

A STUDY BY
MUCK RACK

THE STATE OF

PRR

2024

About this survey

Company type:

- 37% agencies
- 29% brands
- 17% nonprofits
- 12% consultant
- 5% government

PR team size:

- Solo: 23%
- 2-5: 36%
- 6-9: 10%
- 10-15: 11%
- 16-21: 5%
- 22-40: 6%
- 41+: 10%

Location:

- 75% U.S.
- 5% Europe
- 5% Canada
- 3% Asia

Primary audience:

- 28% B2B
- 31% B2C
- 36% B2B and B2C

Industry:

- Public relations agency: 17%
- Technology: 10%
- Marketing/advertising agency: 10%
- Nonprofit: 9%
- Education: 7%
- Other: 7%
- Entertainment, media and publishing: 6%
- Healthcare/biotechnology/pharmaceuticals: 6%
- Financial services/banking: 4%
- Travel and tourism: 4%
- Consumer products: 4%
- Government: 3%
- Food & beverage: 2%

Methodology

We surveyed 1,116 PR professionals from April 4 to May 10, 2024.

The goal of this survey is to deliver insights to the PR industry to help improve the workflow of public relations professionals. Muck Rack distributed the survey primarily through email.

Muck Rack's data journalist and content team cleaned the data in a variety of ways. We removed low effort responses where the respondent completed the survey in less than five minutes. We also removed any duplicate entries, responses that were generated by spam accounts and checked the data for major outliers.

Due to changes in phrasing, comparing data to previous years may not be possible. Figures may not add up to **100%** due to rounding errors or excluded categories.

The conservative margin of error for the survey is about **3%**.

Executive Summary

- **Social media trends:** LinkedIn is the most important social platform for **50% of PR pros**, far surpassing X/Twitter at **16%**. A total of **61%** plan to increase their LinkedIn use, while only **15%** will focus more on X/Twitter.
- **Budget and resource challenges:** Although **most PR pros** expect their budgets to stay the same or rise over the next year, **Half** report their biggest challenge is insufficient resources, both financial and personnel.
- **AI now ranks as a higher priority than media relations:** A growing portion of PR pros, **44%**, say their companies need to incorporate AI tools into their workflow to ensure success in the next five years. This figure grew **13%** from last year. AI now ranks as a higher priority than media relations and just below strategic planning.
- **PR pros feel valued, mostly:** **88%** feel leadership understands their work at least somewhat well. **More than half** of PR pros at agencies feel very valued by leadership, compared to only **22%** at brands.

