



THE STATE OF VISUAL CONTENT MARKETING REPORT

2025 EDITION

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The demands of visual content have never been greater, and the role of Creative Operations in meeting these demands is evolving rapidly. Creative and marketing teams today face challenges not just in producing compelling content, but also in managing processes, workflows, and technologies that support scalable, effective content creation.

This year's report explores how leading enterprise marketing and creative teams are navigating these challenges, while driving efficiency with AI innovation. Through a study conducted by Rocketium and Demand Metric, over 200 professionals shared insights into team structure, spending, tool usage, collaboration, measurement, and the everyday friction that hinders their efforts.

The findings are clear: creative inefficiencies are delaying campaign launches, wasting ad spend, and impacting revenue. Yet, they also highlight opportunities to streamline workflows, reduce cycle times, drive better outcomes, and enhance creative operations with AI.

This report presents key benchmarks, common challenges, and practical recommendations to help teams build stronger, more efficient creative operations; enabling them to deliver the right message to the right audience at the right time.

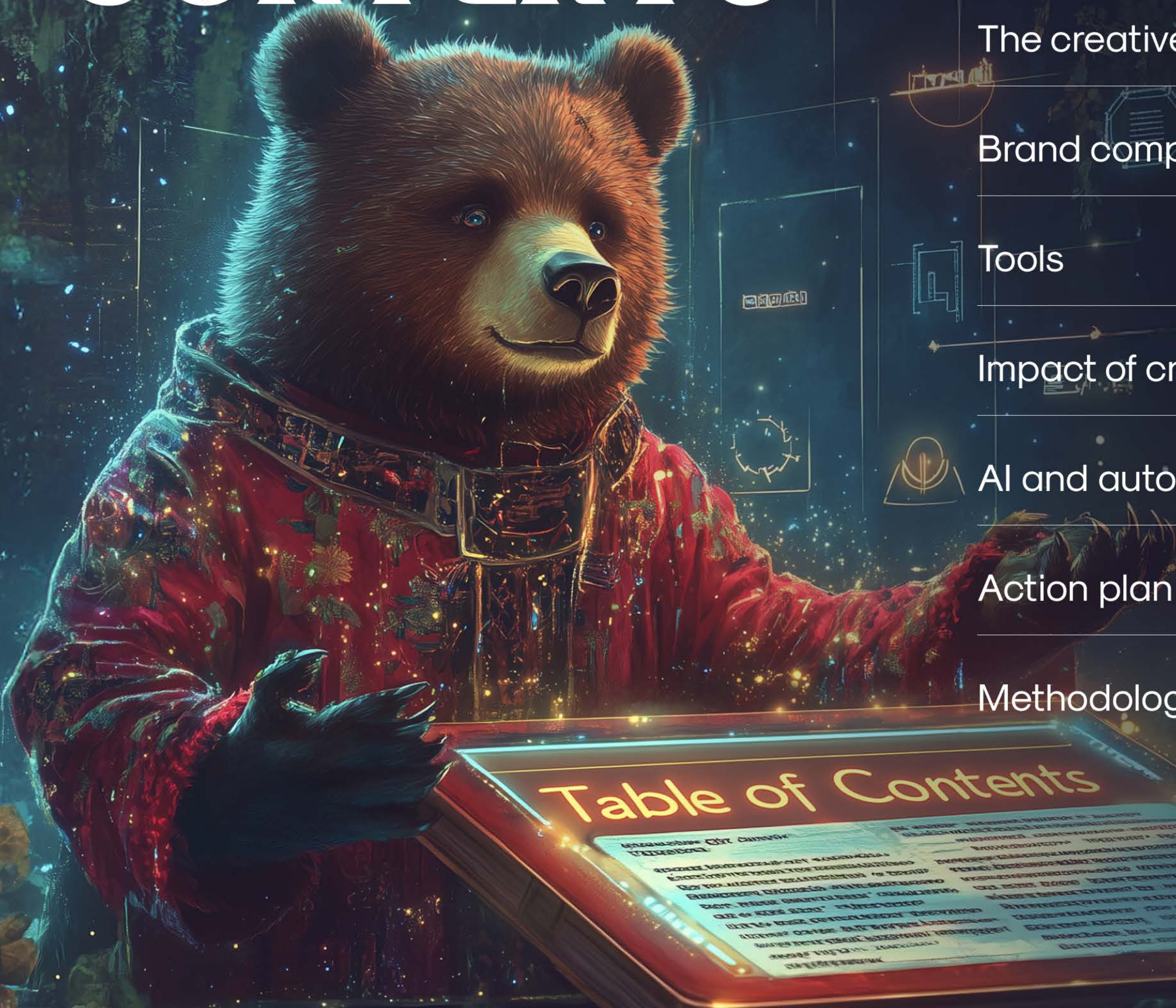


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11 KEY FINDINGS

40%

frequently experience delays in campaign launches due to creative inefficiencies, slowing time-to-market.

52%

use five or more tools to support their creative process, and 35% report poor to non-existent integration between these tools.

43%

waste 5% or more of their ad spend due to delays in campaign go-live dates caused by creative process inefficiencies.

This report details the results and provides insights from the study data analysis. For more details on the survey and its participants, please refer to the Methodology.

32%

report neutral to very poor results from collecting, tracking, and using data to measure and improve the creative process.

37%

of marketers are unsatisfied with their creative process, while only 17% creative professionals feel the same.

78%

creative professionals say they collect, track, and using data well to improve the creative process, but only 63% of marketers agree.

18%

estimate they could realize revenue gains of 10% or more if delays in campaign go-live dates were eliminated.

THE 2025 AGENCY LANDSCAPE

THE AGENCY LANDSCAPE

WORKING WITH AGENCIES IS THE NORM.

Agencies continue to be the creative backbone for many marketing teams. Despite the growth of in-house creative teams, 70% of study participants still rely on agencies, while just 17% do not, and 12% remain unsure (see Figure 1).

This reliance is even more pronounced among the largest advertisers. Among those with annual ad budgets of \$15 million or more, 87% report working with agencies.

Does your company work with any agencies?

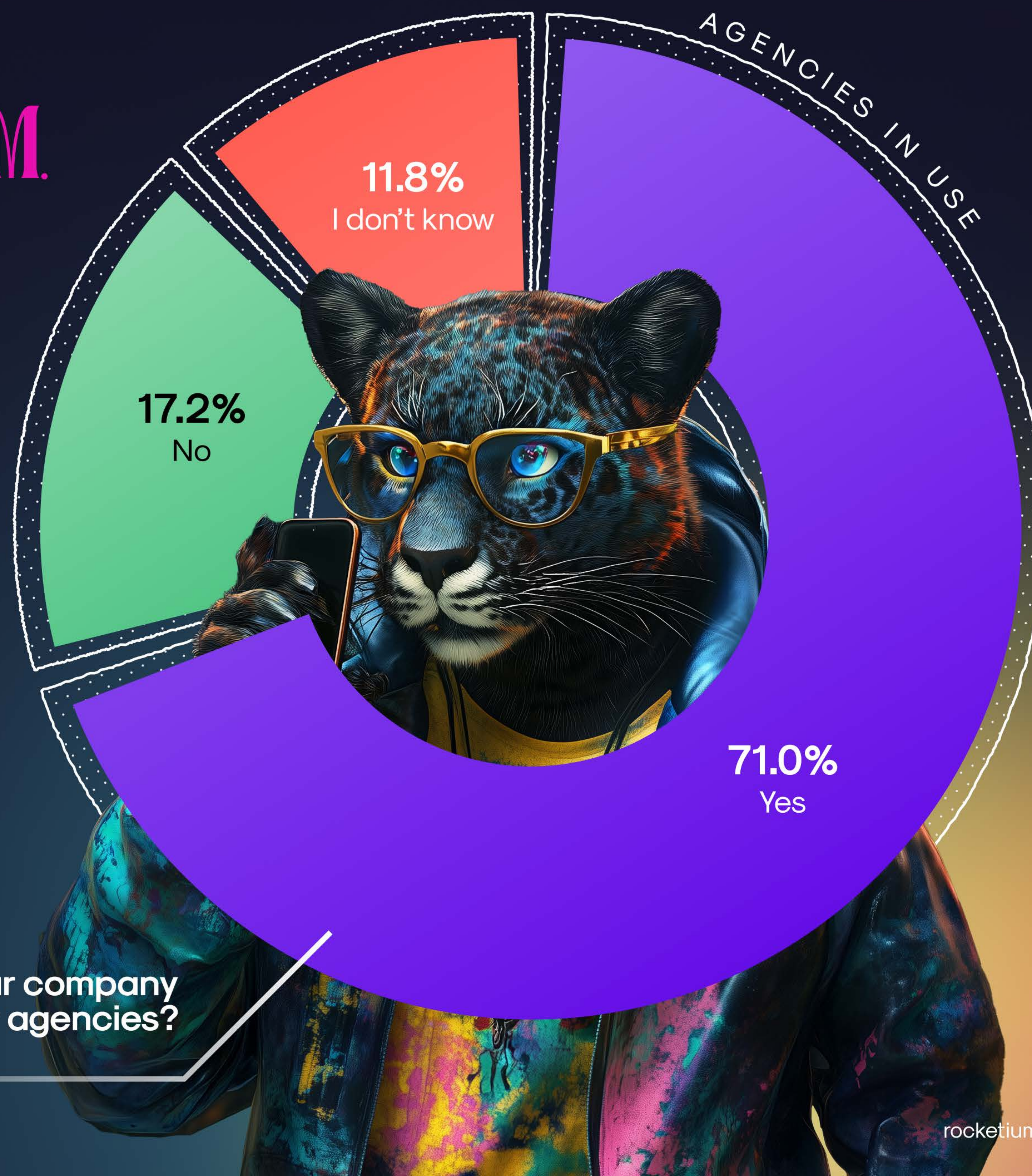


Figure 1

THE AGENCY LANDSCAPE

WORKING WITH JUST A SINGLE AGENCY IS THE EXCEPTION.

Agencies have different specializations and business models. Very few enterprises that work with agencies limit themselves to just one.

For those in the study that work with agencies, just 19% work with a single agency. Almost two-thirds (62%) work with between two and six agencies, while 14% work with 11 or more, as Figure 2 shows.

How many agencies does your company work with?

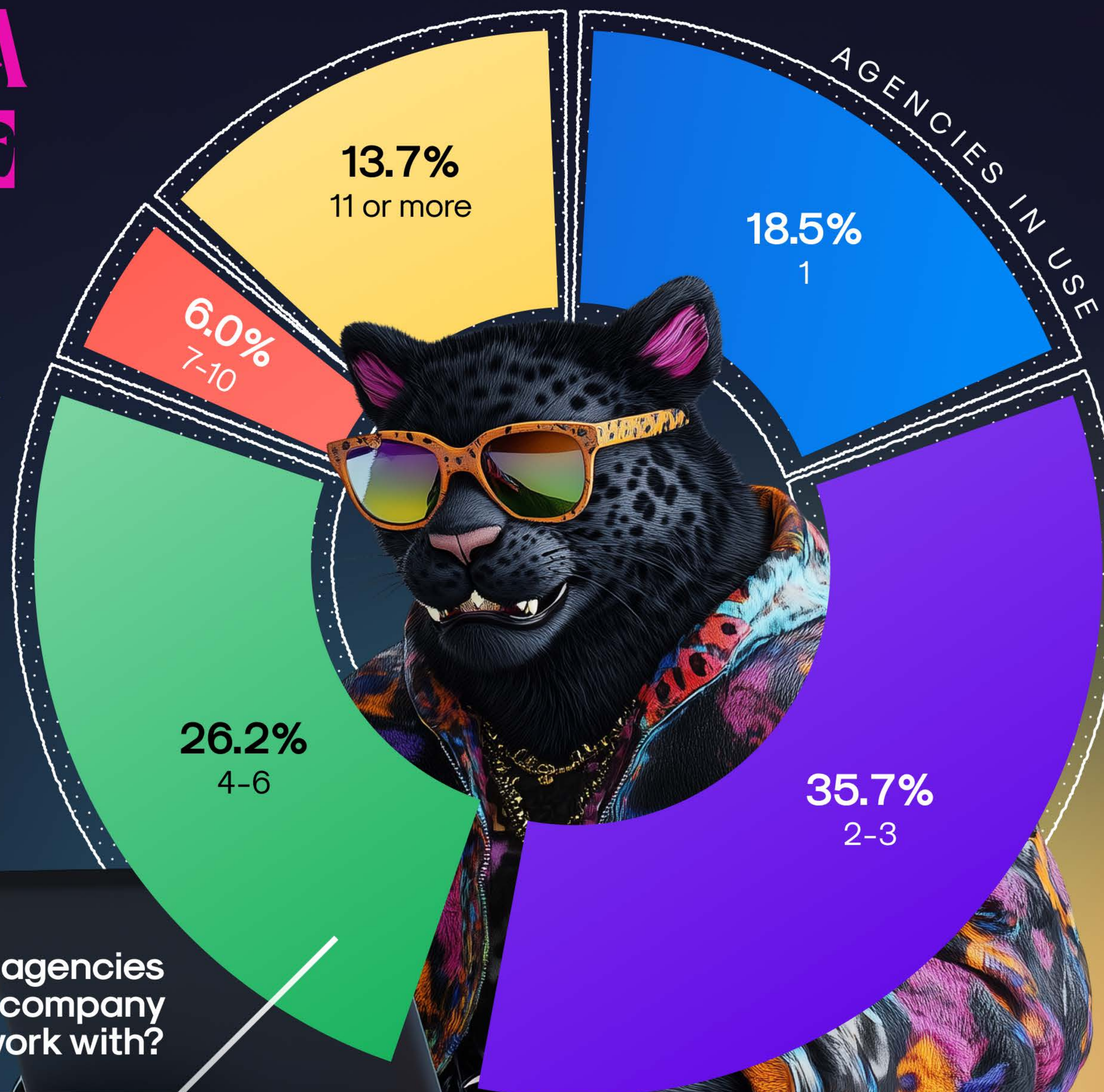


Figure 2

THE AGENCY LANDSCAPE

BRAND CONSISTENCY IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE OF WORKING WITH AN AGENCY.

Brand consistency is the top challenge of working with an agency, cited by 46% in the study. Closely important challenges include slow responses, high outsourcing costs and inconsistent design quality, as Figure 3 shows.

There were differences in the top agency challenge based on annual ad spend as the following table shares:

	\$4 million or less	\$5 to \$14 million	\$15 million or more
Top challenge of working with agencies	Brand consistency (42%)	Communication barriers (50%)	Brand consistency (53%) Integration of workflows (53%)

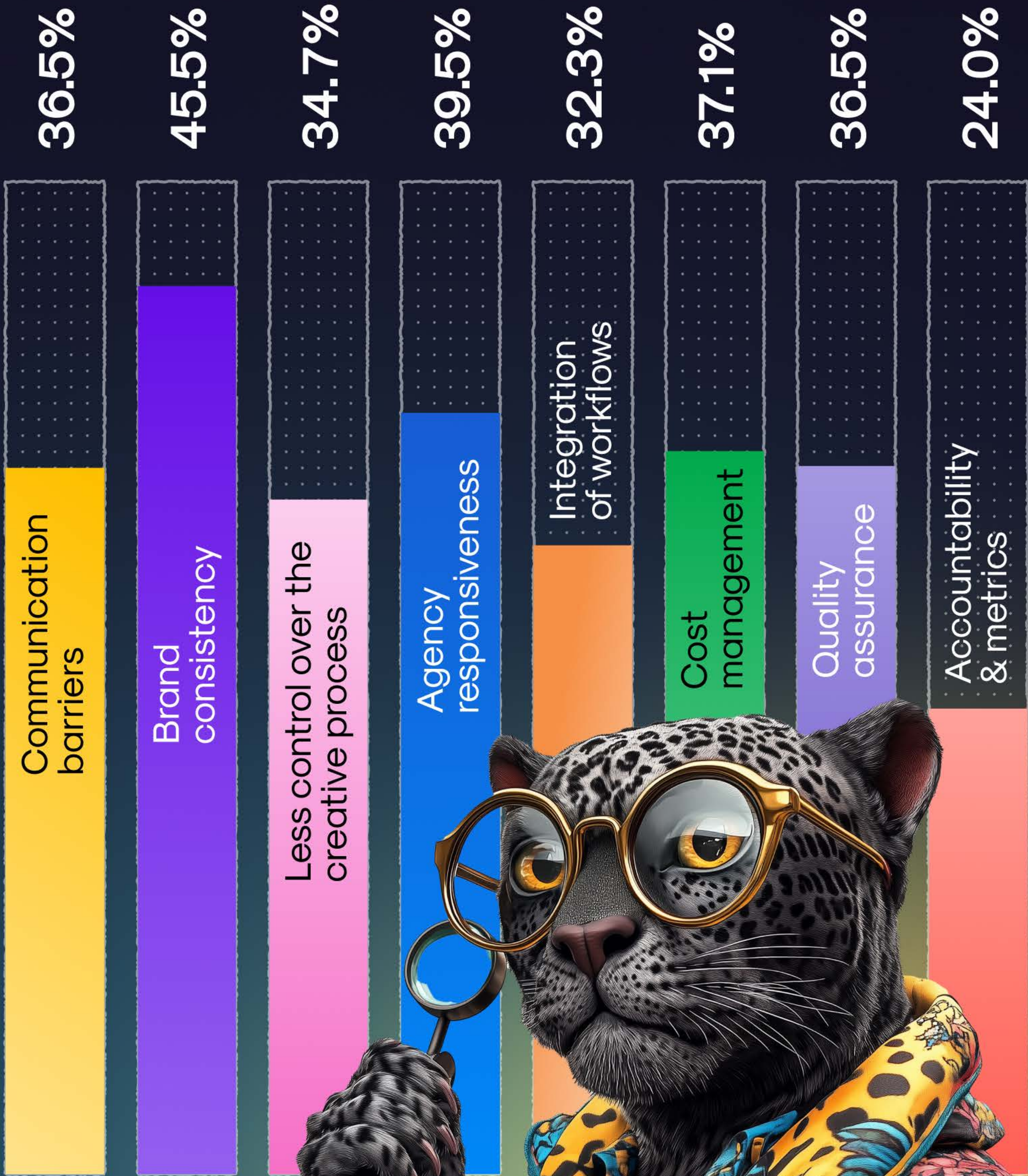


Figure 3

What are the biggest challenges of working with one or more agencies?



THE CREATIVE PROCESS

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

MOST ORGANIZATIONS FEEL THEY MANAGE CREATIVE ASSETS EFFECTIVELY.

Almost three-fourths (73%) of study participants report having an effective process for deploying, storing, and managing their creative assets (Figure 4).

This step is a crucial foundation for creative operations, ensuring that content is easily accessible and ready for use. Respondents in creative and marketing roles shared similar views on process effectiveness, suggesting consistent practices across functions.

How effective is your process
for deploying, storing, and
managing creative assets?

CREATIVE ASSET MANAGEMENT PROCESS EFFECTIVENESS

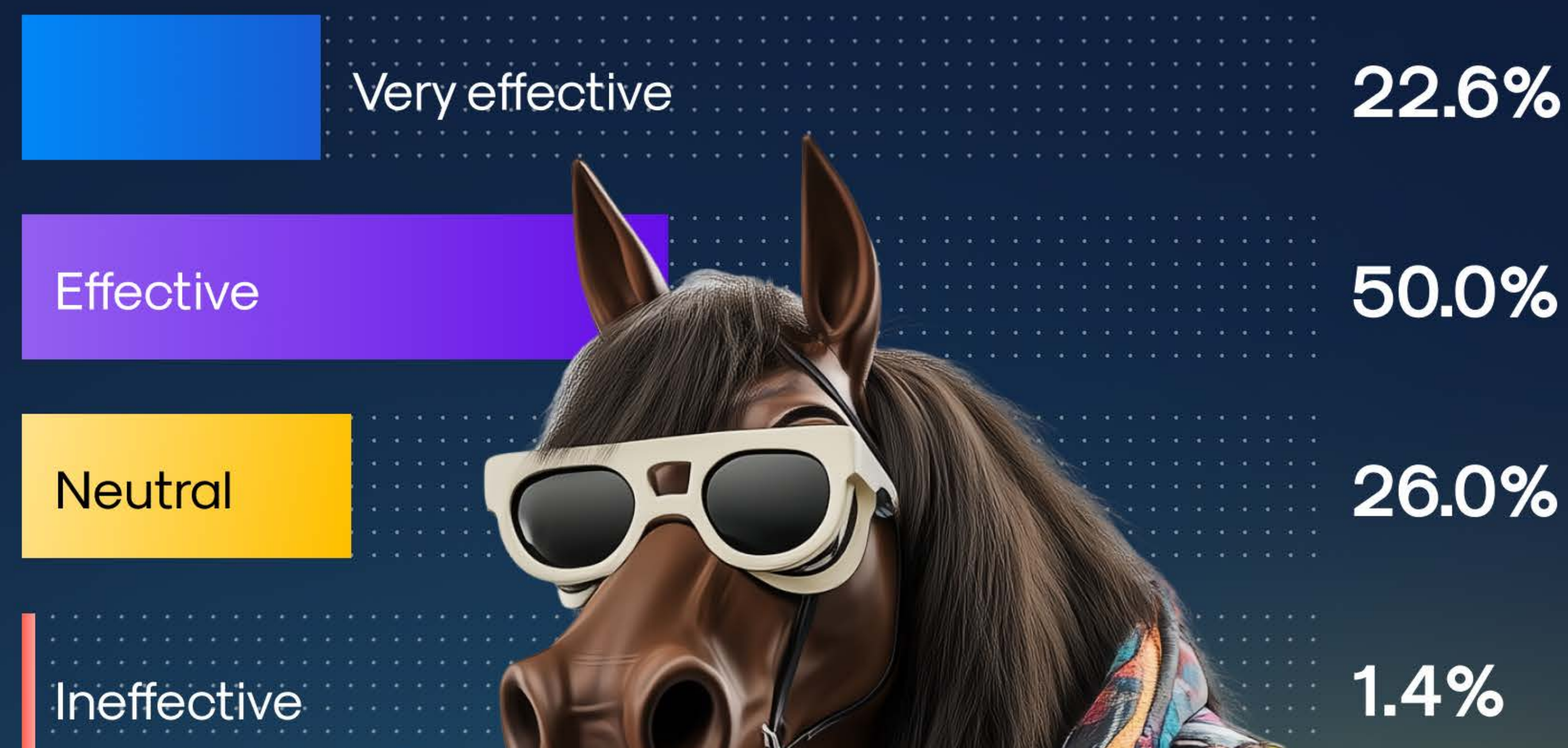


Figure 4

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

NEARLY THREE-FOURTH ARE CONFIDENT ABOUT SCALING THEIR CREATIVE BANDWIDTH.

