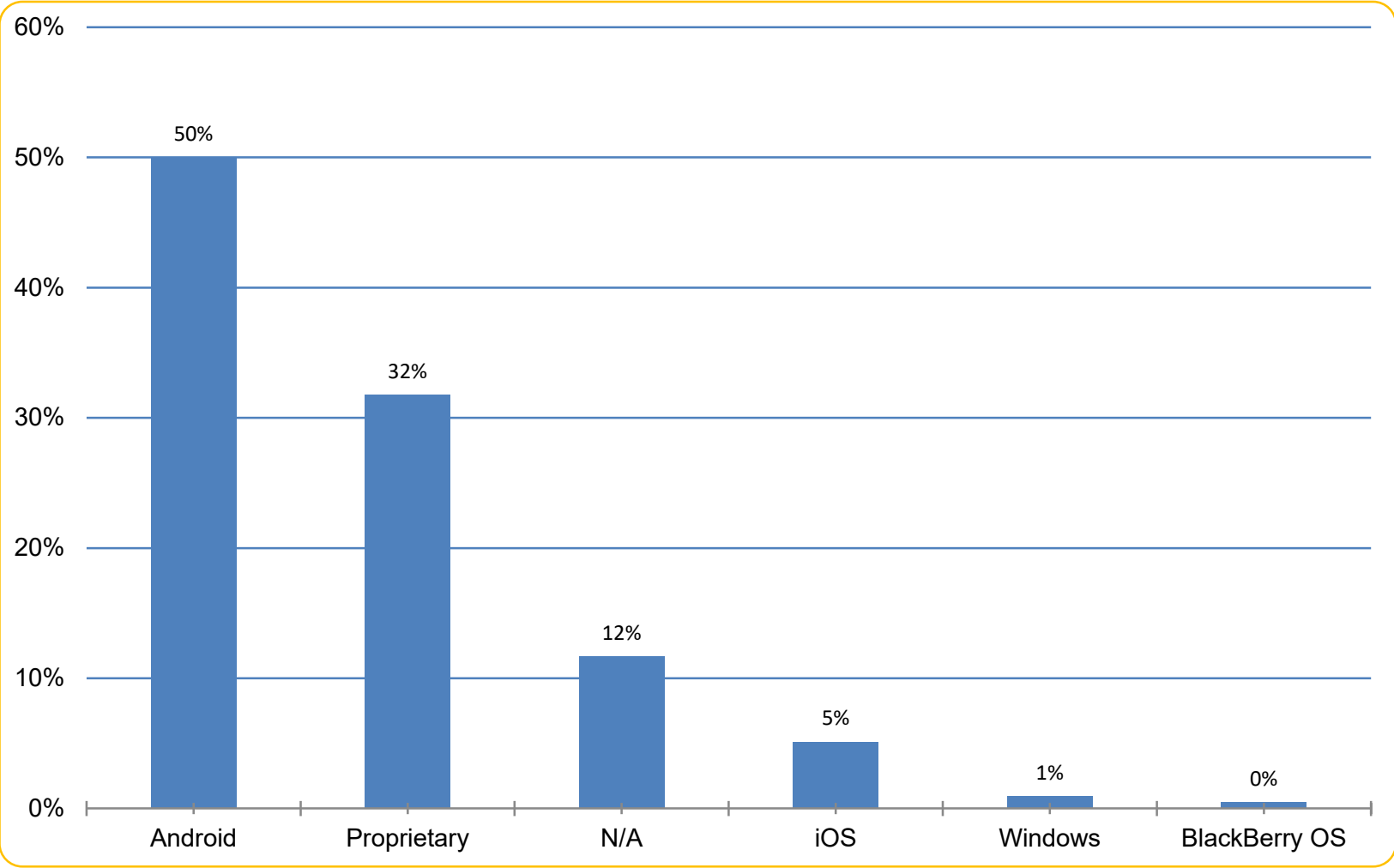
- Features included in the review are not an exhaustive list.
- For many of the features, information about whether it was included in the phone could not be found.
- We cannot conclusively state that the features *are* or *are not* present.