1

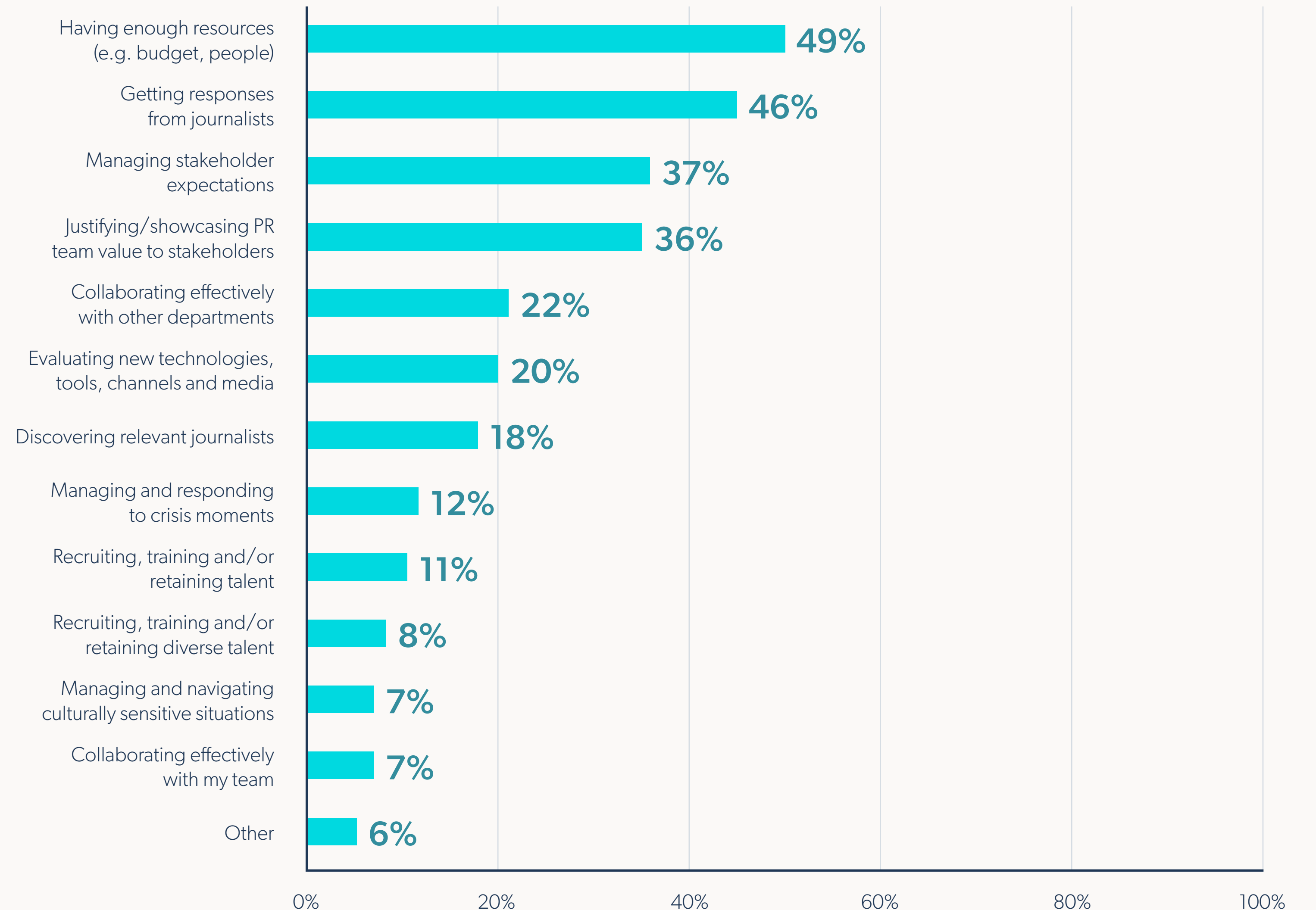
How PR pros work: challenges and priorities

PR pros' top concerns are having enough resources and getting journalist responses

PR pros at brands are more likely to say having enough resources is a top concern. **58%** of PR pros at brands selected this concern compared to **43%** at agencies.

Getting responses from journalists is ranked higher by people at agencies, **54%**, than those at brands, **42%**.