Nearly three-fourths (74%) of study participants report they can scale their creative bandwidth well or very well to manage demand fluctuations (Figure 5).

Creative roles expressed even greater confidence in their ability to scale (81%) compared to marketing roles (69%).

How well can you scale your creative bandwidth to meet surges in demand?

SCALING CREATIVE BANDWIDTH

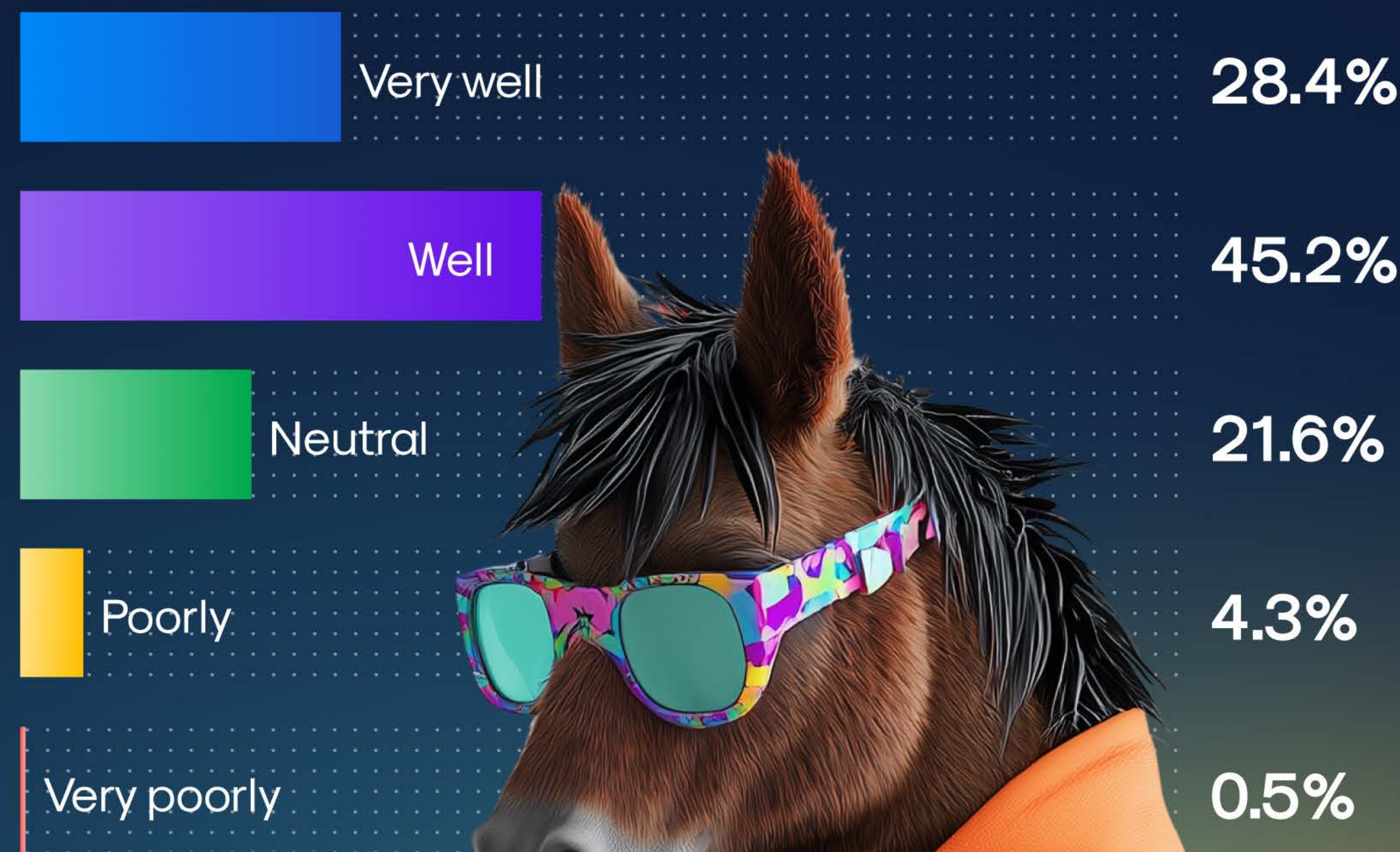


Figure 5

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

MORE THAN HALF TAKE FOUR TO NINE DAYS FOR CREATIVE PRODUCTION.

Figure 6 shows a normal distribution of average cycle times from initial request to final approval for asset creation. The bigger the ad spend or the larger the organization, the higher percentage of study participants that report an average cycle time of 10 or more days as the following table shows:

Study participants with average asset cycle time of 10 or more days	
Annual Ad Spend	
\$4M or less	17%
\$5M to \$14M	17%
\$15M or more	32%
Organization Headcount	
Less than 2,500	18%
2,500 to 9,999	15%
10,000 or more	29%

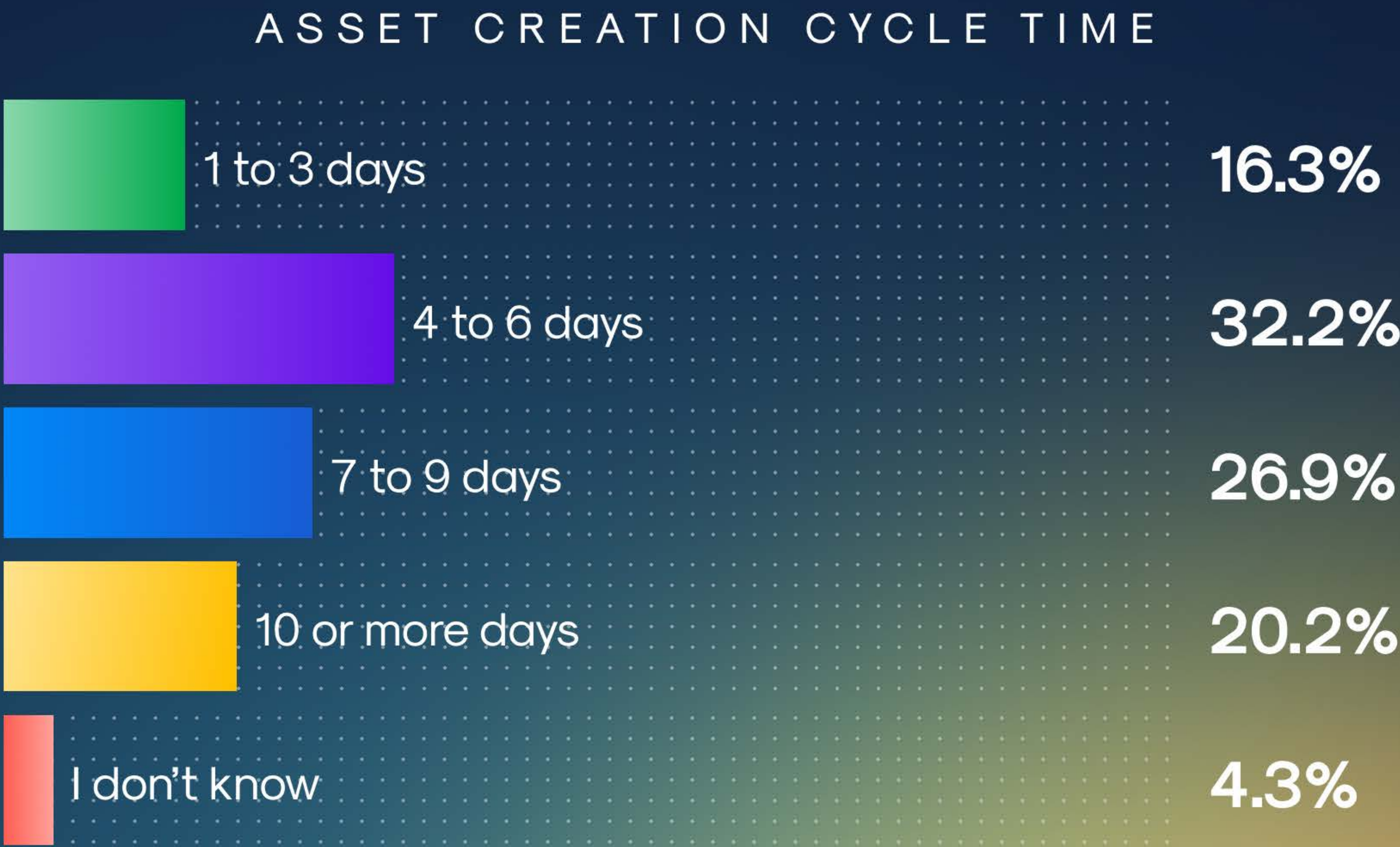


Figure 6

For the creation of a typical asset (e.g. visuals, templates, other assets and final creative), what is the average cycle time from initial request to final approval?

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CREATIVE PROCESS IS THE TOP PRIORITY.

Contrary to popular opinion, lowering costs is not the greatest area in need of improvement. Instead, efficiency and effectiveness rival one another as areas in which the creative process most needs to improve, as Figure 7 shows.

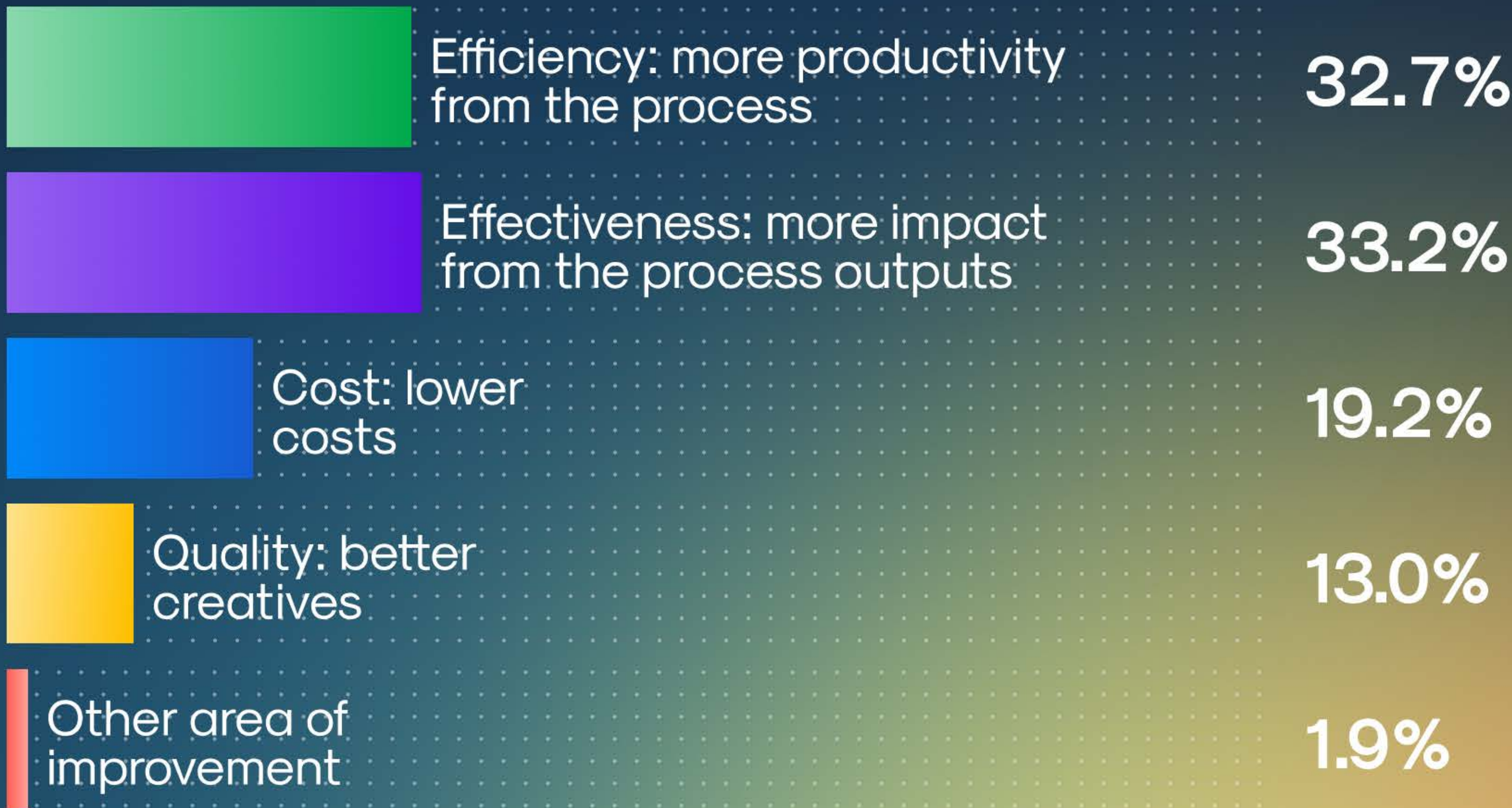
As company size, as measured by headcount, increases, the top need shifts from effectiveness to efficiency:

Headcount	Efficiency	Effectiveness
Less than 2,500	25%	45%
2,500 to 9,999	35%	35%
10,000 or more	36%	21%

Segmenting this data by average asset creation cycle time (Fig. 6) reveals an interesting insight: the fast want to get faster. Study participants with the fastest average cycle time express the greatest need for efficiency improvements:

Avg. cycle time	Efficiency	Effectiveness
1 to 3 days	47%	27%
4 to 6 days	22%	40%
7 to 9 days	32%	32%
10 or more	33%	33%

CREATIVE PROCESS AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT



In which of the following areas does your creative process most need to improve?

Figure 7

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

TWO-THIRDS OF ORGANIZATIONS ARE EFFECTIVELY USING DATA TO IMPROVE THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

Collecting, tracking, and using data to measure and improve the creative process is essential for operational success. 68% of study participants rate themselves as doing this well or very well (Figure 8).

However, proficiency at using data tends to drop as asset creation cycle times lengthen, highlighting the need for tighter, faster processes to support effective data use.

Time taken	% Neutral, Poor, or Very Poor at using data to improve the creative process
1 to 3 days	15%
4 to 6 days	25%
7 to 9 days	30%
10 or more	52%

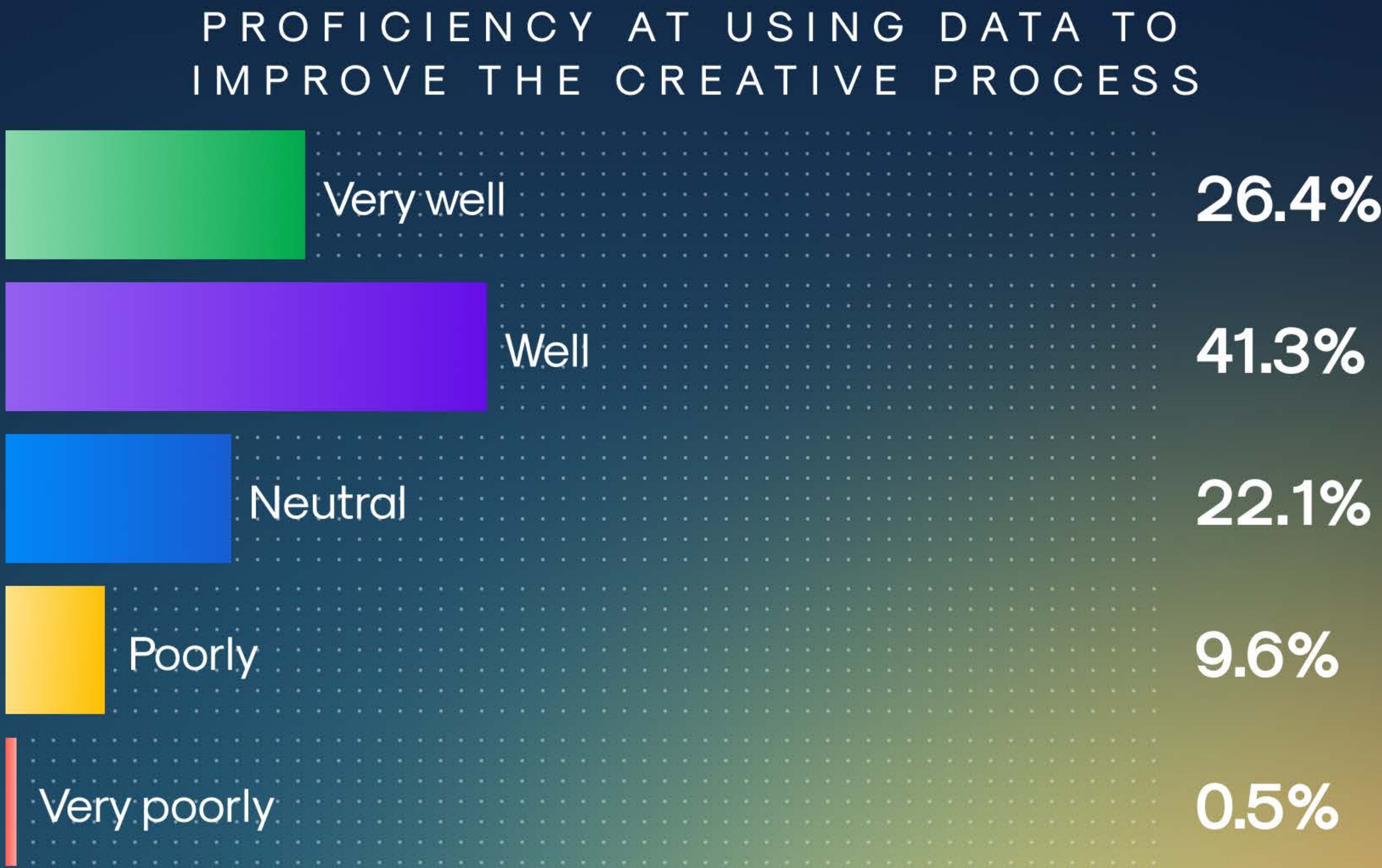


Figure 8

How well do you collect, track, and use data to measure the effectiveness of your creative process and help improve it?

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

PROJECT COST IS THE PRIMARY METRIC TO TRACK CREATIVE PROCESS EFFECTIVENESS.

Cost-related metrics are the top ones for tracking the creative process: project cost ranks first and cost per creative ranks second, as Figure 9 shows. Study participants in marketing roles favor cost per creative over project cost (47% vs. 44%) while those in creative roles favor project cost over cost per creative (54% vs. 41%). The second most-used metric for creative professionals is work vs. capacity (46%), which ranks fifth for marketing professionals (31%).

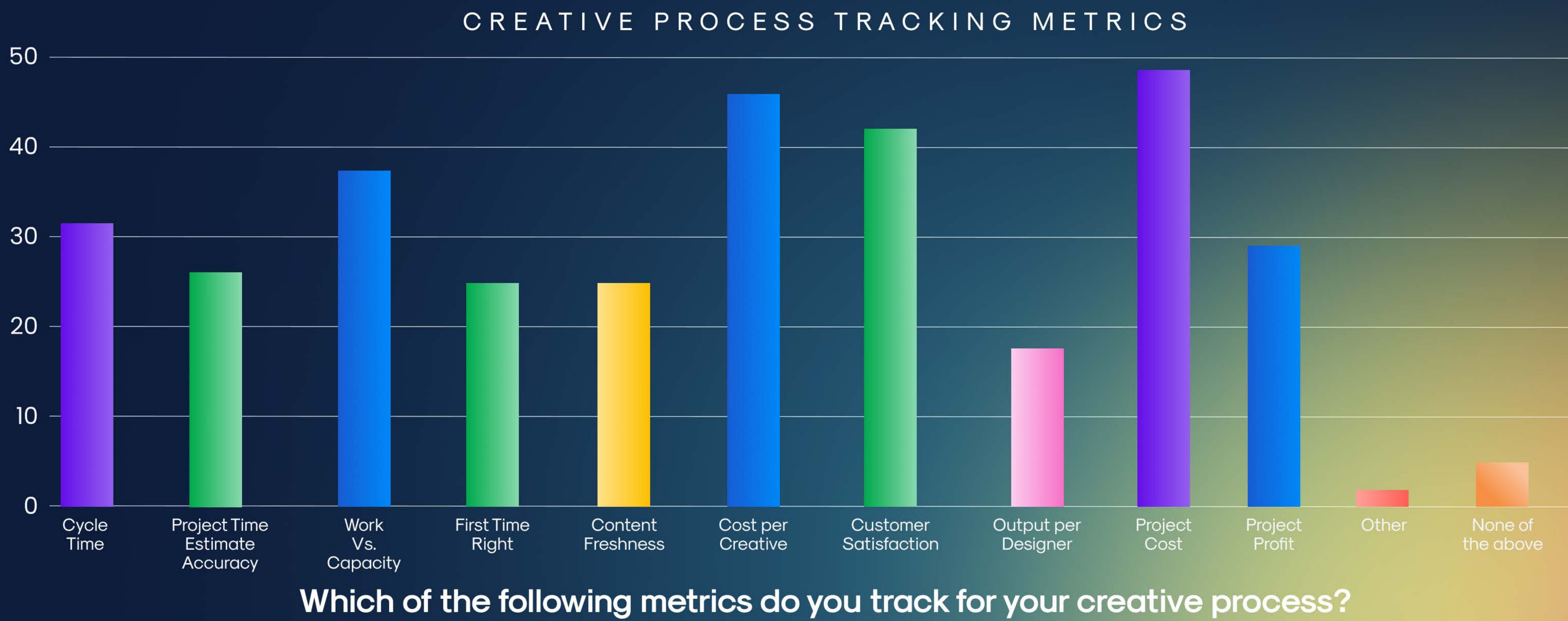


Figure 9

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

HALF OF PARTICIPANTS HAVE A SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH FOR ASSET PERFORMANCE AND CREATIVE DATA.

Having a single source of truth is crucial for managing creative performance effectively. Exactly half of the study participants report having a single source of truth for their asset performance and creative data (Figure 10). Of the remaining participants, 35% say they don't, and 15% are unsure. Creative roles were more likely to report having a single source of truth (61%) compared to marketing roles (44%). This represents a marked increase from last year's report, where only 40% had a single source of truth.

Organizations that have a single source of truth are also more likely to use data effectively to measure and improve creative process performance.