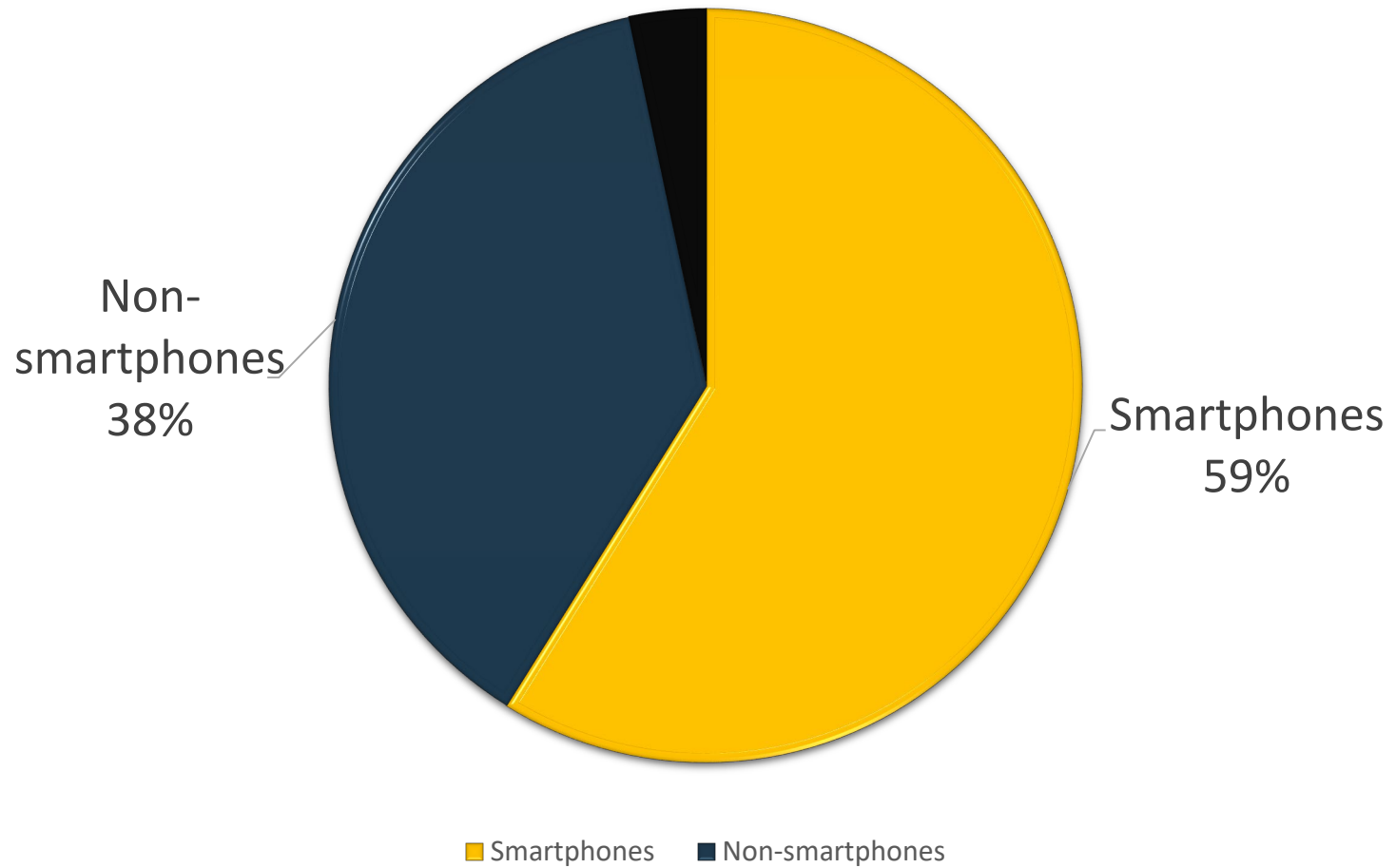


Results

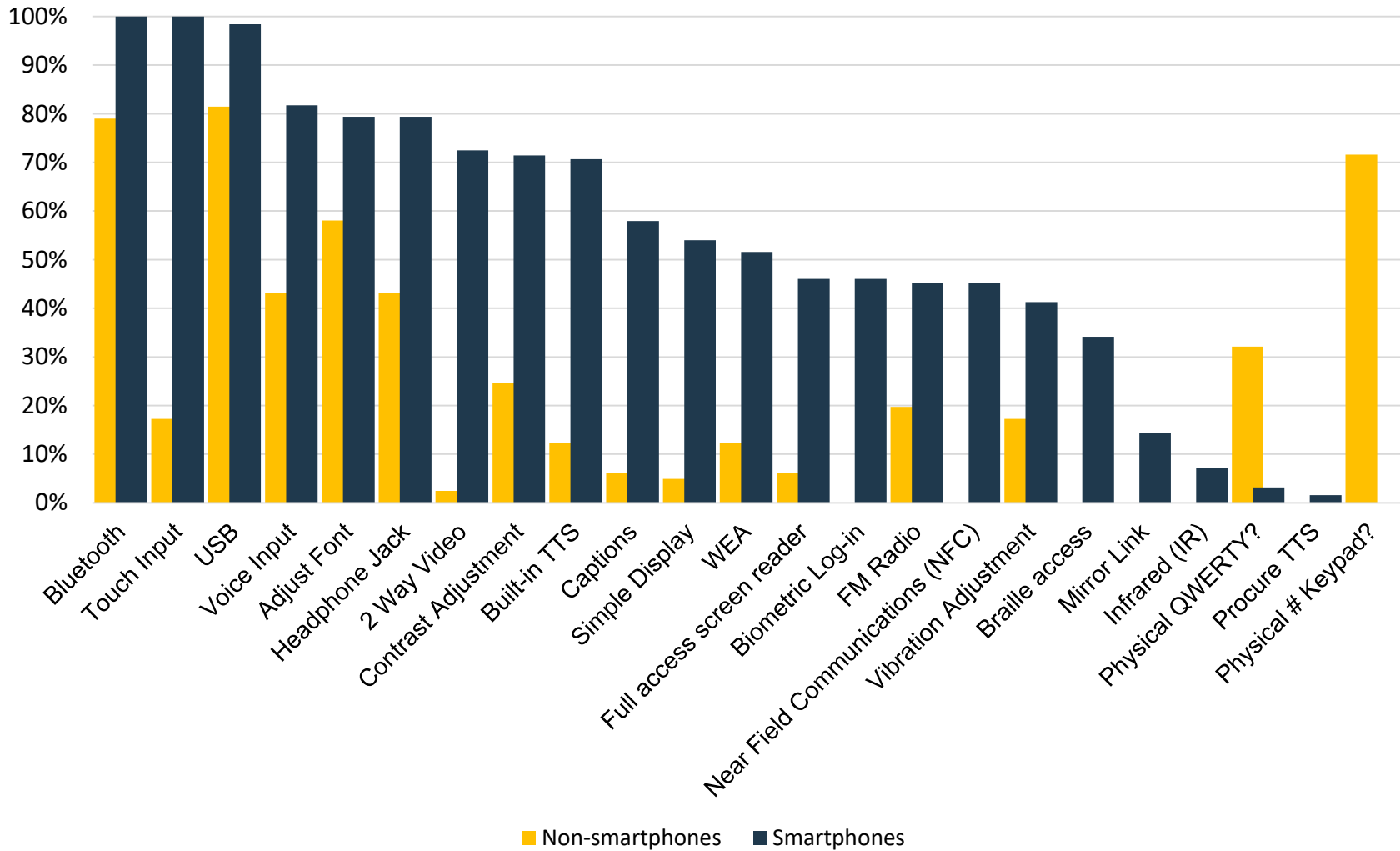