Choose the top three PR/communications challenges your company faces today

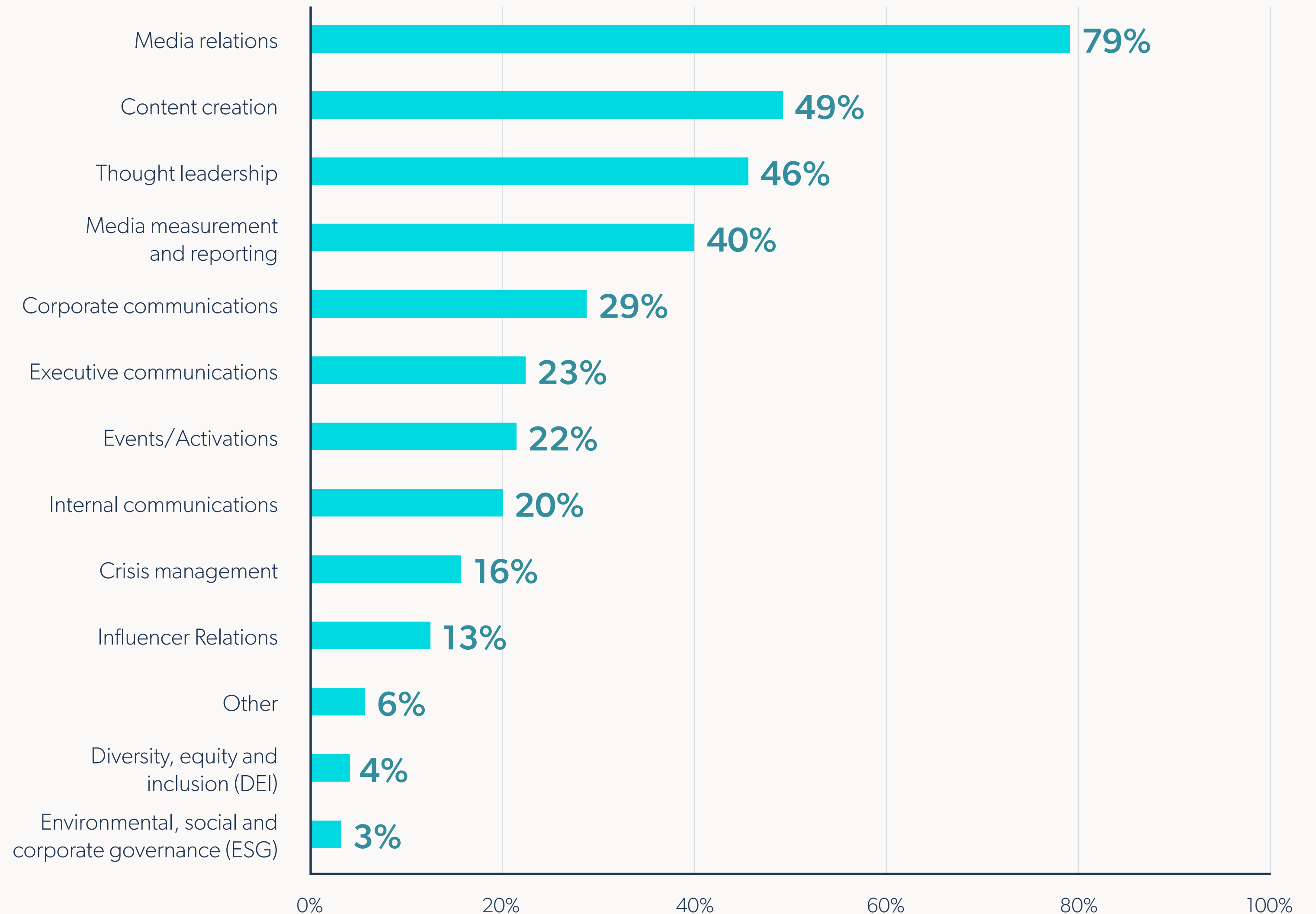


Most spend their time on media relations

Media relations is a more common focus area for PR pros at agencies with **89%** compared to **76%** at brands.

People at agencies are also spending more time on thought leadership. **More than half** of the people at agencies list thought leadership as taking up their time compared to **43%** at brands.

Which of these functions constitutes at least 25 percent of your job as a PR professional? (select up to 4)