Has a single source of Truth	Data use well or very well to measure and improve creative process performance	Data use neutral to very poor to measure and improve creative process performance
Yes	64%	20%
No	26%	55%
Doesn't know	10%	25%

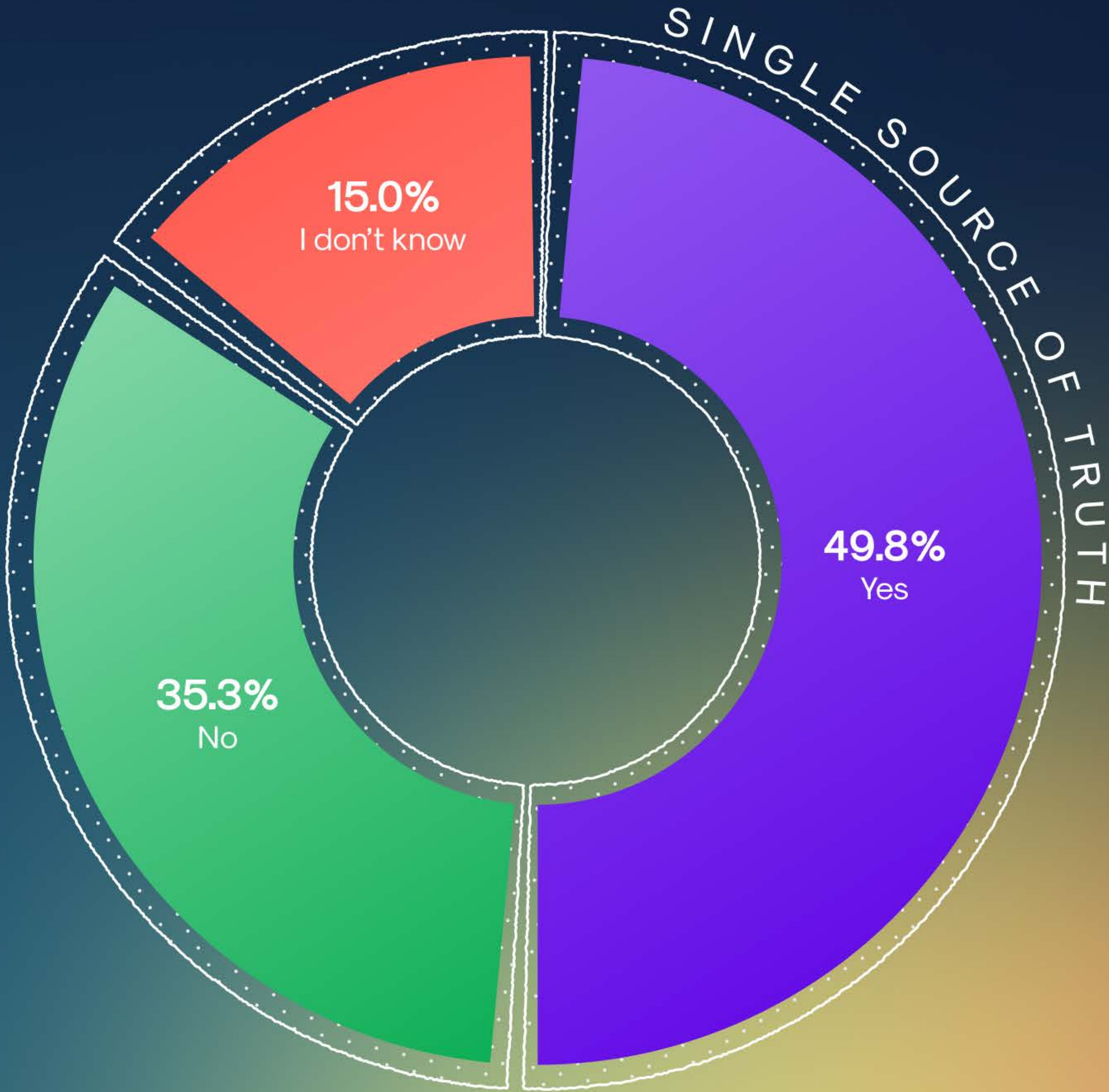


Figure 10

Do you have a single source of truth for all asset performance and creative data?

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

THREE-FOURTHS OF SURVEY PARTICIPANTS ARE SATISFIED WITH THEIR CREATIVE PROCESS.

The creative process is broad, starting with an initial brief and concluding with a final creative deliverable. Almost three-fourths (73%) of study participants are satisfied or very satisfied with their process, as Figure 11 shows. The creative professionals in the study were more satisfied (83%) than were their marketing counterparts (68%).

A major difference in satisfaction is the result of proficiency using data to measure and improve creative process performance (Fig. 8). The greater the proficiency, the higher the satisfaction as the following table reveals:

Process Satisfaction	Data use well or very well to measure and improve creative process performance	Data use neutral to very poor to measure and improve creative process performance
% Satisfied or Very satisfied	86%	46%
% Neutral, poor, or very poor	14%	54%

The difference in satisfaction is even more pronounced when using the presence of a single source of truth.

SATISFACTION WITH THE CREATIVE PROCESS

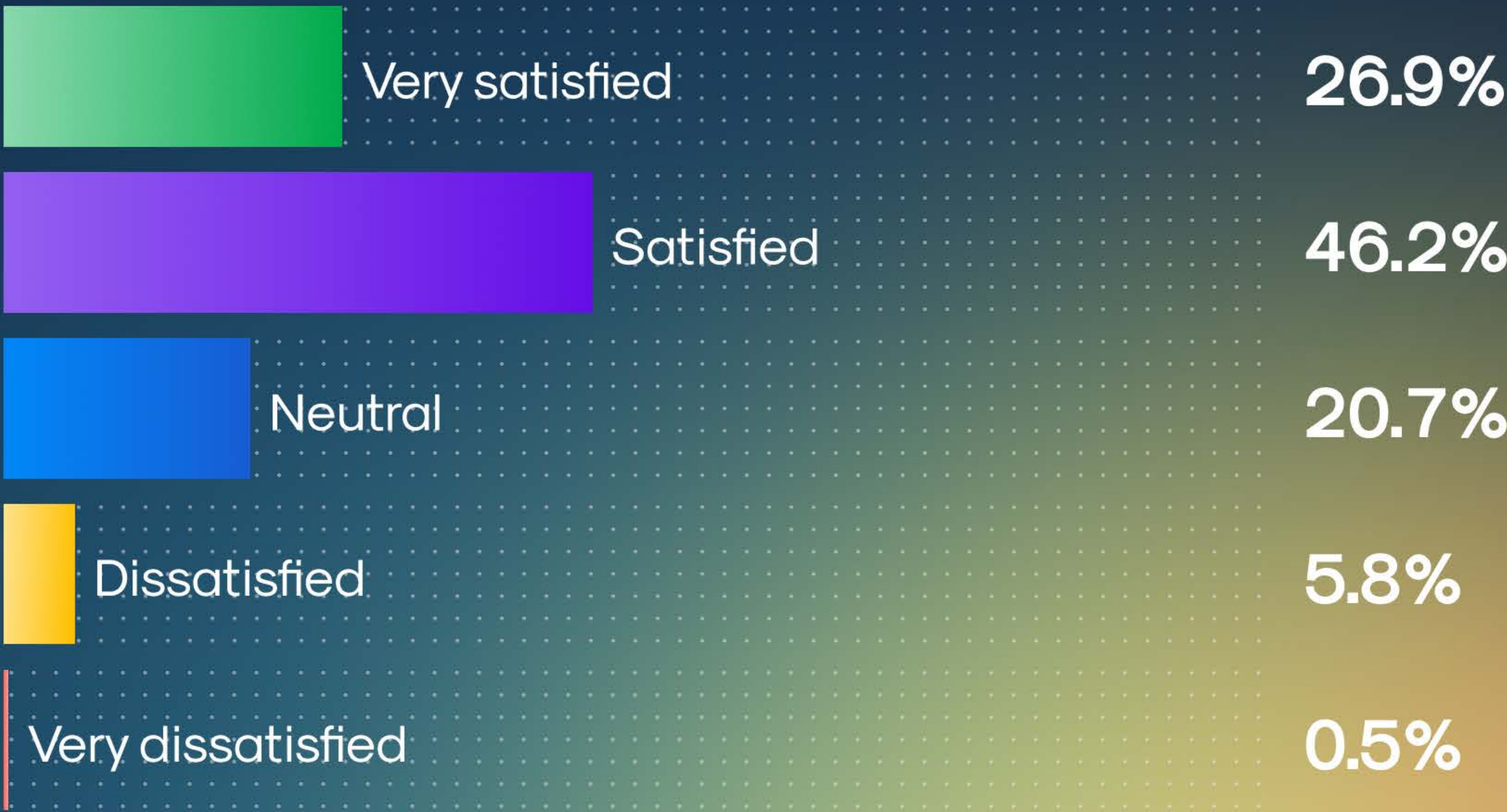


Figure 11

How satisfied are you with your creative process, from initial brief to final creative?

04 BRAND COMPLIANCE & ANALYTICS

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

ALMOST HALF OF PARTICIPANTS REFRESH THEIR CREATIVES ONCE A WEEK OR MORE OFTEN.

Refreshing creative assets regularly is an essential practice for maintaining relevance and performance in marketing campaigns.

Nearly half (45%) of study participants report refreshing creative assets at least once a week (Figure 12). Of these, 20% say they update assets multiple times per week, while 24% refresh them weekly.

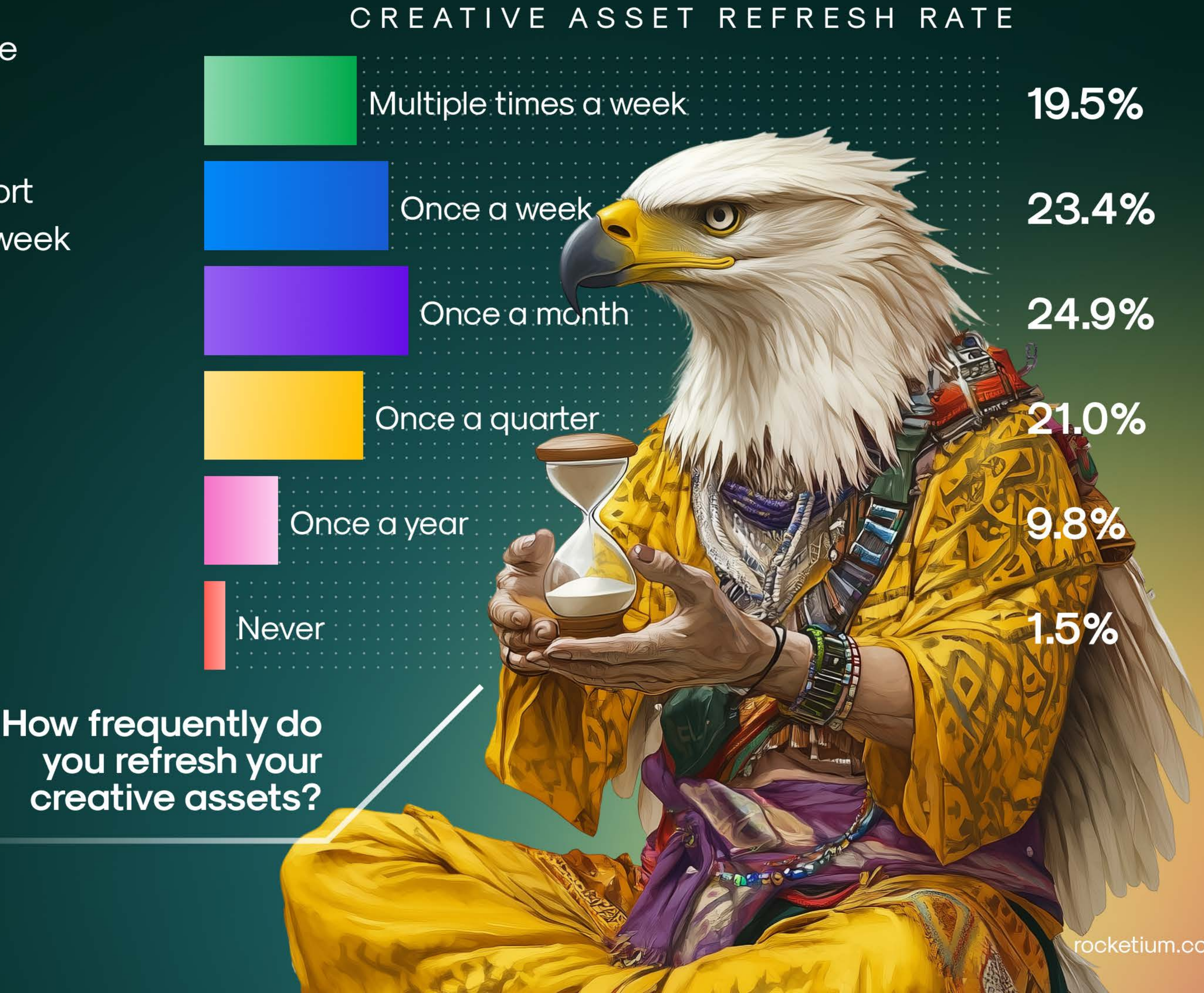


Figure 12

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

MAJORITY SAY THEY CAN EASILY ADAPT ASSETS FOR PLATFORMS.

Being able to adapt creative assets across multiple platforms and formats is crucial for maximizing reach and engagement. 67% of study participants say they can adapt assets with ease or great ease (Figure 13).

Interestingly, creative and marketing roles in the study showed similar levels of confidence in this area, suggesting a shared understanding of the importance of flexible creative assets.

How easily are you able to adapt assets for various platforms/uses?

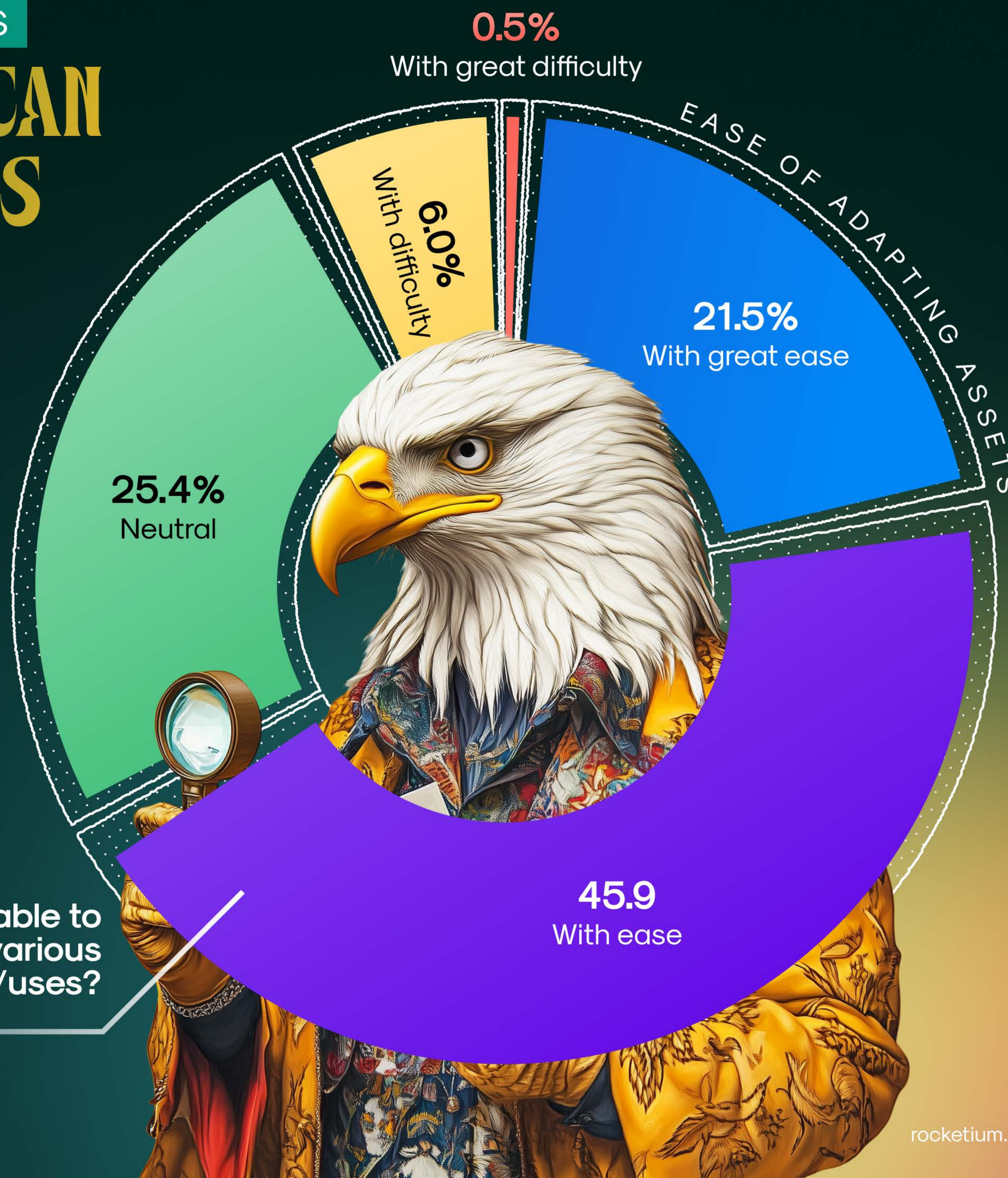


Figure 13

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

THREE-FOURTHS
WOULD REFRESH THEIR
CREATIVE ASSETS
MORE OFTEN IF IT
WERE EASIER.

Frequent asset refreshes are key to staying relevant in a dynamic marketing environment. Yet 74% of study participants say they would refresh their creative assets more often if it were easier to do (Figure 14). This highlights that process difficulties continue to hinder effectiveness and performance, pointing to a need for streamlined workflows.

If your creative assets were easier to refresh, how likely are you to update them more frequently?

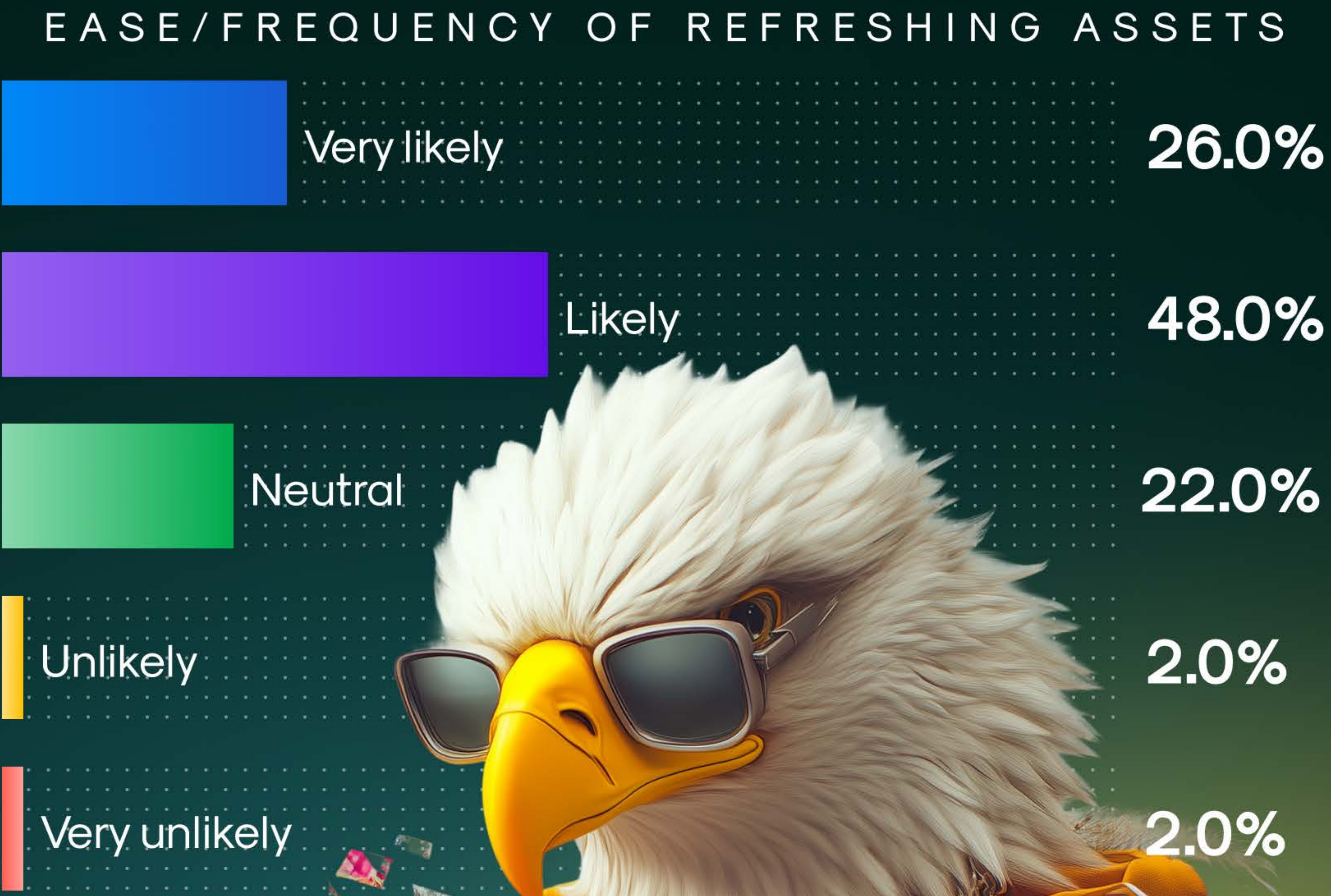


Figure 14



BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

MOST ORGANIZATIONS GET CREATIVE ASSET PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS INFREQUENTLY.

Nearly half (47%) of study participants report receiving these insights only once a quarter or less (Figure 15). This suggests that many organizations either lack the necessary infrastructure or the will to consistently evaluate and iterate on their creative performance. For these teams, building stronger analytics practices represents a major opportunity to drive better outcomes and optimize every dollar spent.

FREQUENCY OF GETTING PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS



Figure 15

How often do you get insights about the performance impact of creative choices (copy, imagery, layouts, colors)?

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS
ARE DRIVING SMARTER
INVESTMENTS IN
CREATIVE ASSETS.

By getting creative performance insights, two-thirds of study participants are investing more in what works. These insights enable more effective budget allocation and resource prioritization toward higher-performing creative elements, as Figure 16 shows.