Operating Systems

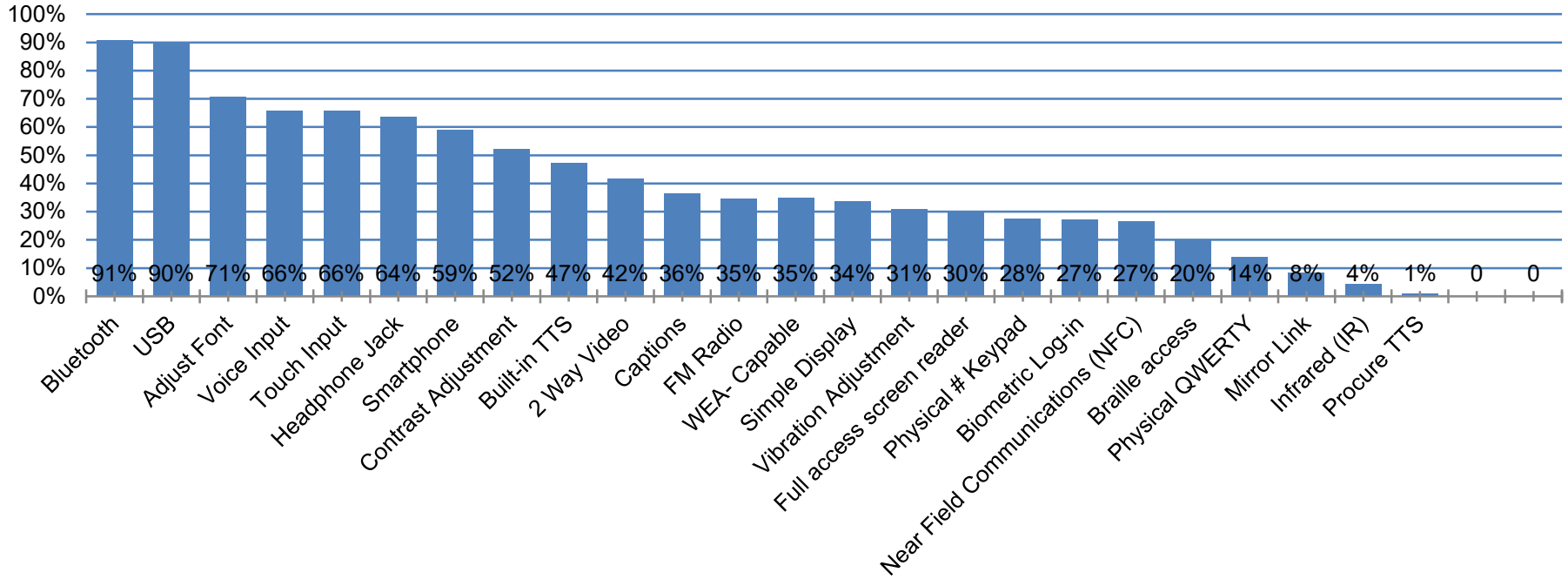


Phone Type