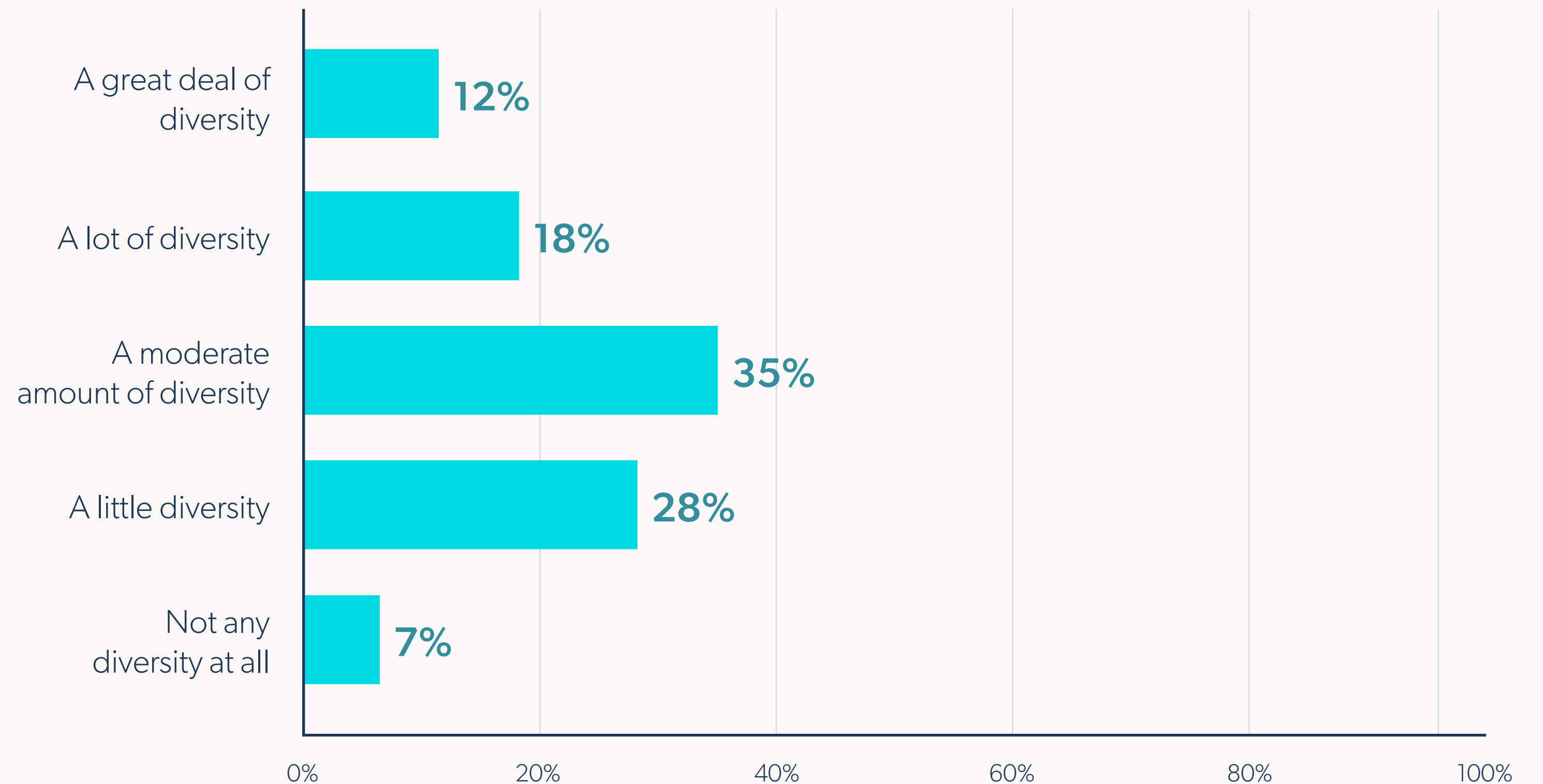


About two thirds of PR pros say their workplace has at least a moderate amount of diversity

Responses to this question were unchanged from last year.

Brands are more likely to say there is at least a moderate amount of diversity in their workplaces. **14%** of PR pros at brands say they have a great deal of diversity, compared to **7%** at agencies. And **22%** at brands say they have a lot of diversity, compared to **15%** at an agency.

In your opinion, how much diversity does your workplace have?