BENEFITS OF CREATIVE ASSET
PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

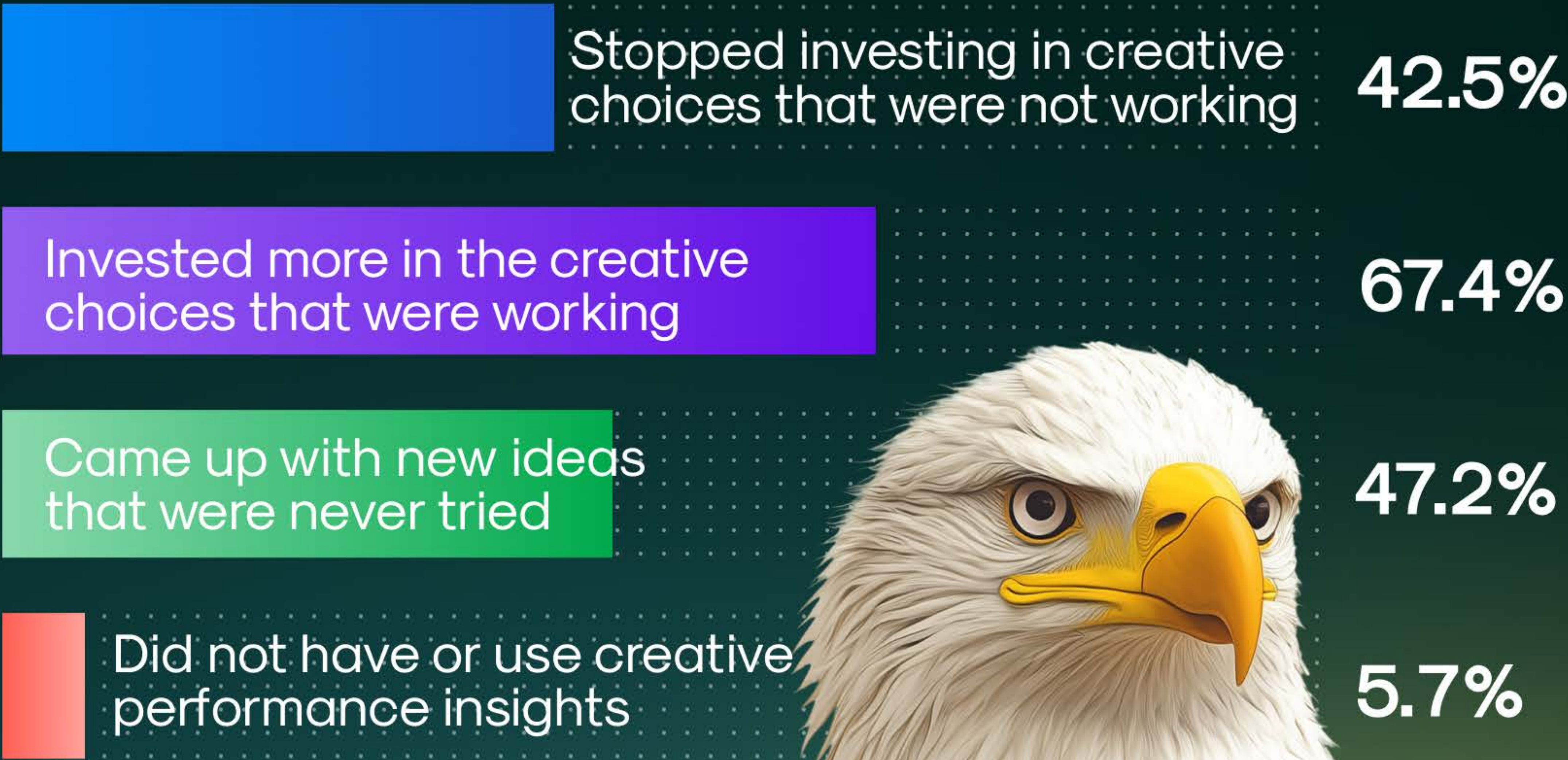


Figure 16

Which of the following benefits have you realized from obtaining insights into the performance of creative choices?



BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

OVER 70% SEE FINANCIAL BENEFITS FROM CREATIVE ANALYTICS.

As marketing budgets continue to grow, measuring the financial impact of creative choices becomes a critical priority. An impressive 79% of study participants report a measurable increase in savings or revenue tied to their creative performance (Figure 17). Both creative and marketing teams agree on the scale of these benefits, underscoring the value of investing in analytics to maximize marketing ROI.

What was the monetary impact of these benefits in increased savings or revenue as a percentage of the total marketing budget?

MONETARY BENEFITS OF CREATIVE ANALYTICS

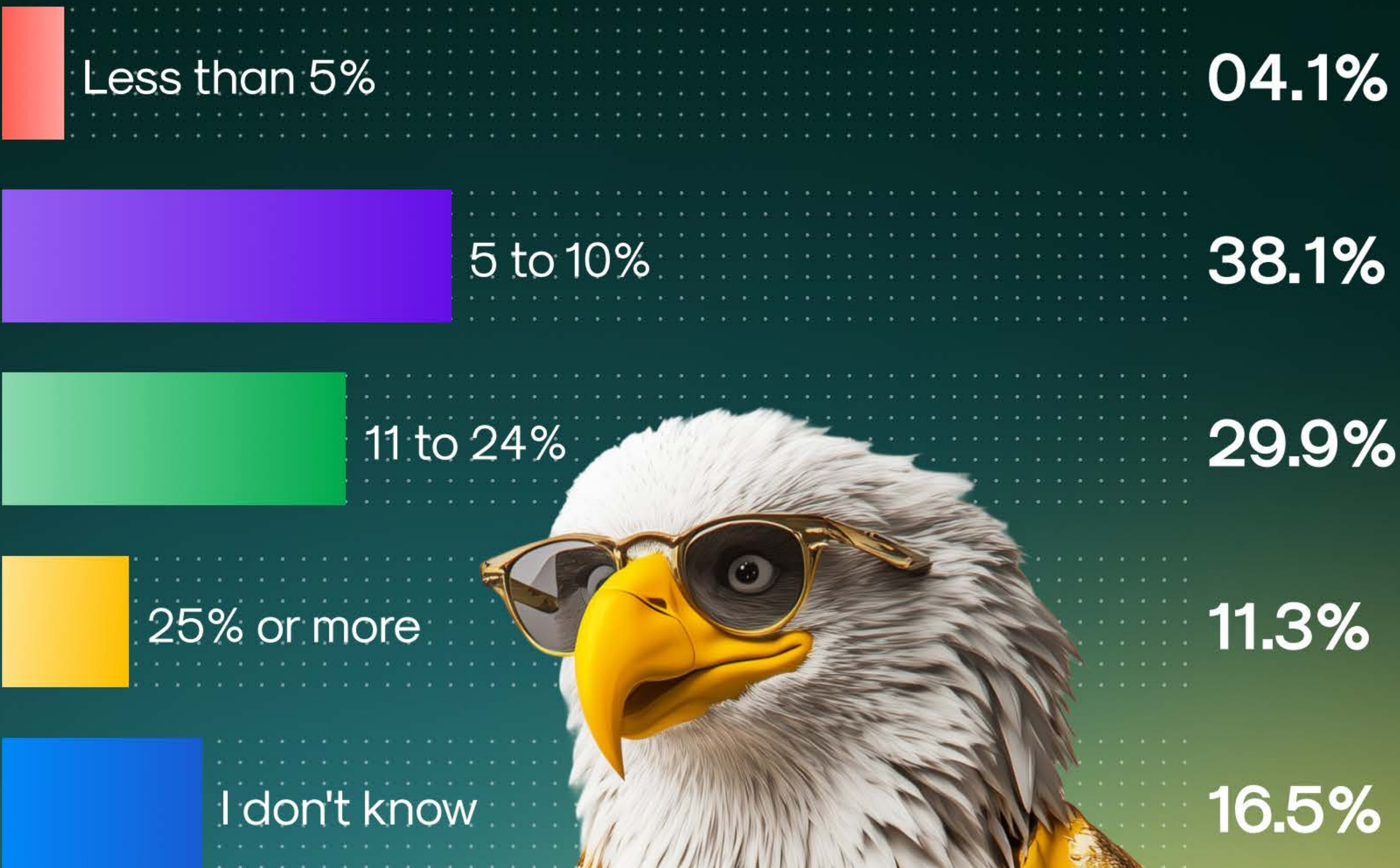


Figure 17



BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

MANUAL REVIEWS ARE THE DOMINANT METHOD FOR ENSURING ADHERENCE TO BEST PRACTICES.

Automation has certainly begun to have an impact on how organizations design and create visual content, including ensuring adherence to best design practices. Manual reviews, however, still dominate for this purpose, as Figure 18 shows. There has been no increase in the use of automated design checks from the 2024 study.

The use of automation for design checks correlates to faster cycle times (Fig. 6), as the following table shows:

	Cycle time: 1 to 3 days	Cycle time: 4 to 6 days	Cycle time: 7 to 9 days	Cycle time: 10 or more days
% using automated design checks	29%	22%	24%	15%

A factor that facilitates an organization’s use of automation to perform design checks or reviews is the presence of a single source of truth for asset data (Fig. 10), as this table shows:

Has a single source of truth	Automated design checks	Manual design checks	Not sure
Yes	34%	64%	02%
No	13%	80%	07%

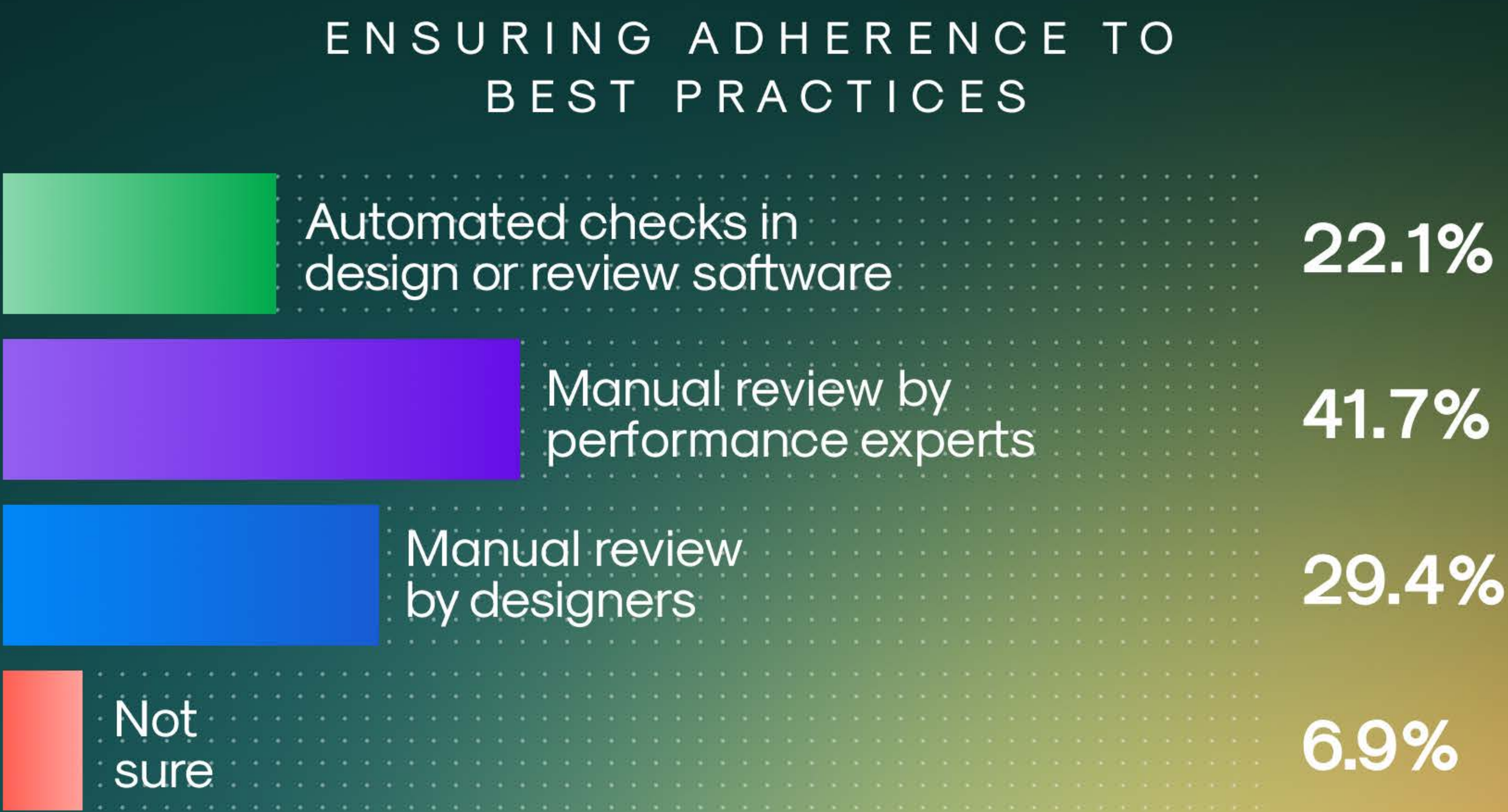


Figure 18

How do you ensure that designs adhere to performance best practices?

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

PREDICTIVE INSIGHTS WOULD HAVE THE BIGGEST IMPACT ON CREATIVE ASSET PLANNING, EXECUTION, AND DESIGN.

The ability to gain and leverage predictive insights is the most coveted measurement capability (74%) for design planning and execution, as Figure 19 shows. Study participants who are not effectively using data to measure and improve the creative process have a more pronounced need for predictive insights (84%) compared to those who are effectively using data in this way (69%).

MOST BENEFICIAL MEASUREMENT CAPABILITY

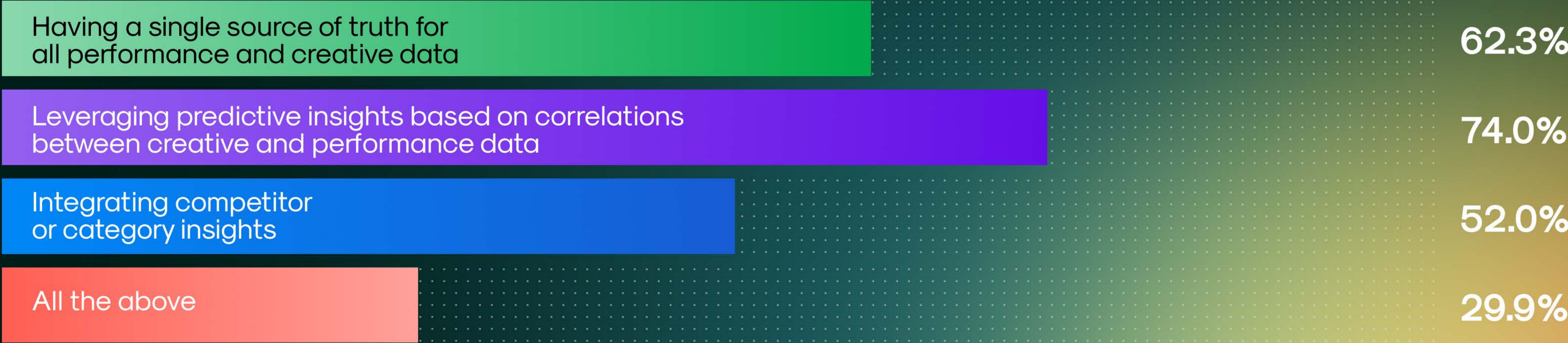


Figure 19

Which of the following measurement capabilities would be most beneficial from a planning, execution, and design standpoint?

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

MAJORITY ARE CONFIDENT IN MAINTAINING CREATIVE COMPLIANCE ACROSS CHANNELS AND AUDIENCES.

Most study participants express confidence in their ability to ensure compliance of creative assets across channels and audiences, as Figure 20 shows. This data suggests that major compliance failures are rare. With almost one-fourth (23%) of participants at a neutral rating reflects some uncertainty or process issues. Room for improvement exists in the areas of tools, workflows, or governance models.

How effectively organizations are able to use data to improve their creative process (Fig. 8) is a major influence on compliance, as the following table shows:

Ensuring compliance across channels and audiences	Uses data well or very well	Uses data neutral to very poorly
Very well	32%	14%
Well	52%	37%
Neutral	13%	45%
Poorly	2%	5%
Very poorly	1%	0%



Figure 20

How well are you able to ensure compliance of assets across multiple channels and/or audiences?

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

MOST DEPLOY CREATIVES ACROSS THREE TO SIX CHANNELS.

As marketing channels proliferate, the challenge of maintaining creative consistency and performance intensifies. 70% of study participants report deploying creative assets across three to six channels (Figure 21). Only 13% deploy across seven or more, a decrease from 20% last year—suggesting teams may be consolidating efforts for better control and efficiency. Managing creative deployment across multiple channels demands robust workflows, streamlined tools, and effective tracking to ensure assets remain on-brand and deliver impact at scale.

Across how many channels do you typically deploy creative assets?

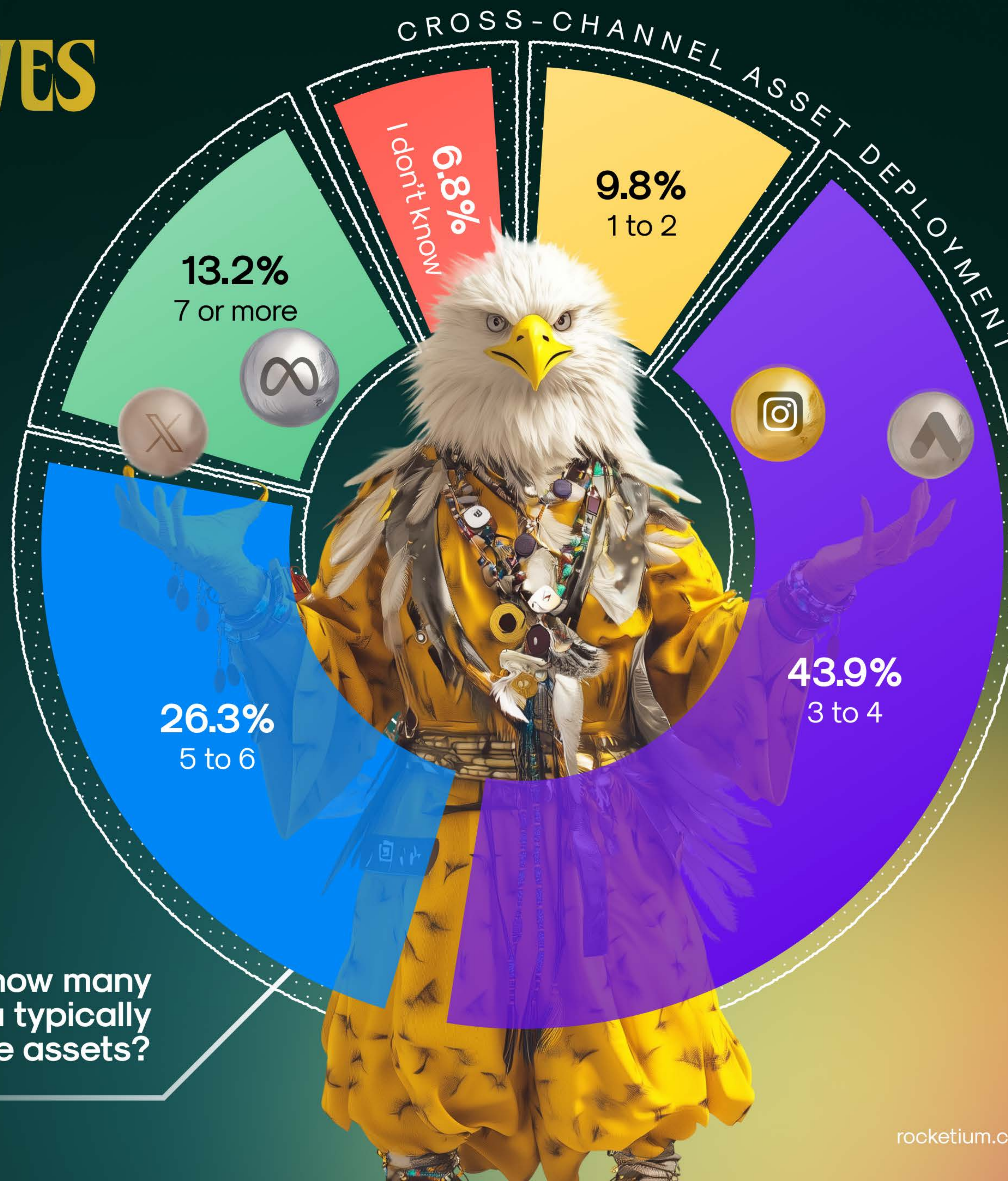


Figure 21

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

MARKETERS ARE PERSONALIZING CREATIVES FOR A LARGE NUMBER OF DISTINCT AUDIENCES.

Almost half (46%) of study participants are personalizing their creatives to 10 or more distinct audiences or audience segments, as Figure 22 shows. This degree of personalization underscores the need for scalable and efficient creative versioning.