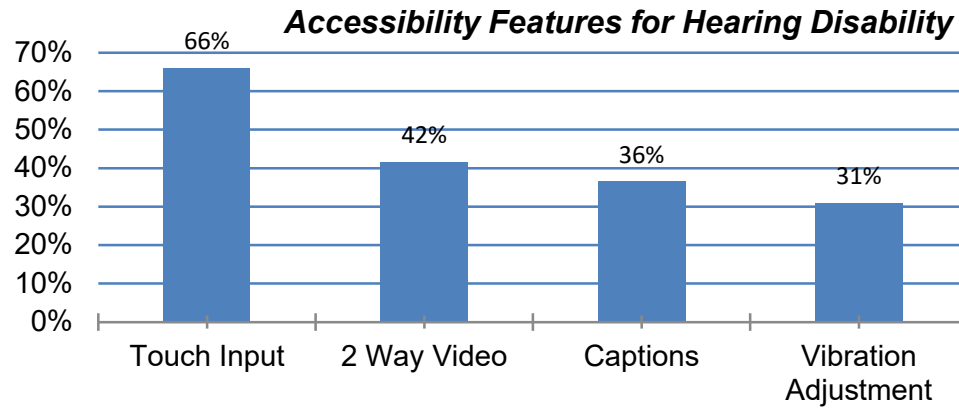
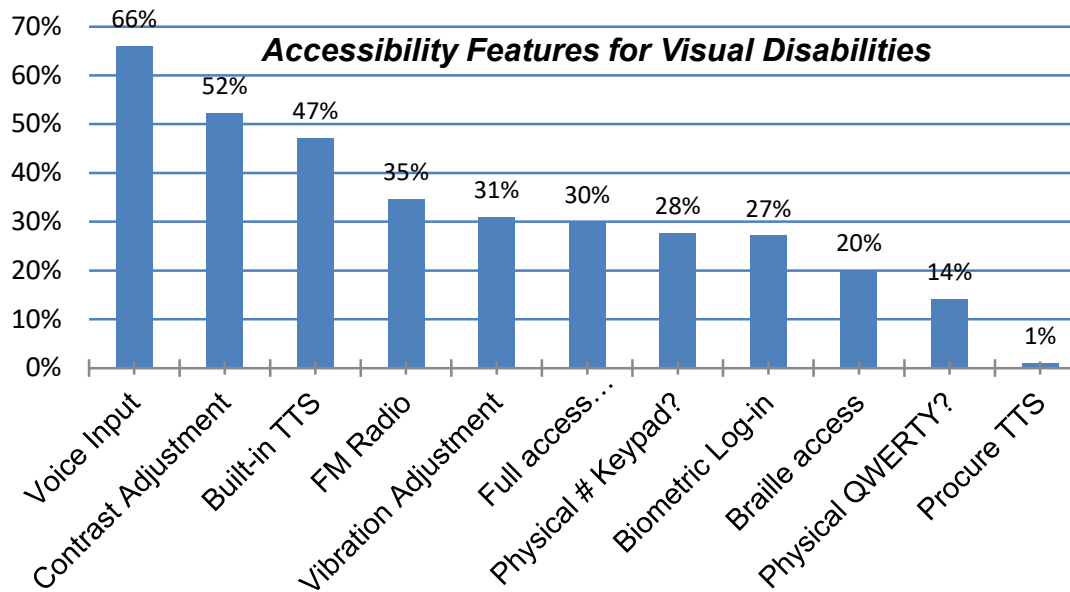