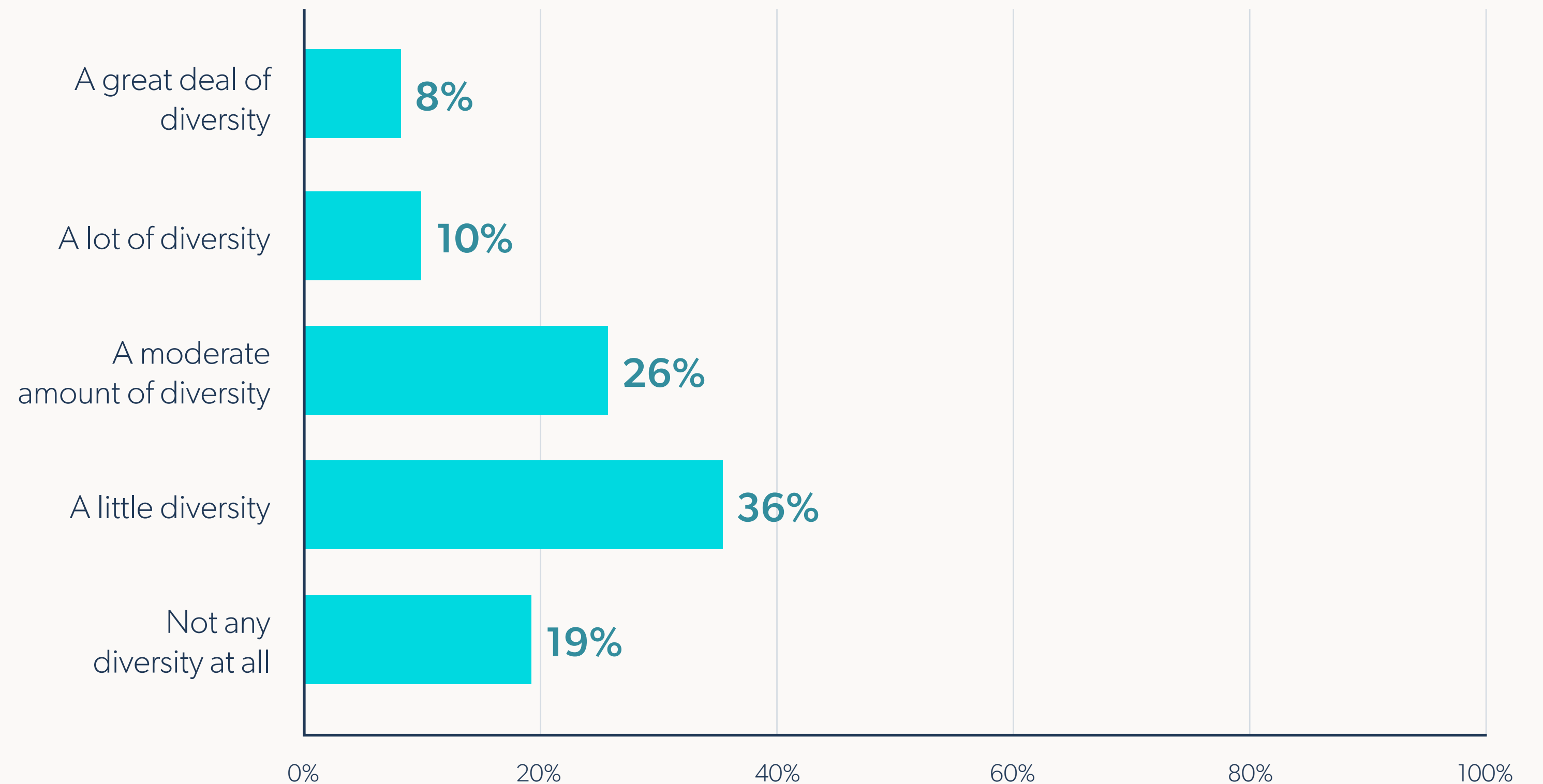


But more than half say there is little to no diversity in leadership

55% say there is little to no diversity on their leadership team.

Both brands and agencies rank similarly in the results, but agencies are **twice as likely** to say there is not any diversity at all compared to brands.