Organizations whose ad spend is in the mid-range are doing the most personalization of their creatives for a broad number of audiences, as the following table shows:

Annual Ad Spend	Personalizing creatives to 9 or less audiences	Personalizing creatives to 10 or more audiences	I don't know
\$4 million or less	13%	13%	45%
\$5 to \$14 million	39%	58%	03%
\$15 million or more	45%	43%	12%

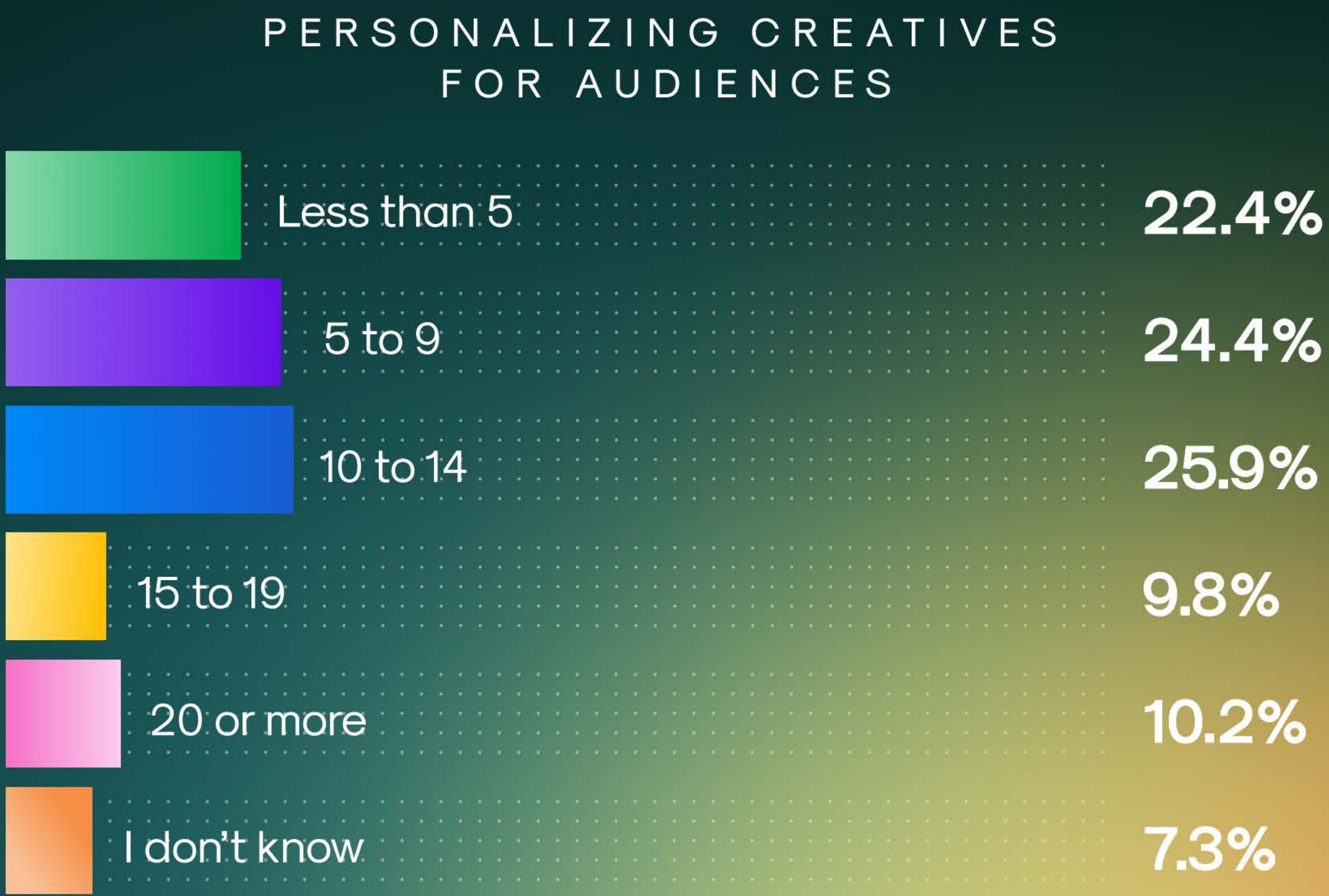


Figure 22

How many audiences or audience segments must you personalize creatives to?

BRAND COMPLIANCE AND ANALYTICS

MARKETERS MUST PRODUCE CREATIVES IN A WIDE VARIETY OF FORMATS AND SIZES.

Producing content for multiple platforms and devices requires flexibility and speed. Over two-thirds (69%) of study participants report producing creatives in four or more sizes or formats (Figure 23). This demand is especially high among organizations with larger ad spends: 60% of those spending \$15 million or more do this regularly.

Higher cycle times often correlate with this complexity. Nearly 75% of organizations with cycle times of four days or more produce creatives in multiple formats, highlighting the need for streamlined processes and better workflow management.

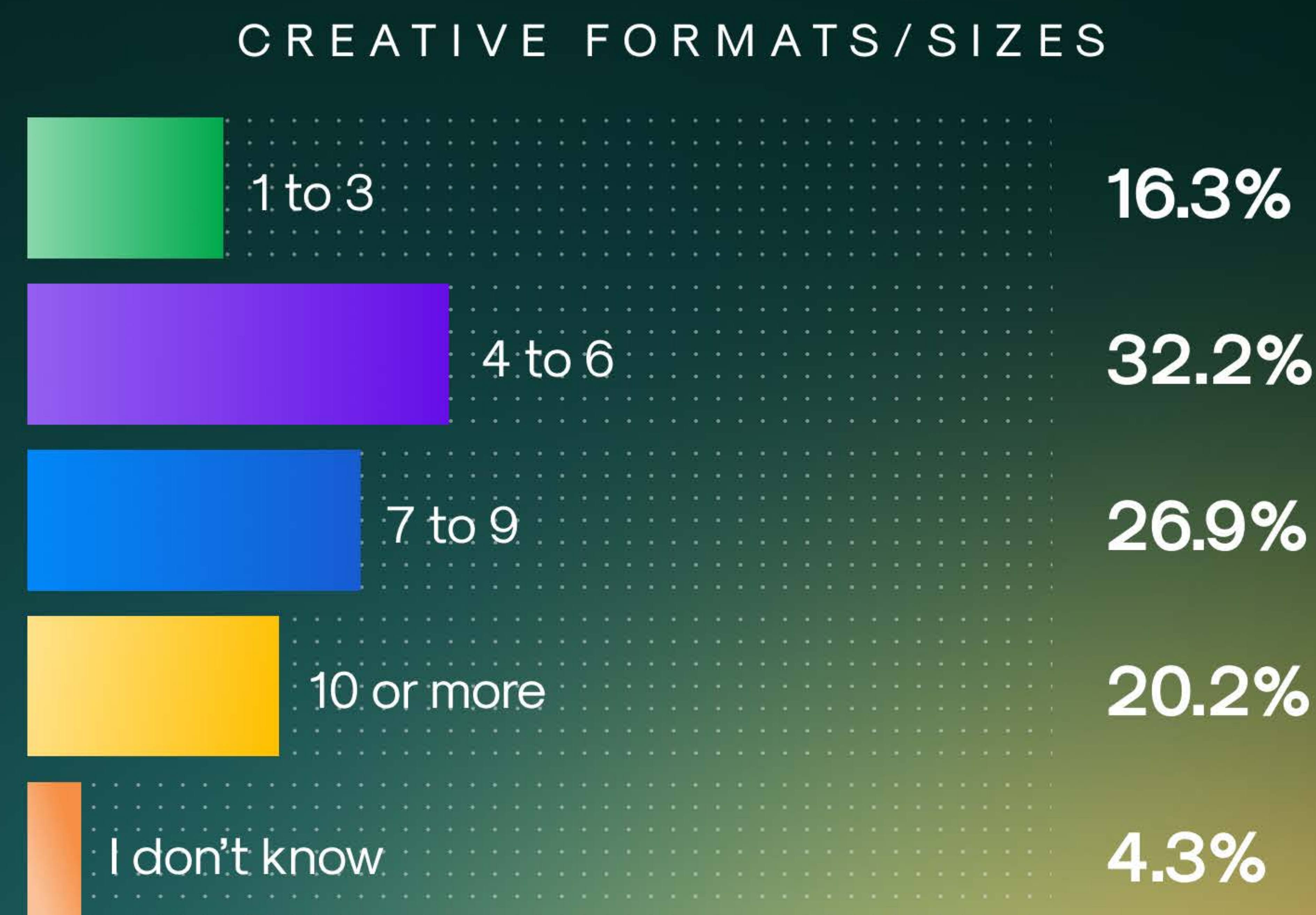


Figure 23

How many sizes or formats does a creative typically have to be adapted to?



TOP 15 TOOLS

TOOLS

A MAJORITY OF ORGANIZATIONS RELY ON FIVE OR MORE TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

As marketing and creative demands grow, teams increasingly rely on a stack of tools to support every step of the creative process. More than half (52%) of study participants report using five or more tools to manage tasks like project management, collaboration, asset production, and performance tracking (Figure 24). This fragmentation highlights both the complexity of modern creative operations and the urgent need for better integration and workflow optimization.

SUPPORTING TOOLS, TECHNOLOGY, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

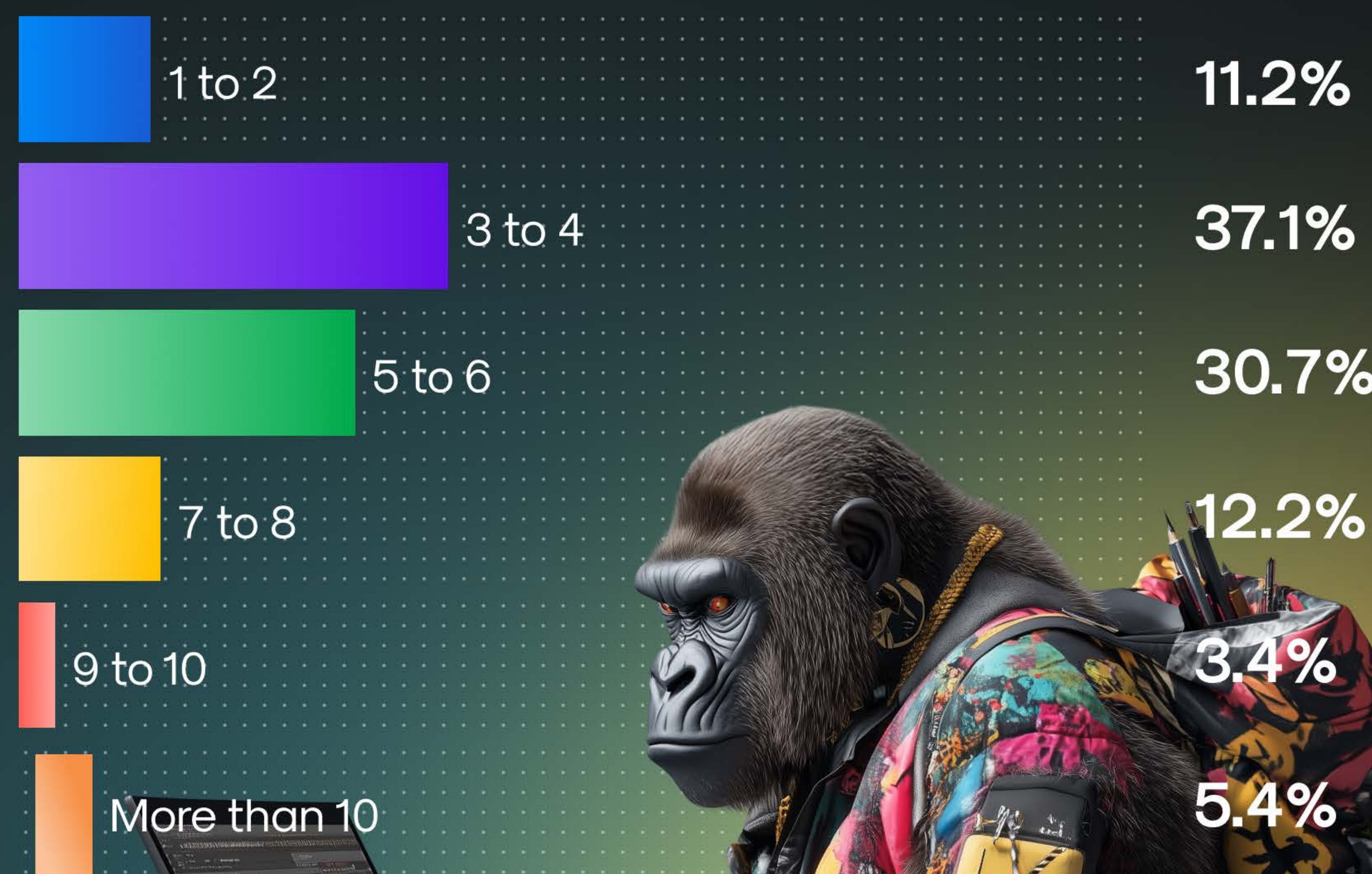


Figure 24

How many different software tools, technologies, and supporting infrastructure are in use to support your creative process?

TOOLS

TOOL INTEGRATION ENABLES FASTER AND SMARTER CREATIVE WORKFLOWS.

The integration of software tools that support the creative process workflow is crucial because it directly impacts the efficiency and effectiveness (Fig. 7) of the process. Almost two-thirds (65%) of organizations in the study report their tools integrate well or very well, as Figure 25 shows.

How well tools integrate with each other is directly proportional to cycle time (Fig. 6). The ones with the lowest cycle times noticed the highest integration between tools.

Asset creation cycle time	% tools integrate well or very well
1 to 3 days	85%
4 to 6 days	75%
7 to 9 days	66%
4 to 6 days	75%

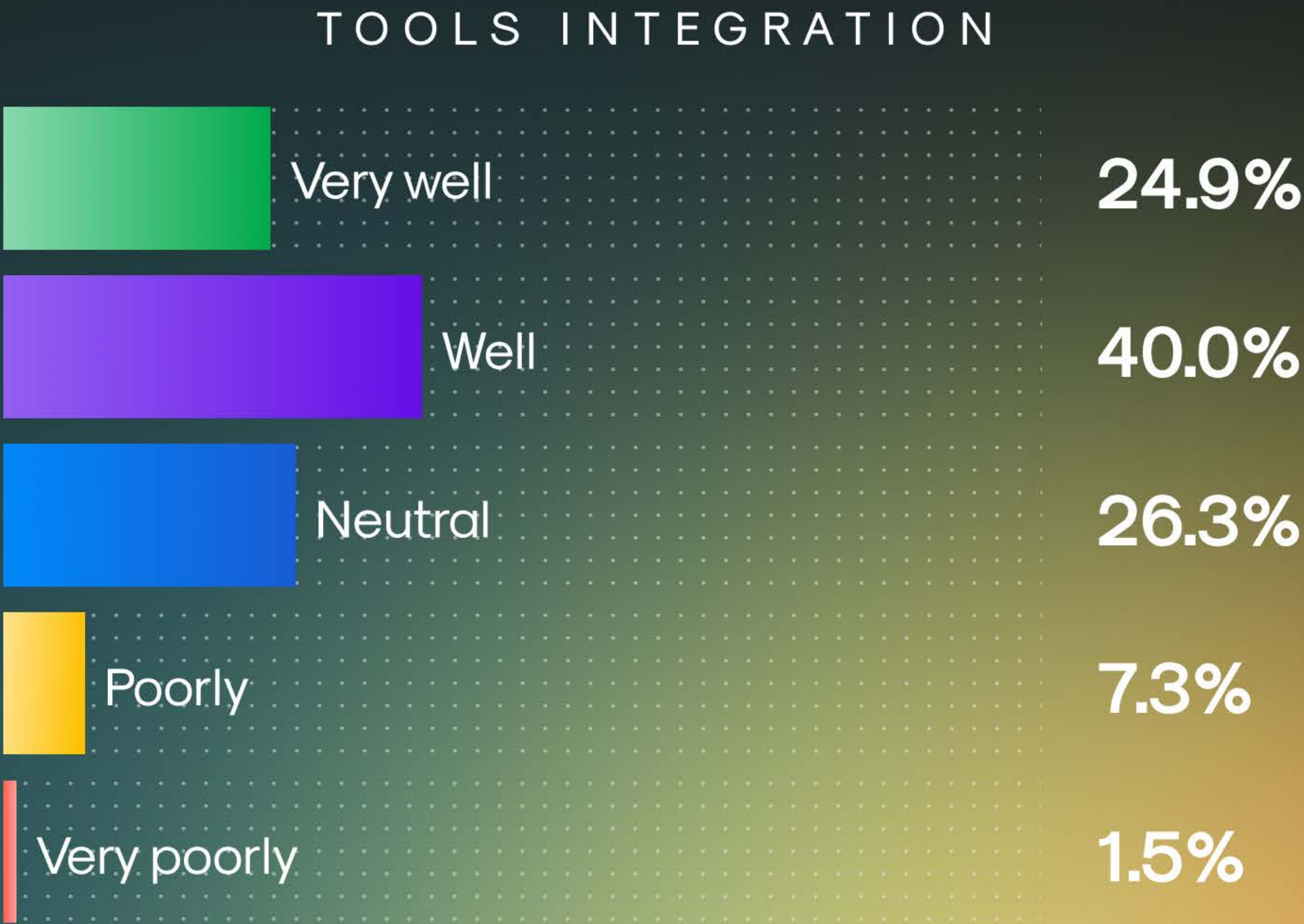


Figure 25

How well do all the software tools in use integrate with each other to support your creative process workflow?

TOOLS

ORGANIZATIONS ARE SPLIT ON THE EASE OR DIFFICULTY OF MANAGING THE CREATIVE TECH STACK.

Just over half of study participants (57%) report it's easy to manage the tech stack that supports the creative process, as Figure 26 shows.

What makes this management task far easier is having a single source of truth (Fig. 10) for all asset performance and creative data, as the following table shows:

Single source of truth?	% easy to manage the tech stack
Yes	77%
No	35%

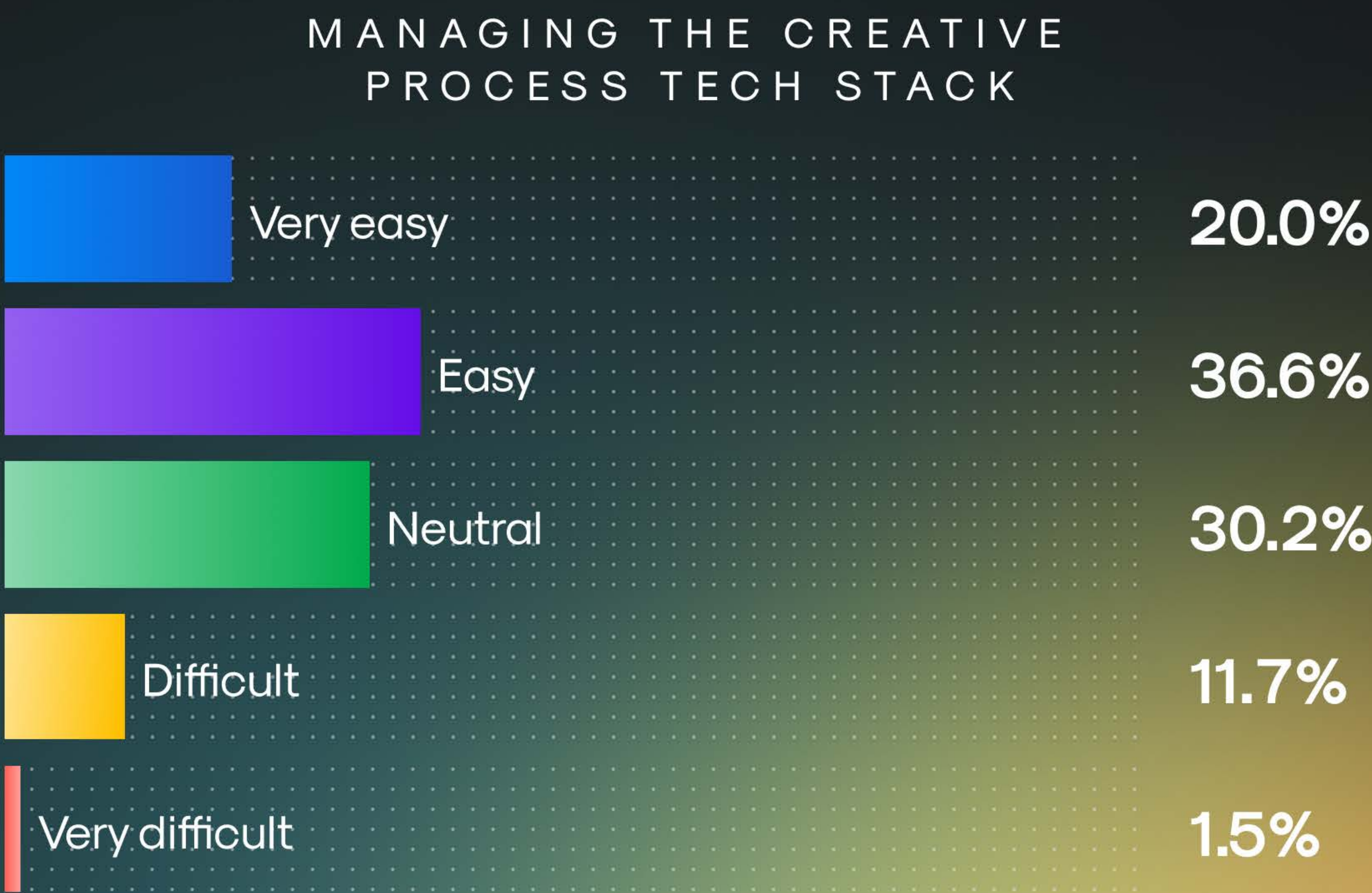


Figure 26

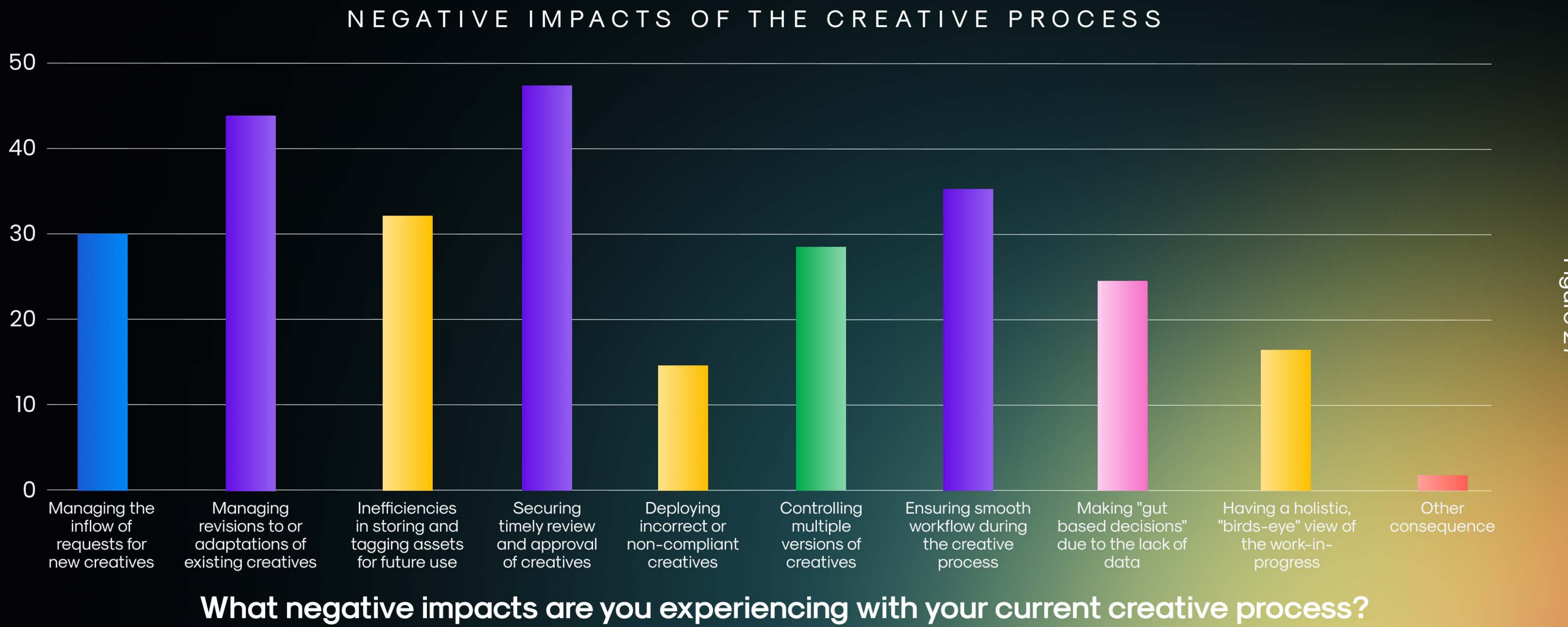
How difficult or easy is it to manage the tech stack your organization uses to support your creative process?

100% IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

CREATIVE TEAMS ARE STRAINED BY PROCESS FRICTION AND INEFFICIENCIES.

Review and revision bottlenecks are the top challenges for study participants, as Figure 27 shows. Workflow and asset management inefficiencies follow close behind as additional challenges.



IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

DELAYS IN CAMPAIGN GO-LIVES DUE TO PROCESS INEFFICIENCIES ARE COMMON.

Creative inefficiencies continue to plague marketing timelines. Over 40% of marketers report experiencing delays frequently or very frequently due to creative processes (Figure 28). Only about one-third (32%) say delays are infrequent or very infrequent—highlighting that streamlined workflows remain the exception rather than the norm.

How often do you experience delays in campaign go-live dates due to your current creative process?

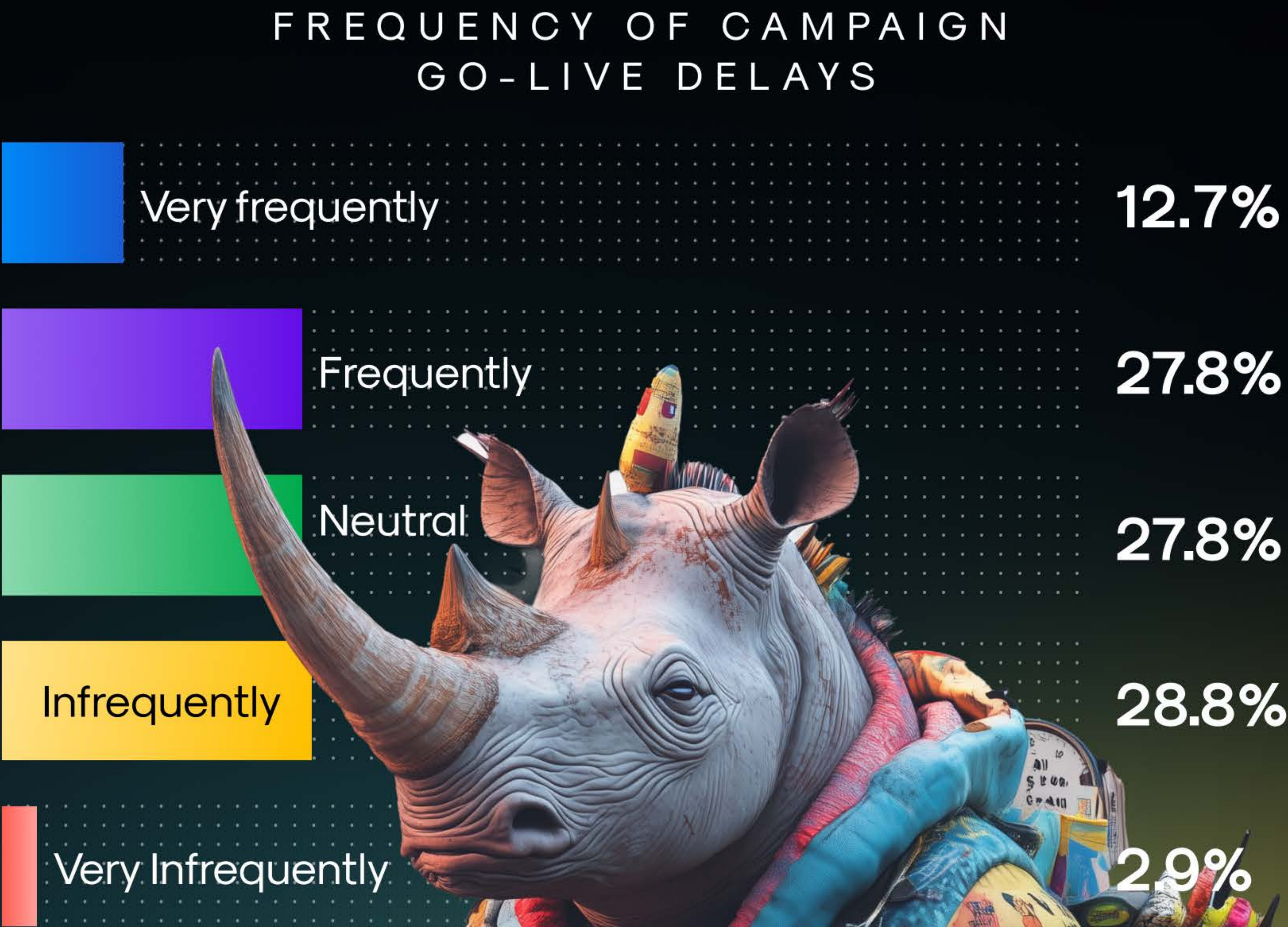


Figure 28

IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

DELAYS IN CAMPAIGN GO-LIVE HURT TEAM WELLBEING AND PRODUCTIVITY.

Operational bottlenecks and process inefficiencies have real consequences beyond just missed deadlines. 40% of study participants rank increased workload, overtime, and stress as the top negative impact of delays in campaign go-live dates (Figure 29).

These pressures can drive burnout and lower team morale. Additional financial impacts include increased expenses (34%) and loss of revenue (33%), underscoring that creative process delays can hit both team dynamics and the bottom line.

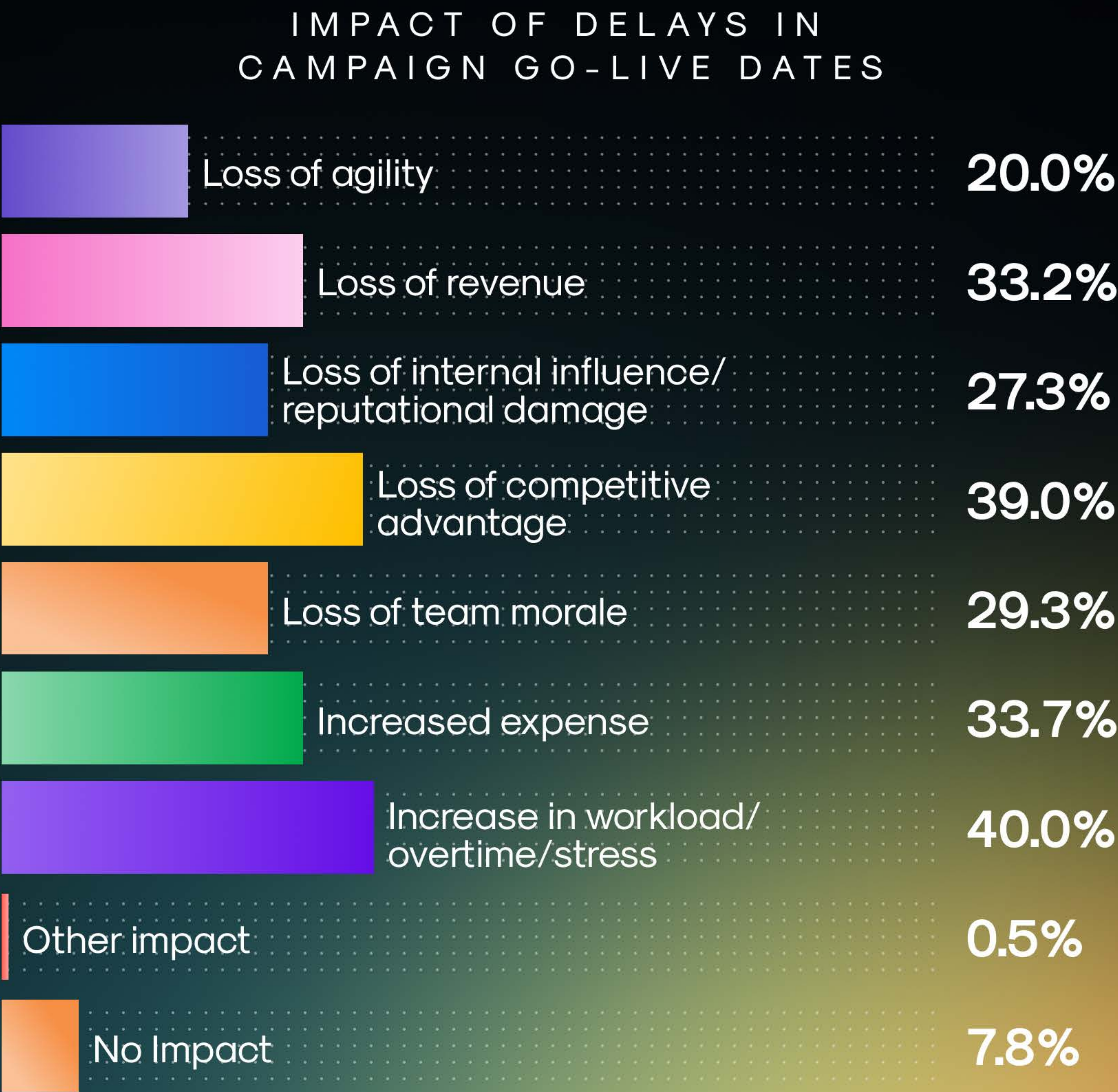


Figure 29

How do delays in campaign go-live dates impact you?

IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

ELIMINATING CAMPAIGN DELAYS COULD UNLOCK MEANINGFUL REVENUE GAINS.

In today’s competitive marketing landscape, delays in campaign go-live dates don’t just waste time – they directly affect the bottom line. A majority (60%) of study participants estimate their organization could realize 4% or more additional revenue if these delays were eliminated (Figure 30). Notably, 18% project gains of 10% or higher, emphasizing that for some teams, delays represent a serious obstacle to revenue growth.

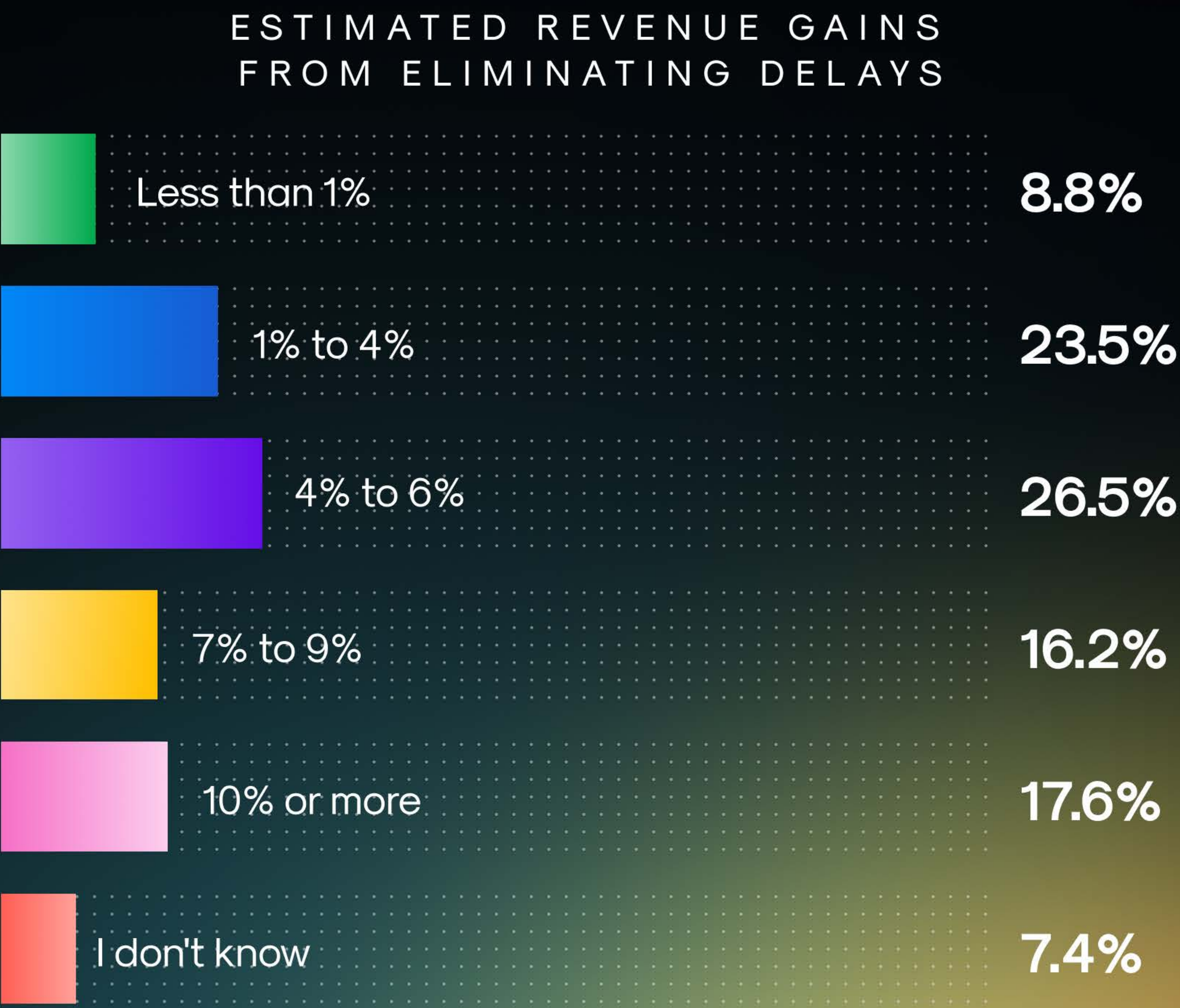


Figure 30

If the delays in campaign go-live dates were eliminated, what percent of additional revenue do you think your organization could realize?

IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

CAMPAIGN GO-LIVE DELAYS ARE COSTING ORGANIZATIONS A NOTICEABLE PORTION OF THEIR AD BUDGETS.

Nearly half (43%) of study participants estimate that 5% or more of their ad spend is wasted due to campaign delays, as Figure 31 shows. This data reveals a measurable and recurring cost that is eroding media efficiency.

Those who refresh their assets more frequently (Fig. 12) are seeing more of their ad spend wasted from delays:

Ad spend wasted	Refresh multiple times per week or weekly	Refresh monthly	Refresh quarterly	Refresh annually
5% or more	46%	47%	42%	35%

AD SPEND WASTED FROM DELAYS

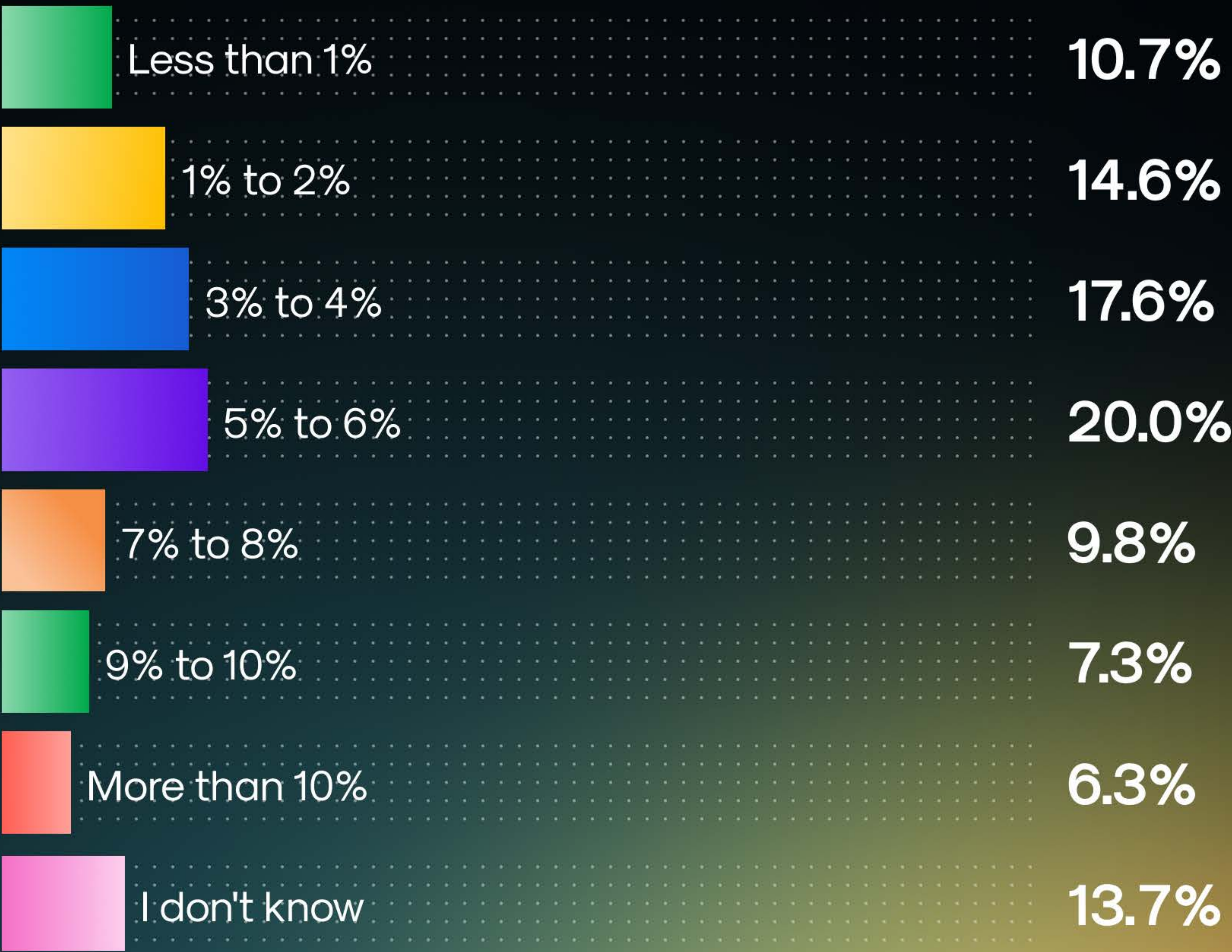


Figure 31

Because of the delays in campaign go-live dates you experience, what percent of your ad spend do you think is wasted?

IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

DELAYS OR INEFFICIENCIES ARE LIMITING THE ABILITY TO SHARE CONTENT ON MULTIPLE PLATFORMS.

In a multichannel marketing environment, speed and consistency are critical. Yet nearly half (47%) of study participants report that delays or inefficiencies in their creative process limit their ability to share content effectively across platforms (Figure 32). These delays undermine omnichannel efforts, reducing reach, impact, and ultimately, marketing ROI.

IMPACT OF DELAYS ON OMNICHANNEL MARKETING EFFORTS

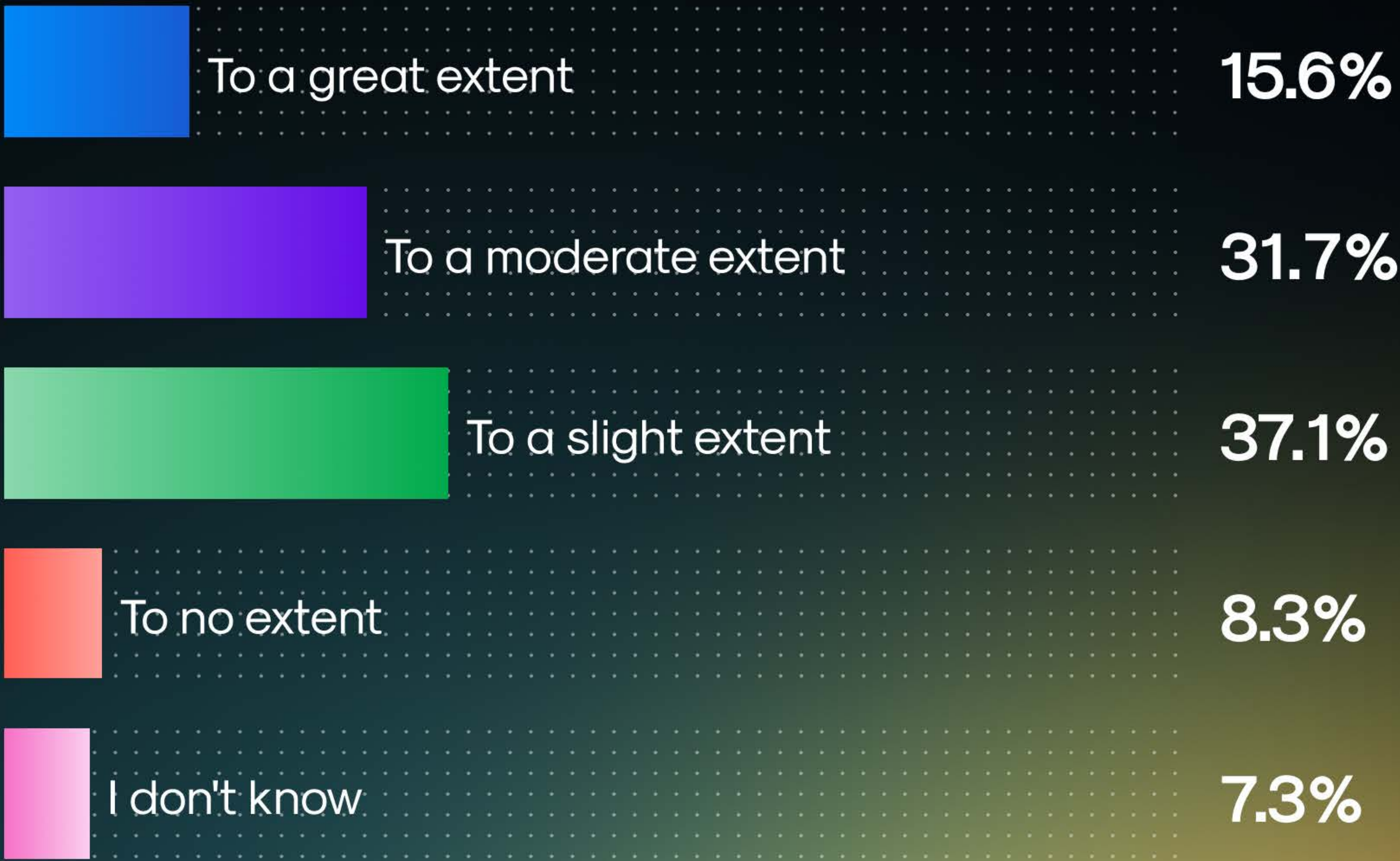


Figure 32

To what extent do delays or inefficiencies in your creative process limit your ability to share your content on multiple platforms or channels like your website, social, apps, or email?