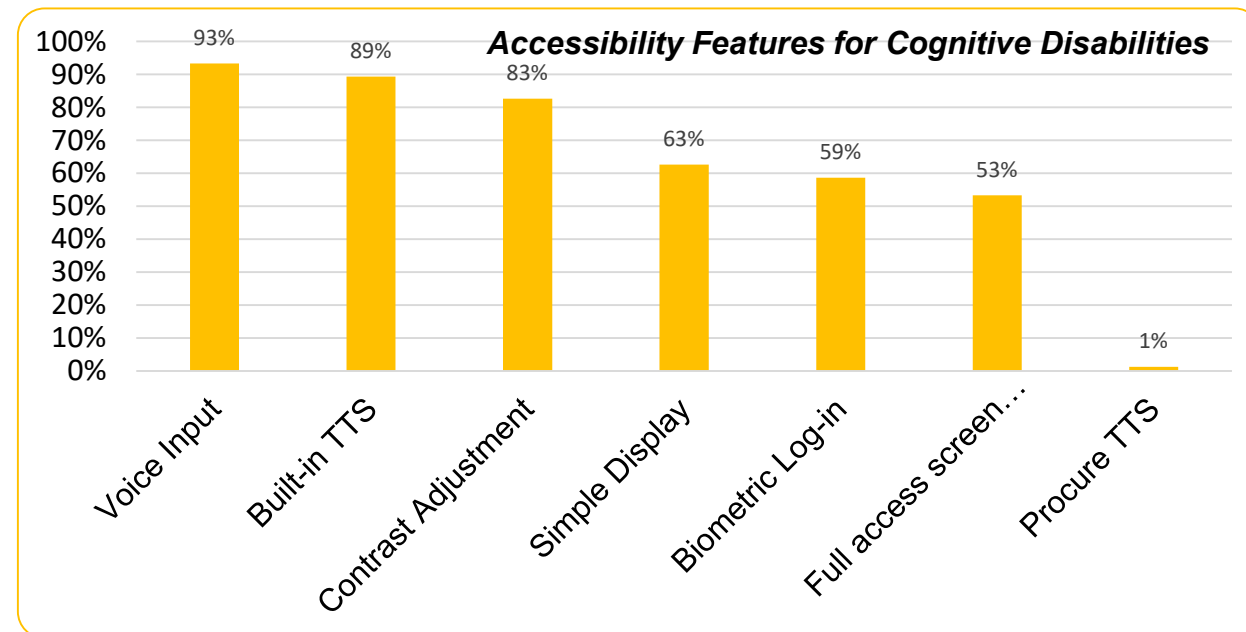
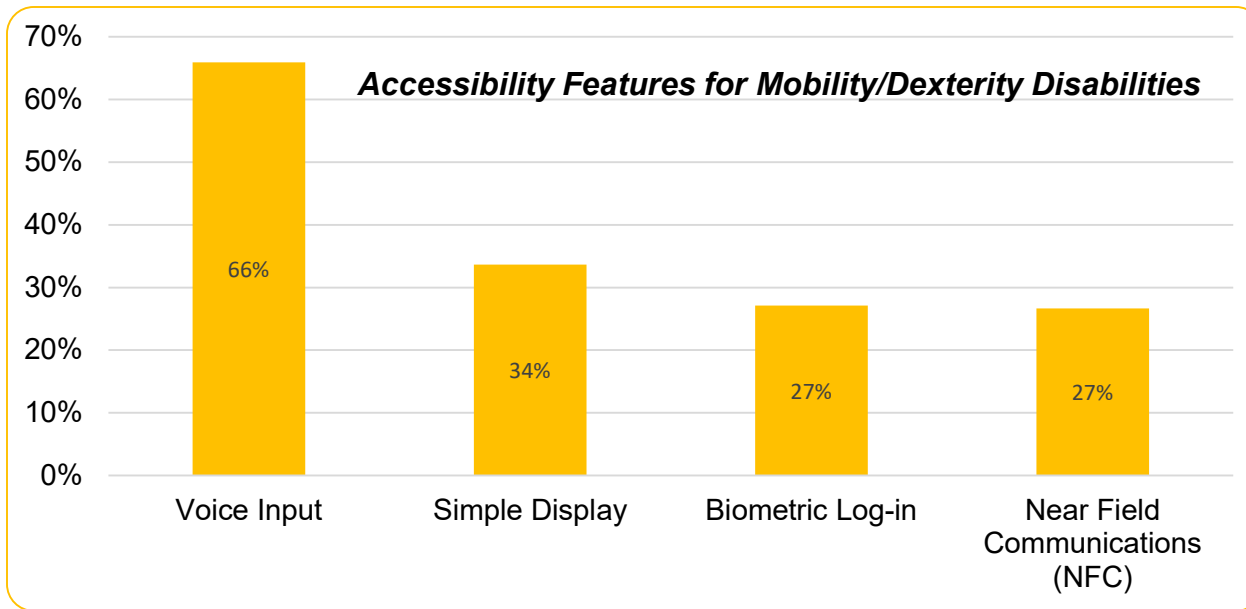
What is the tradeoff?