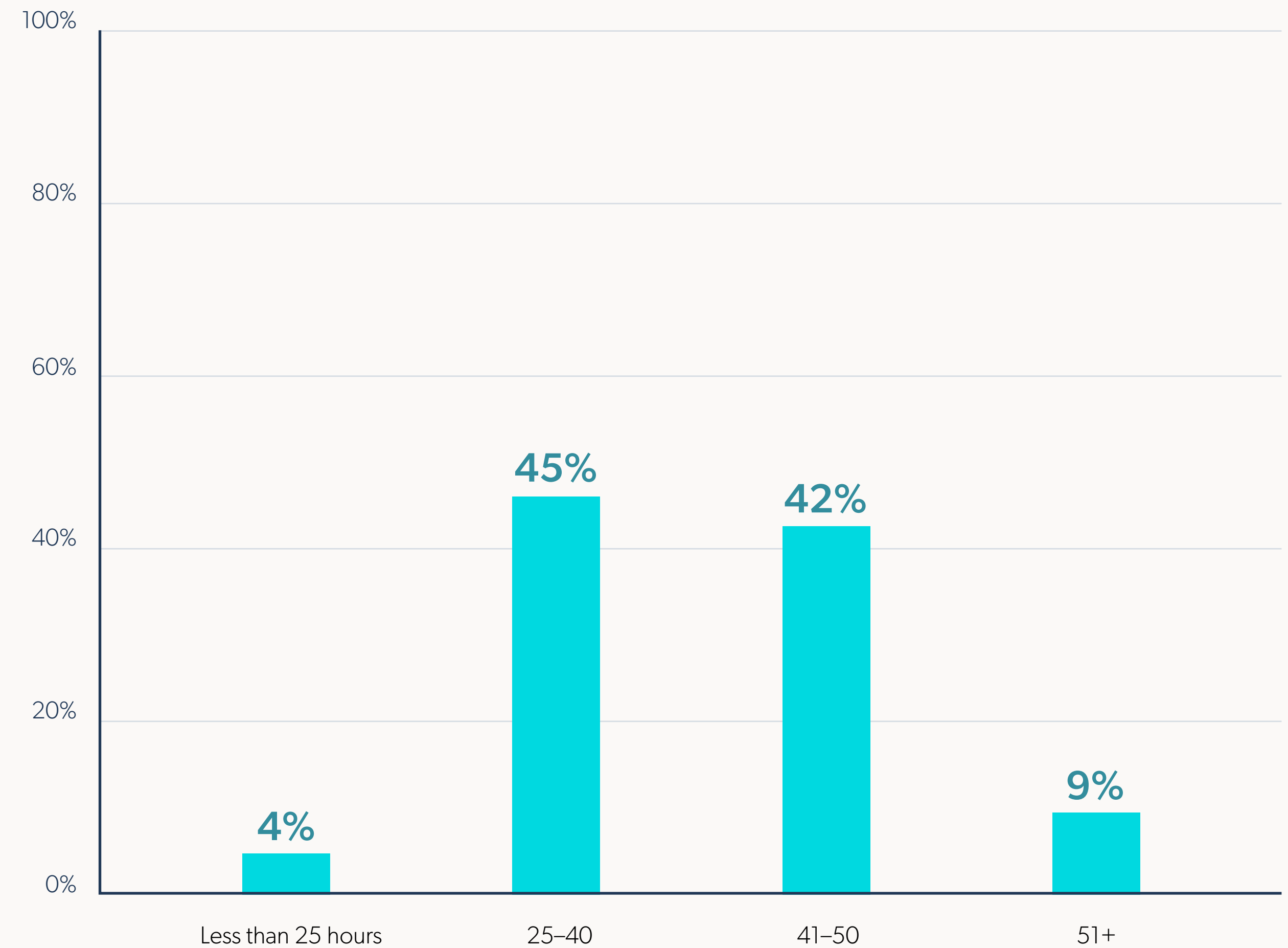
In your opinion, how much diversity does your leadership team have?



More than half of PR pros work over 40 hours per week

The percentage of people working 41–50 hours decreased compared to last year by **9%** while other figures stayed around the same.

Over the last week, how many hours did you work?