IMPACT OF CREATIVE INEFFICIENCIES

A MAJORITY OF ORGANIZATIONS ARE ABLE TO SUPPORT HIGH LEVELS OF PERSONALIZATION.

For two-thirds of study participants, their creative process is able to support high levels of personalization, such as content localization, as Figure 33 shows.

Proficiency at using data to measure and improve the creative process (Fig. 8) is a key enabler of personalization:

Proficiency using data	% support of personalization well to very well	% support of personalization neutral to very poorly
Well to very well	79%	21%
Neutral to very poorly	79%	21%

The ability to support high levels of personalization is also a key driver of creative process satisfaction (Fig. 11):

Process satisfaction	% support of personalization well to very well	% support of personalization neutral to very poorly
Satisfied to very satisfied	79%	21%
Neutral to very dissatisfied	33%	67%

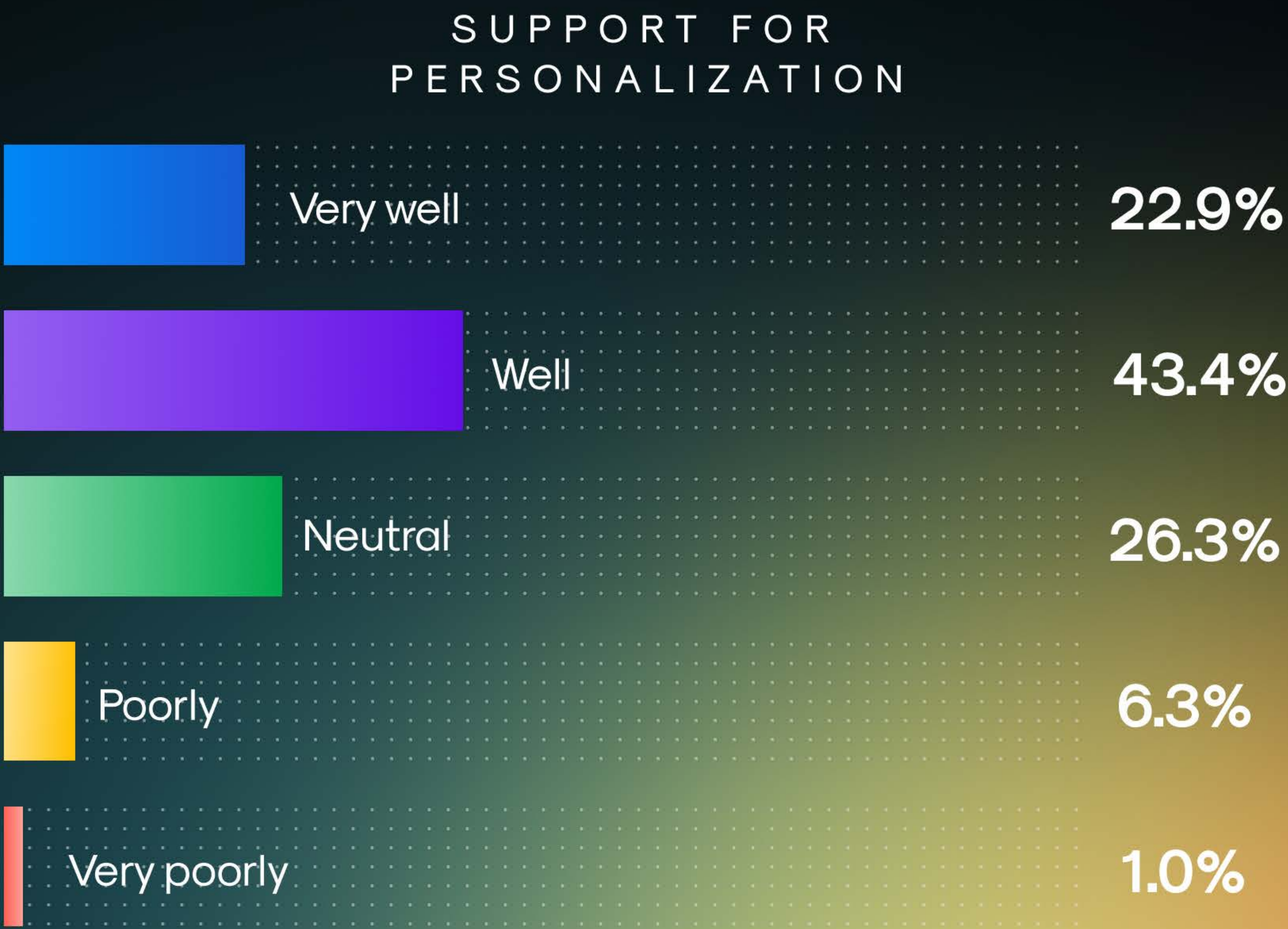


Figure 33

How well does your creative process support high levels of personalization, such as content localization?

AI AND AUTOMATION IN CREATIVE OPS

AI AND AUTOMATION IN CREATIVEOPS

AI ADOPTION IS WIDESPREAD BUT STILL IN THE EARLY STAGES FOR MOST PARTICIPANTS.

AI is transforming how marketing and creative teams approach content production and operations. A combined 67% of study participants say they are either experimenting with AI (31%) or actively using it for specific creative tasks (37%), as Figure 34 shows. Yet, despite its promise, most organizations remain in the early phases of adoption and have yet to scale AI as a core part of their creative strategy.

AI ADOPTION FOR CONTENT CREATION AND CREATIVEOPS

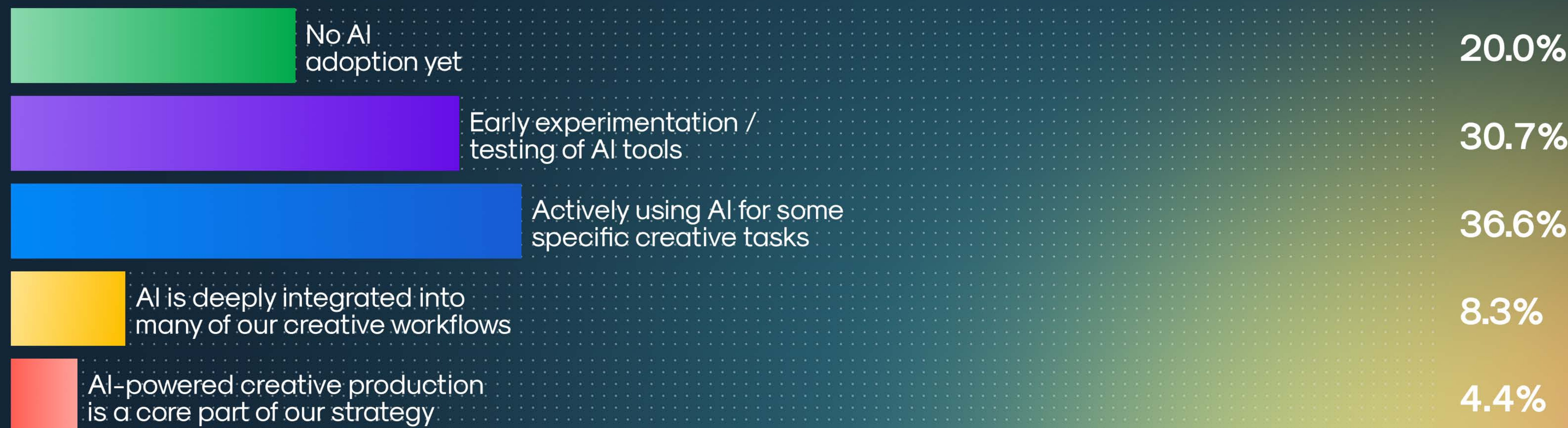


Figure 34

How has your organization's adoption of AI in content creation and creative operations evolved over the last year?

AI AND AUTOMATION IN CREATIVEOPS

CONCERNS ABOUT COMPLIANCE AND BRAND SAFETY ARE THE TOP BARRIERS TO AI ADOPTION.

AI promises efficiency and speed, but its adoption still faces significant hurdles in creative operations. The top barriers include compliance and brand safety concerns (46%), unclear ROI (40%), and integration challenges with existing tools (34%) (Figure 35). Notably, creative and marketing teams rank these barriers differently, reflecting the varied perspectives and priorities that shape AI adoption in large organizations.

Creative and marketing professionals in this study rank these barriers to AI adoption differently:

Creative professionals	Marketing professionals
1. Unclear ROI on AI-driven creative processes	1. Compliance and brand safety concerns
2. Compliance and brand safety concerns	2. Lack of internal expertise
3. Resistance from creative teams	3. Integration challenges with existing tools (Tie)
	3. Unclear ROI on AI-driven creative processes

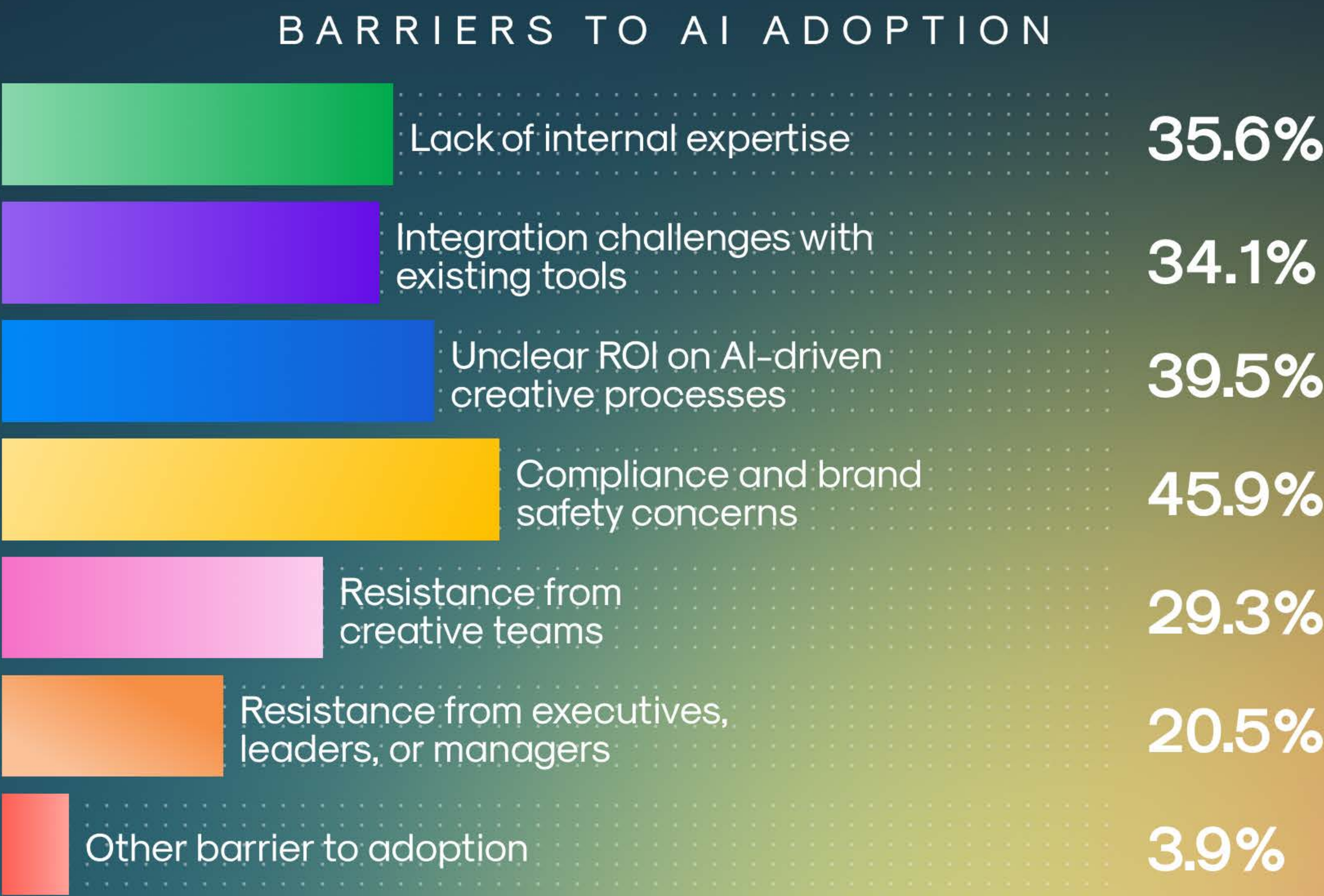


Figure 35

What are your biggest barriers to AI adoption?

AI AND AUTOMATION IN CREATIVEOPS

COPY AND MESSAGE GENERATION IS THE TOP AI APPLICATION IN THE CREATIVE PROCESS.

Study participants are primarily using AI for content generation and production efficiency, with nearly half of marketers (49%) using it for copy and messaging, and over a third using it to generate concepts (37%) and automate variations (38%), as Figure 36 shows.

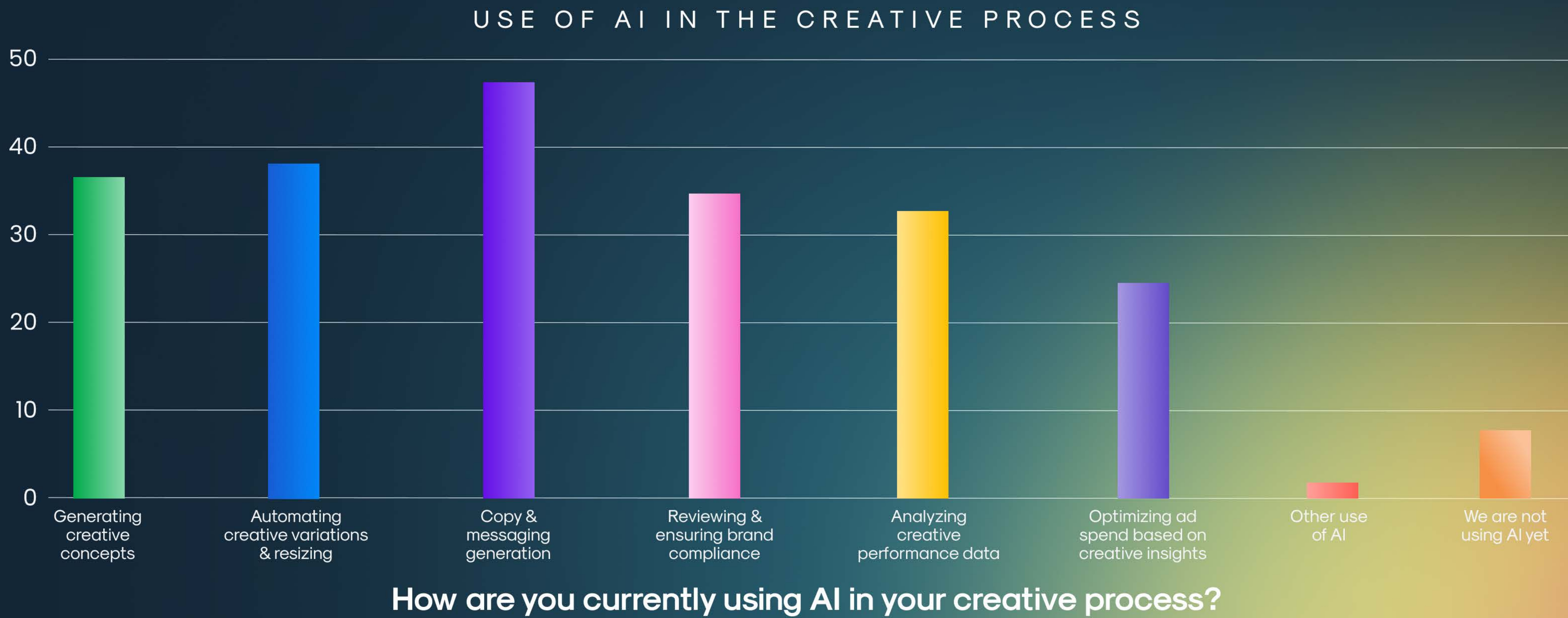


Figure 36

AI AND AUTOMATION IN CREATIVEOPS

SPEEDING UP CAMPAIGN EXECUTION IS THE BIGGEST POTENTIAL AI WIN.

According to study participants, AI's immediate value lies in accelerating workflows (53%), which will help teams meet deadlines and respond to market demands faster, as Figure 37 shows.

IMPACT OF AI-DRIVEN USE CASES

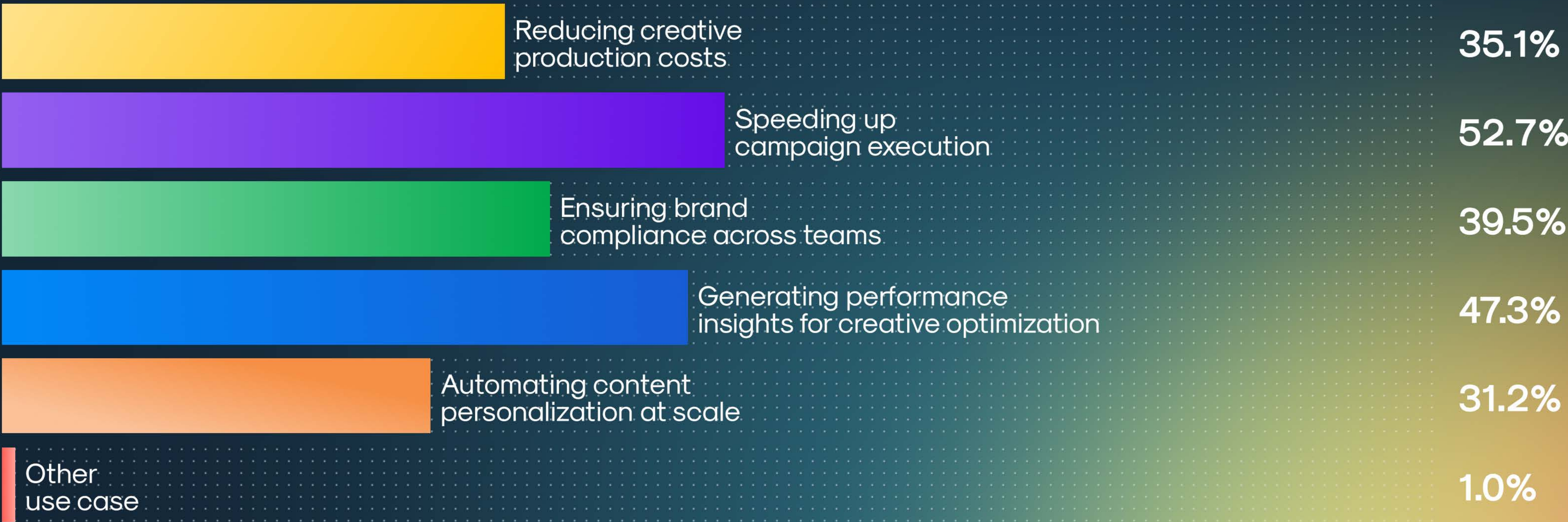


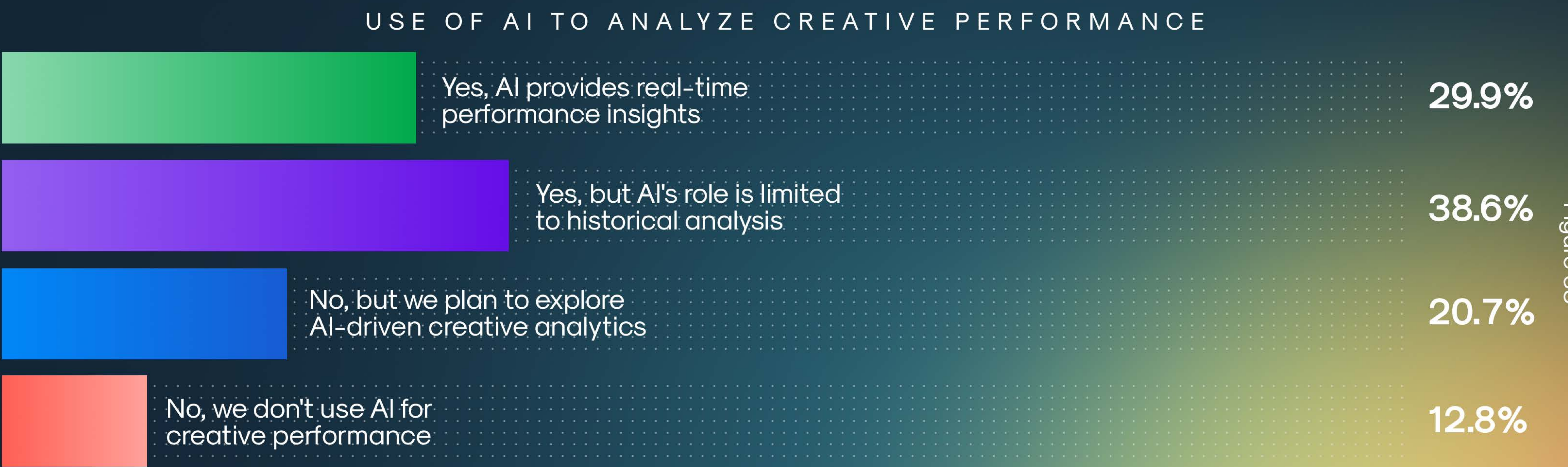
Figure 37

Which AI-driven use cases would have the biggest impact on your creative operations?

AI AND AUTOMATION IN CREATIVEOPS

TWO-THIRDS OF STUDY PARTICIPANTS USE AI TO ANALYZE CREATIVE PERFORMANCE.

Two-thirds of the organizations in this study report using AI to analyze creative performance, though most are still in early stages, as Figure 38 shows. Only 30%, however, are leveraging it for real-time insights which represents a key opportunity for future advantage.