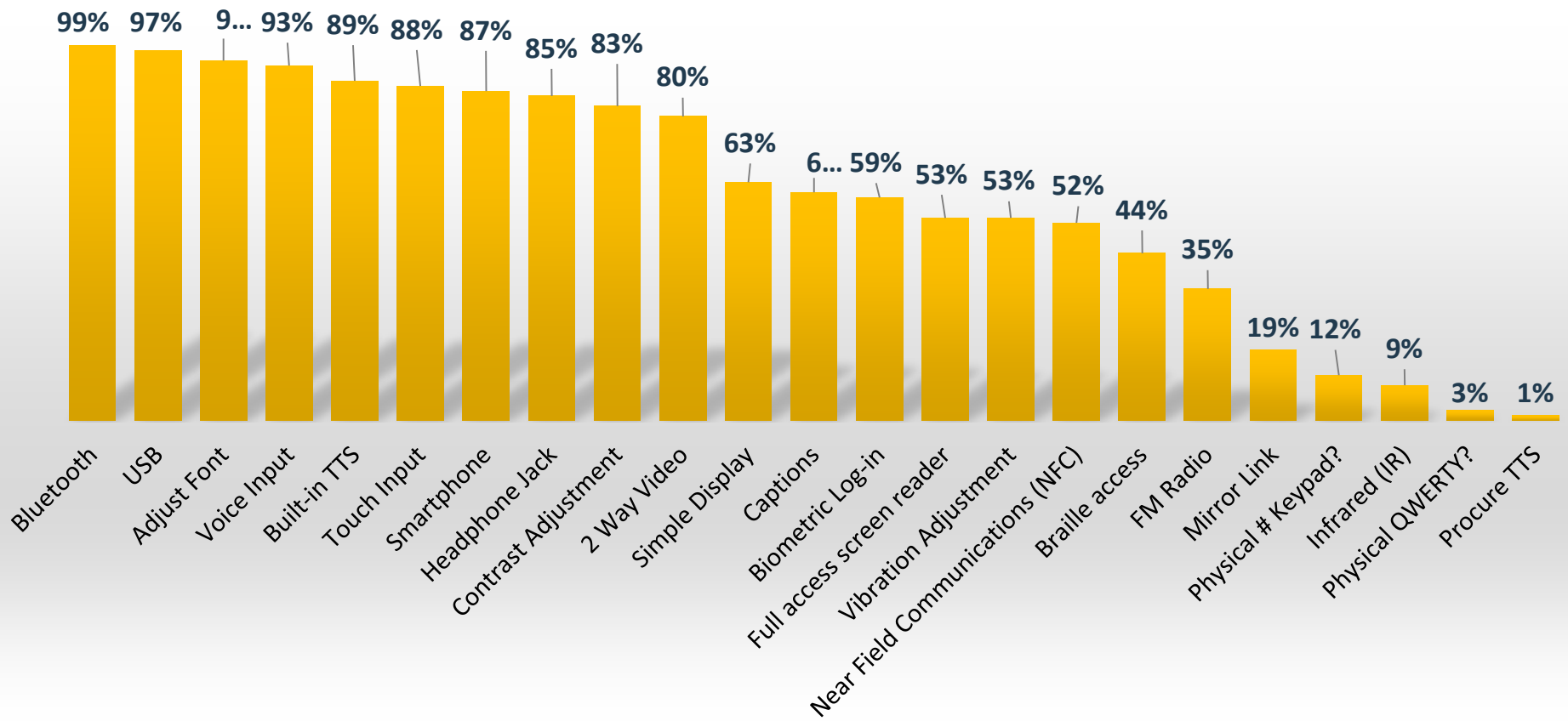




Accessibility Features

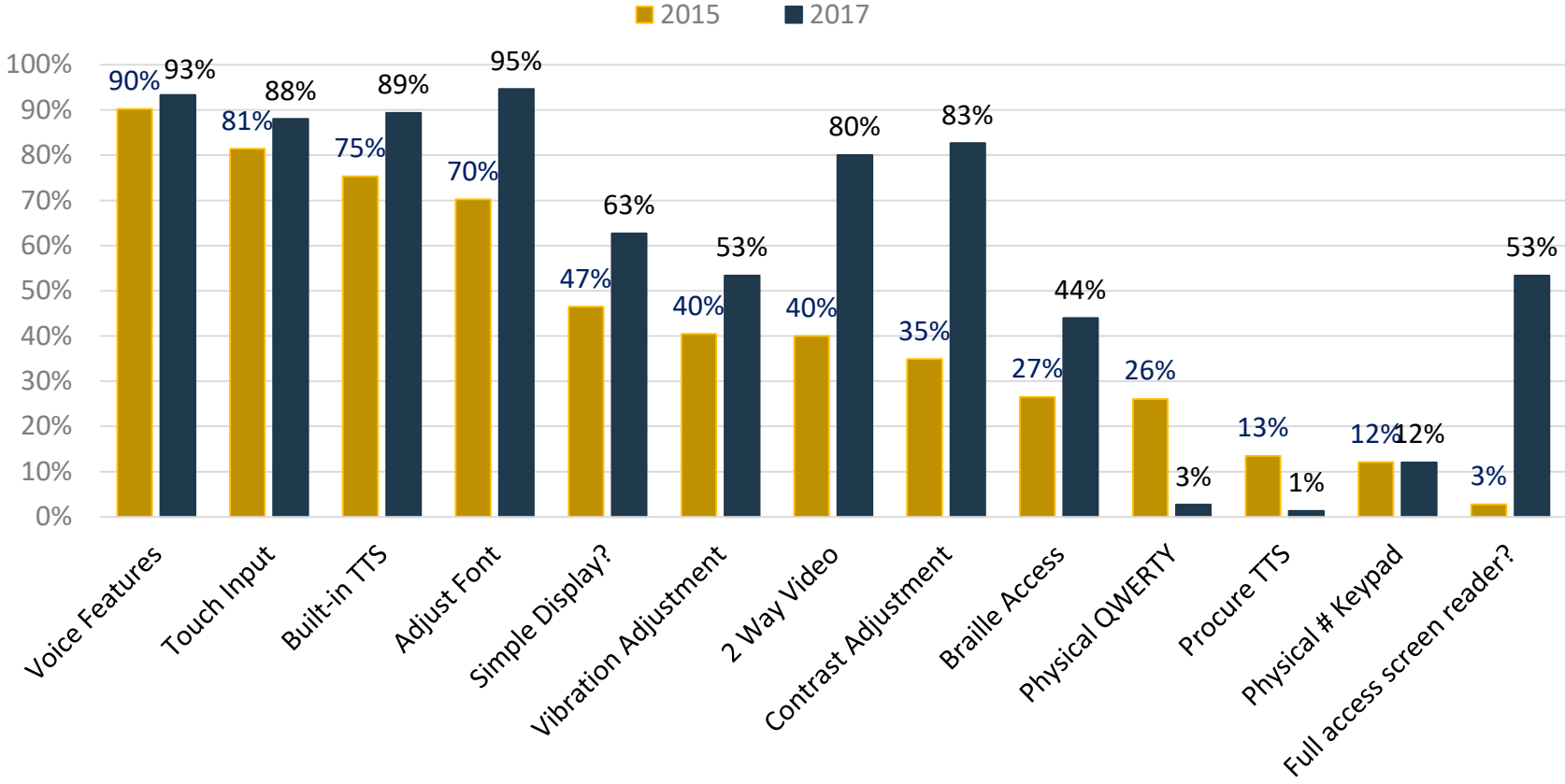




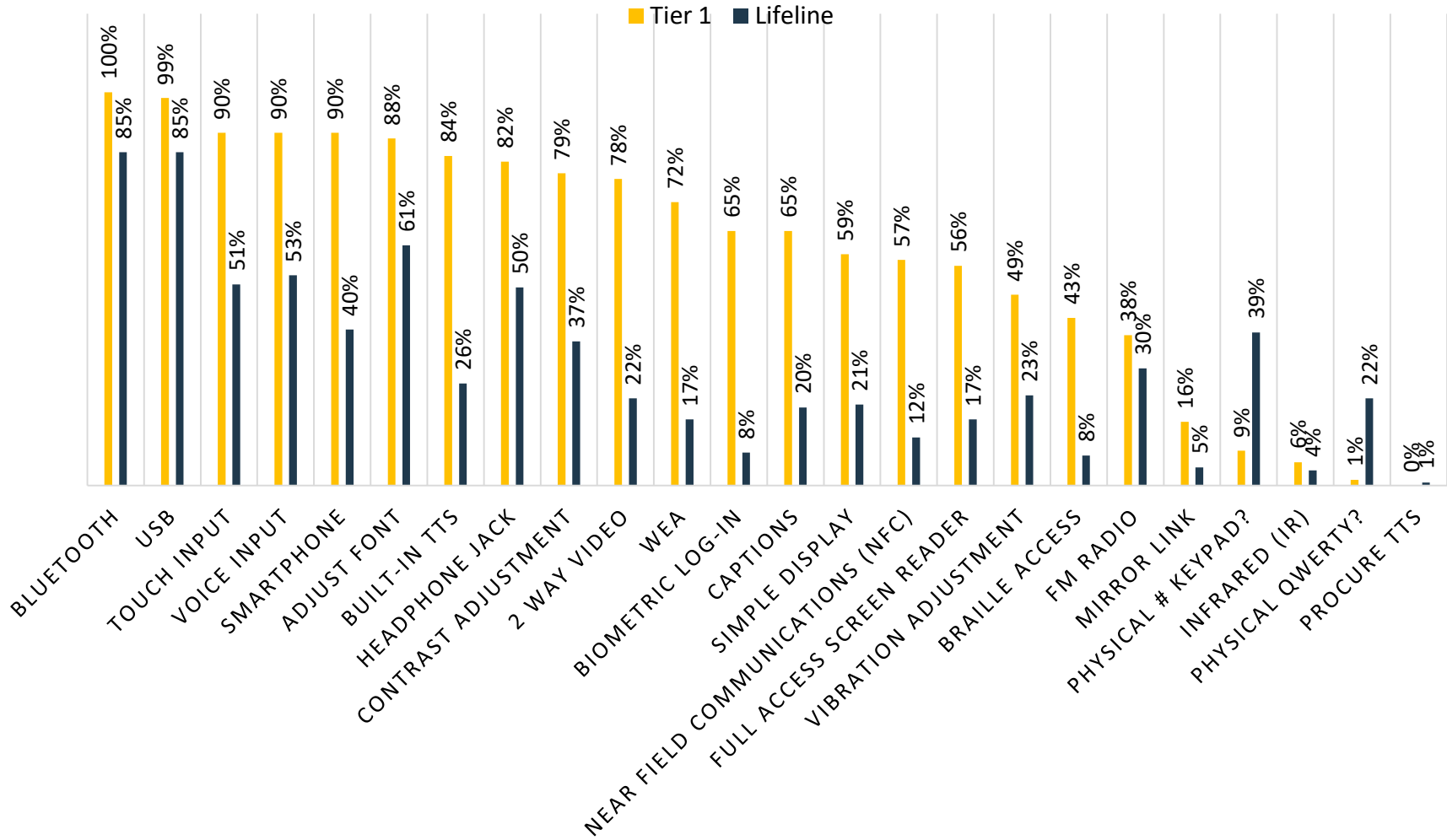


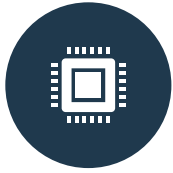
WEA-Capable Sub-Sample

Longitudinal Comparison of WEA-Capable Handsets



Tier 1 Phones v. Lifeline Phones





In the aggregate, the accessibility of mobile phones is improving.

Accessibility features are not uniformly available in all phone models.



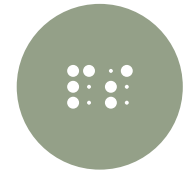
On average, only half (or less) of accessibility features were found when the data were parsed.



Lifeline provider phones in the sample had diminished levels of accessibility.



It is essential that Lifeline providers participate in WEA and that their devices are accessible.



A more inclusive mobile market would allow individuals with disabilities to select from more devices.

Conclusions

Contact & Connect

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Accessible Technology Policy Group

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