Do you currently use AI to analyze and optimize creative performance?

AI AND AUTOMATION IN CREATIVEOPS

IMAGE GENERATION TOOLS TOPS THE AI PRIORITY LIST.

Almost half of study participants (47%) plan to prioritize implementing AI-powered creative generation tools in the next 12 months, as Figure 39 shows. While most are actively exploring AI, nearly a quarter (23%) are not yet engaged.

PRIORITIES FOR AI ADOPTION

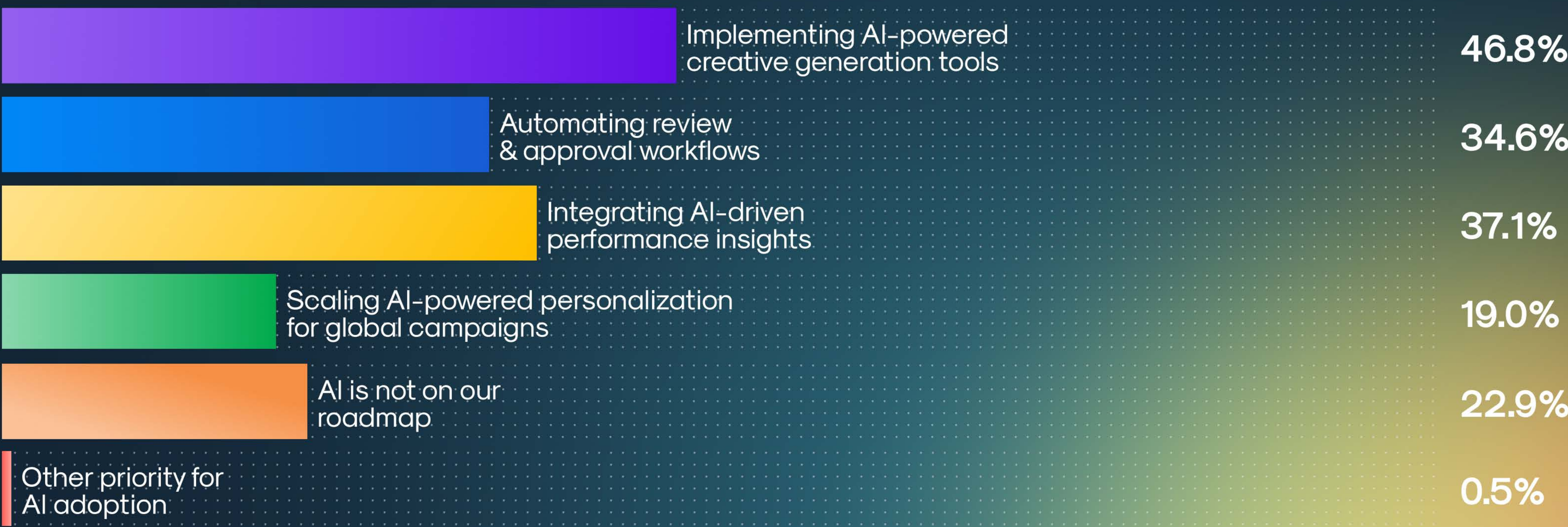


Figure 39

What is your top priority for AI adoption in creative operations over the next 12 months?



08 ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN

This plan is designed to help marketing and creative leaders eliminate inefficiencies, improve collaboration, and drive better performance from their visual content strategy.

STEP 1: STREAMLINE THE CREATIVE PROCESS TO ELIMINATE DELAYS

40% of study participants report frequent delays that impact revenue, team morale, and media spend efficiency. Audit your creative workflows for bottlenecks, especially in review and approval stages. Set a target to reduce average asset creation cycle times, ideally to below 6 days. Leverage workflow automation and project management tools that are optimized for the creative process.

STEP 2: CONSOLIDATE AND INTEGRATE CREATIVE TOOLS

Over half of study participants (52%) are using 5 or more tools, yet 35% report poor tool integration, which drags down speed and satisfaction. To improve, conduct a stack audit by eliminating redundant or poorly integrated tools, prioritizing platforms that offer open APIs and seamless integration, and aligning IT and marketing/creative leads on integration priorities.

STEP 3: ESTABLISH A SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH FOR CREATIVE DATA

Only half of study participants have a single source of truth. Those who do are significantly more satisfied and efficient. To get there, centralize asset and performance data in a shared system. At the same time, align creative and marketing teams on KPIs and success metrics. Then, use asset management platforms that support metadata tagging, version control, and compliance checks.

STEP 4: USE DATA MORE EFFECTIVELY TO DRIVE CREATIVE DECISIONS

Only 68% are using data well to improve their creative process. Proficiency using data strongly correlates with creative process satisfaction and performance. To gain data proficiency, standardize data collection around creative asset performance. Train both creative and marketing teams to interpret and act on insights, or have agents monitor this for you. Set a goal to refresh creative assets at least monthly based on what the performance data is telling you.

STEP 5: BOOST COLLABORATION BETWEEN MARKETING AND CREATIVE TEAMS

There's a satisfaction gap where 83% of creative professionals are happy with the creative process vs. 68% of marketers. To get alignment and boost collaboration, create shared briefs, goals, and feedback loops to align expectations. Invest in shared planning tools and regular cross-functional syncs. Measure process satisfaction on a regular basis, such as quarterly, across both groups.

STEP 6: ACCELERATE AI ADOPTION WHERE IMPACT IS IMMEDIATE

While 67% of study participants are using AI in some way, few have scaled it. The top AI use cases include copy generation and asset resizing. To rev up AI in creative operations, prioritize AI for high-impact tasks like campaign execution speed and creative variation. Pilot tools for automated content personalization and brand compliance. Address adoption barriers—especially compliance and ROI—with clear governance and metrics.

STEP 7: ENHANCE OMNICHANNEL AND AUDIENCE PERSONALIZATION CAPABILITIES

70% of study participants are deploying assets across three to six channels, and 46% adapt content for 10 or more audiences, yet nearly half feel limited by inefficiencies. To enhance asset personalization, develop templates and modular content systems for rapid adaptation. Map out audience segments and ensure asset reuse workflows are scalable. Most importantly, use AI or automation tools to tailor versions at scale while maintaining brand consistency.

STEP 8: INVEST IN PREDICTIVE AND REAL-TIME PERFORMANCE INSIGHTS

Most study participants (74%) want predictive insights, but this study reveals that performance measurement is infrequent. To leverage real-time and predictive, implement real-time performance dashboards for campaign tracking. Shift measurement from quarterly to ongoing. Use AI-driven analytics to forecast creative performance before campaigns are launched.

STEP 9: REFRESH CREATIVE ASSETS MORE FREQUENTLY

The study makes clear that most (74%) would refresh assets more often if easier. Those who do refresh more frequently are getting better results. To refresh more often, set guidelines for regular creative refresh cycles, such as weekly or biweekly. Create a reusable content library with customizable elements. Implement automated versioning based on format, audience, or channel.

STEP 10: CLOSE THE BRAND CONSISTENCY GAP WITH AGENCIES

Brand consistency is the top challenge in agency relationships (46%). To remedy this, standardize brand guidelines and enforce them via technology. Require agency partners to use your centralized asset hub. Conduct quarterly brand compliance reviews across all external partners.

By following this action plan, organizations can boost efficiency, increase revenue impact, and strengthen creative effectiveness in a data-driven, omnichannel marketing environment.

CONCLUSION

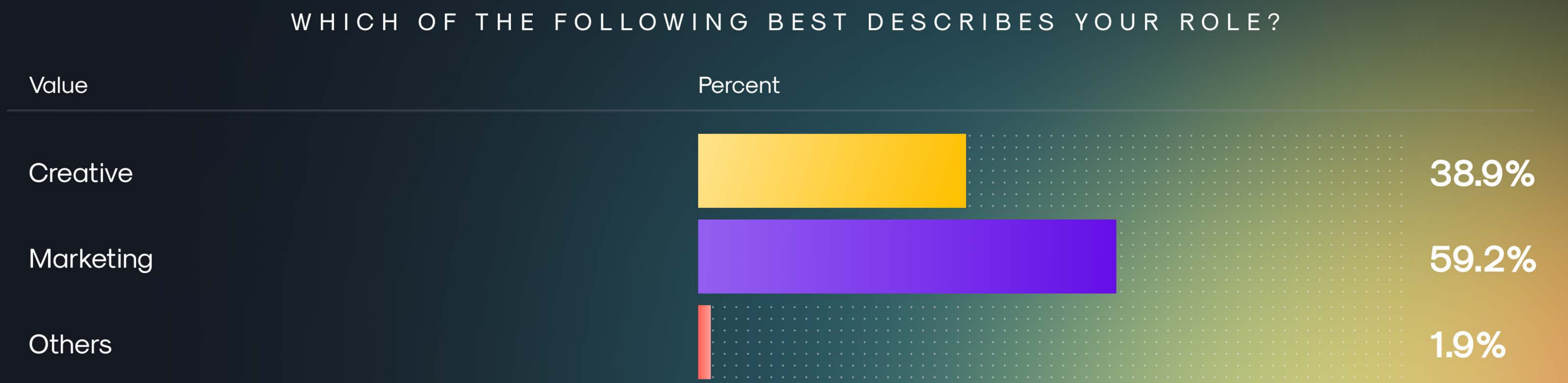
The State of Visual Content Marketing 2025 report makes clear that while many organizations have made strides in modernizing their creative operations, significant inefficiencies still hinder speed, performance, and ROI. Delays in campaign go-live dates, fragmented tool ecosystems, and underutilization of data are costing teams both time and revenue, while also straining collaboration between creative and marketing functions. There is, however, much room for optimism. The report reveals strong momentum around growing AI adoption, increased use of performance insights, and a widespread ability to scale personalization. These indicators signal a shift toward more agile, data-driven creative processes. For organizations looking to remain competitive, the path forward is clear: prioritize integration, accelerate automation, and harness data and AI to unlock both creative potential and measurable business impact.

METHODOLOGY

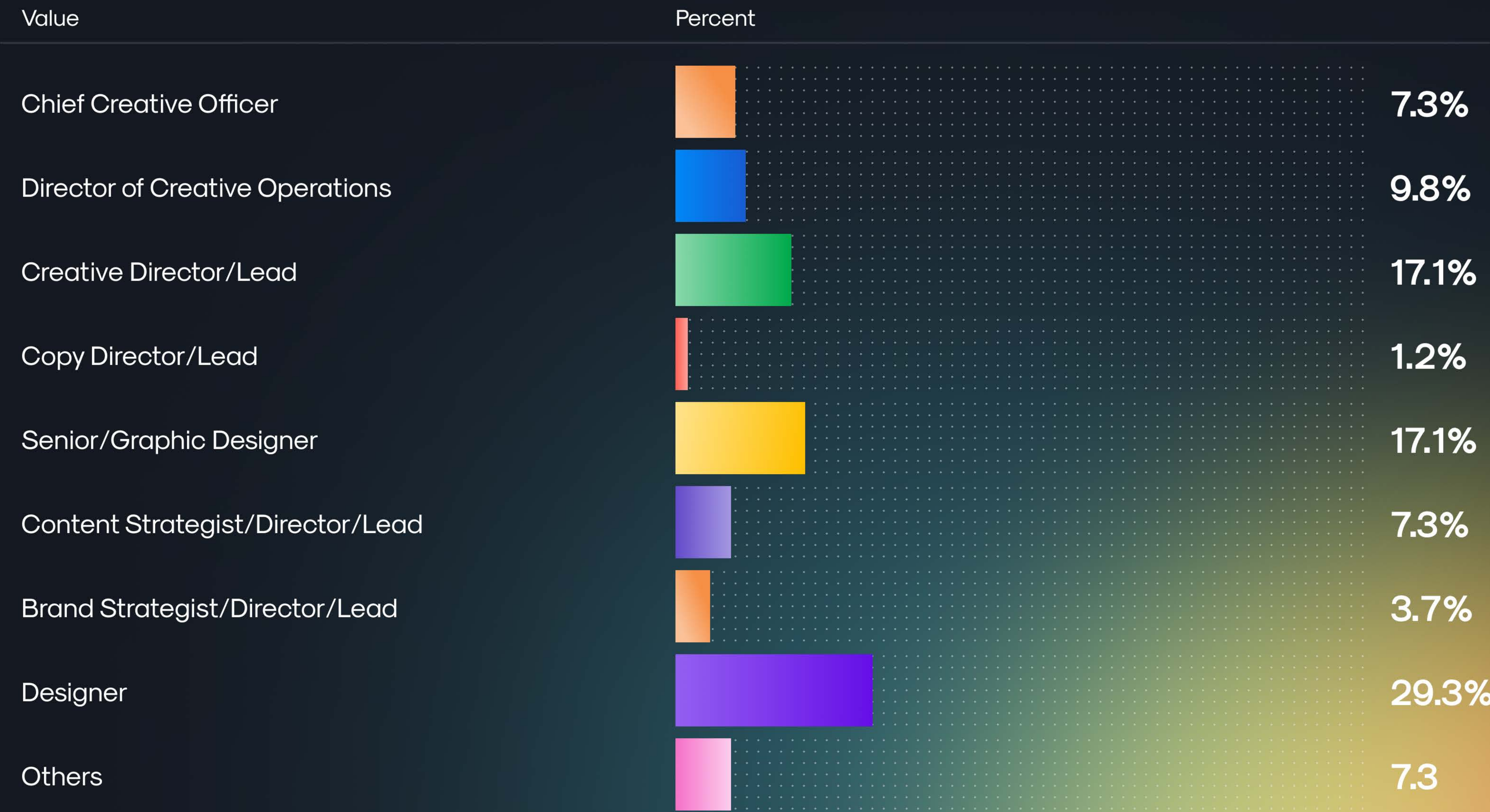
This State of Visual Content Marketing survey was administered online from March 07, 2025, through March 26, 2025. During this period, 205 complete and 16 partial responses were collected. Most of the partial responses had useful data and were included in the report analysis. Only valid or correlated findings are shared in this report.

The representativeness of this study's results depends on the similarity of the sample to environments in which this survey data is used for comparison or guidance. Findings based on small sample sizes are noted and should only be used for informational purposes.

Summarized below is basic categorization data collected about the study participants:



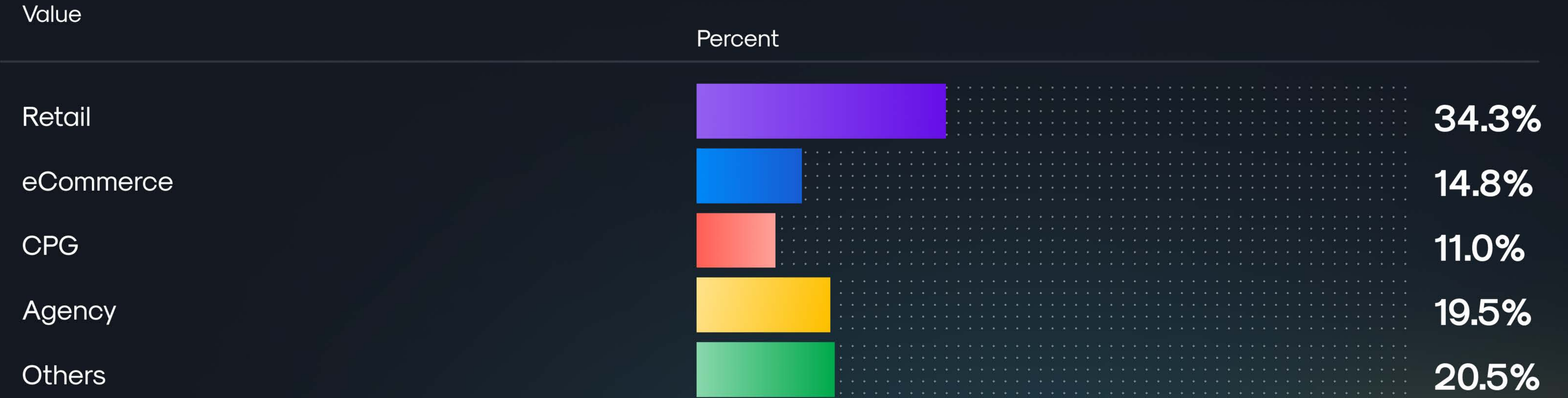
WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR CREATIVE ROLE?



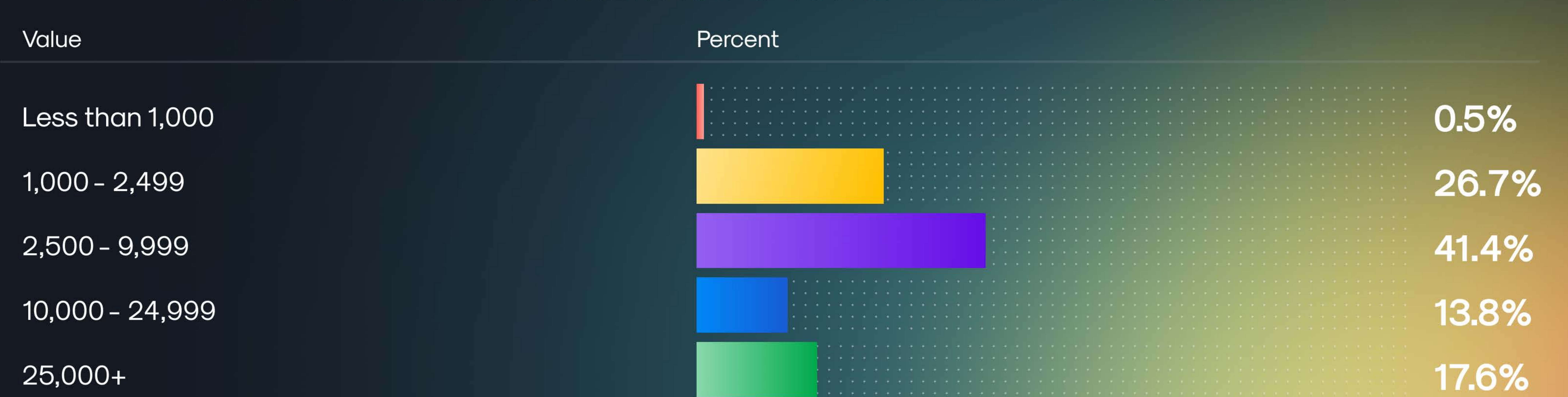
WHICH BEST DESCRIBES YOUR MARKETING ROLE?



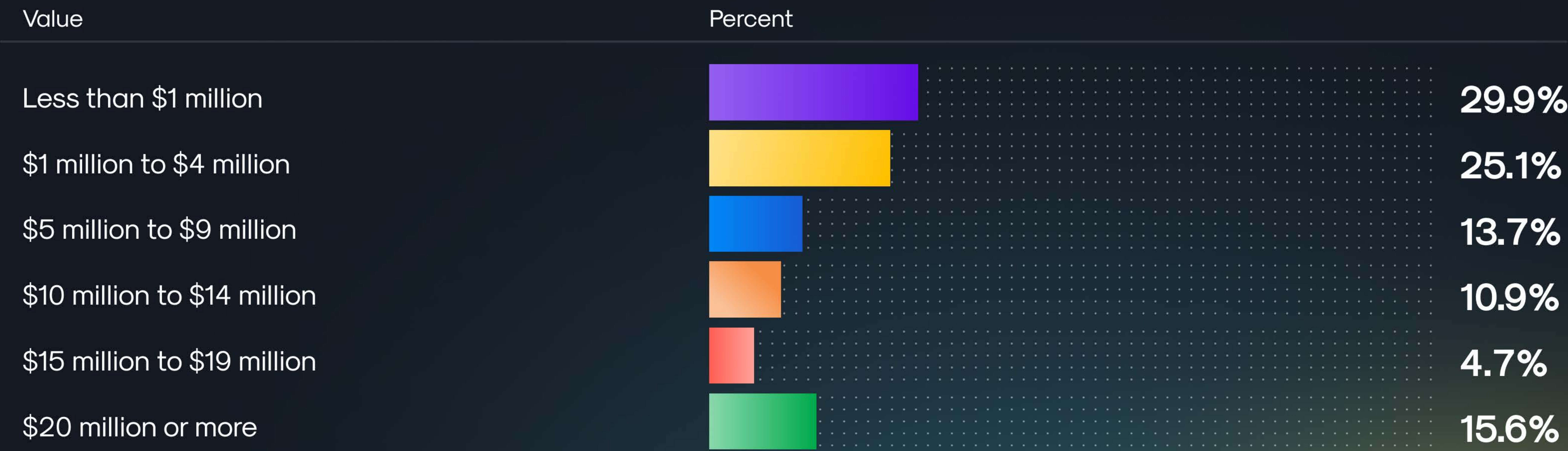
WHAT BEST DESCRIBES THE NATURE OF YOUR BUSINESS?



WHAT IS YOUR ORGANIZATION'S TOTAL WORLDWIDE HEADCOUNT?



WHAT IS YOUR APPROXIMATE ANNUAL AD SPEND?



DESIGN RATIONALE

Marketing and design teams today operate in a jungle of omnichannel demands, constant deadlines, the pressure to create personalized content at scale, and driving the best campaign results. They're not just navigating this environment; they're mastering it by blending data, creativity, and AI to lead the pack.

That's why this year's design language takes inspiration from the alpha predators of the creative jungle: confident, strategic, and unafraid to innovate. Drawing from vivid, AI-generated visuals the theme embodies a new kind of creative leader, one who isn't just reacting to challenges but boldly defining the future.

This report celebrates these Creative Alphas, the marketing and design professionals who are transforming content operations into a competitive advantage. We hope it inspires every team to embrace their inner alpha and build campaigns that thrive at scale.

DEMAND METRIC

Demand Metric is a global research and advisory firm with expertise in conducting primary research to produce thought-provoking reports. The primary goal of this research is to educate marketers about changes in the technology landscape so they can always stay one step ahead. Through strategic partnerships with the AMA and ANA, Demand Metric has become the industry standard for marketers.

Rocketium

Rocketium is a visual content marketing platform that helps teams scale content efficiently and cost-effectively. With Rocketium Creative for automated content scaling and Rocketium Performance for AI-driven campaign optimization, brands, marketplaces and agencies create high-impact campaigns at lower costs. Trusted by global leaders like Amazon, Walmart, General Mills, Colgate-Palmolive, Publicis Groupe, and Omnicom Group, Rocketium transforms visual content marketing with speed, intelligence, and scale.

For general inquiries and to learn more about the report, write to **marketing@rocketium.com**