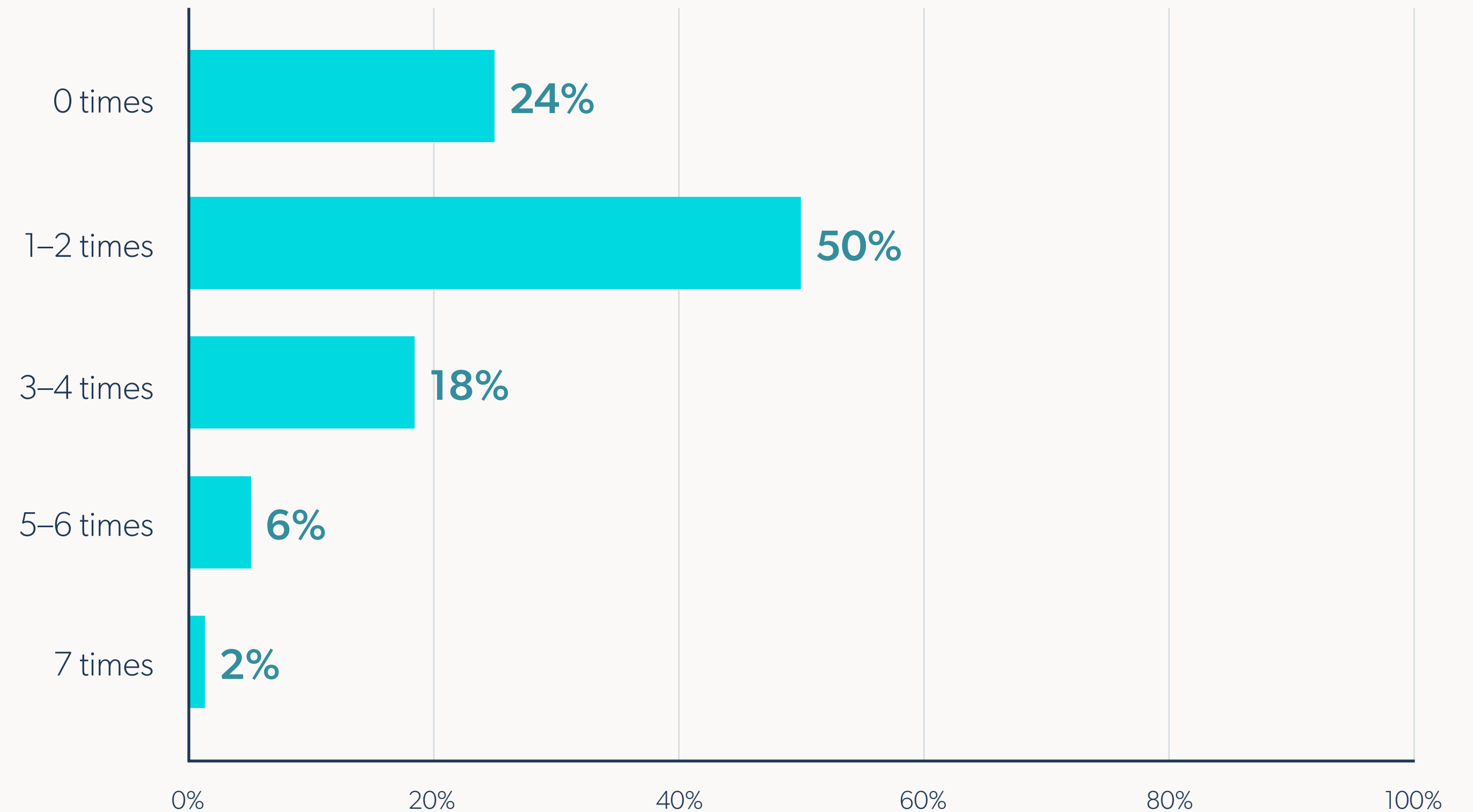
After-hours work continues to be the norm

Most PR pros work after hours at least **one day per week**.

Less than a quarter say they keep work contained to normal working hours.

Nearly half of c-suite employees report working after hours 3 or more days per week, while **83%** of coordinators report working after hours a maximum of 2 days per week.

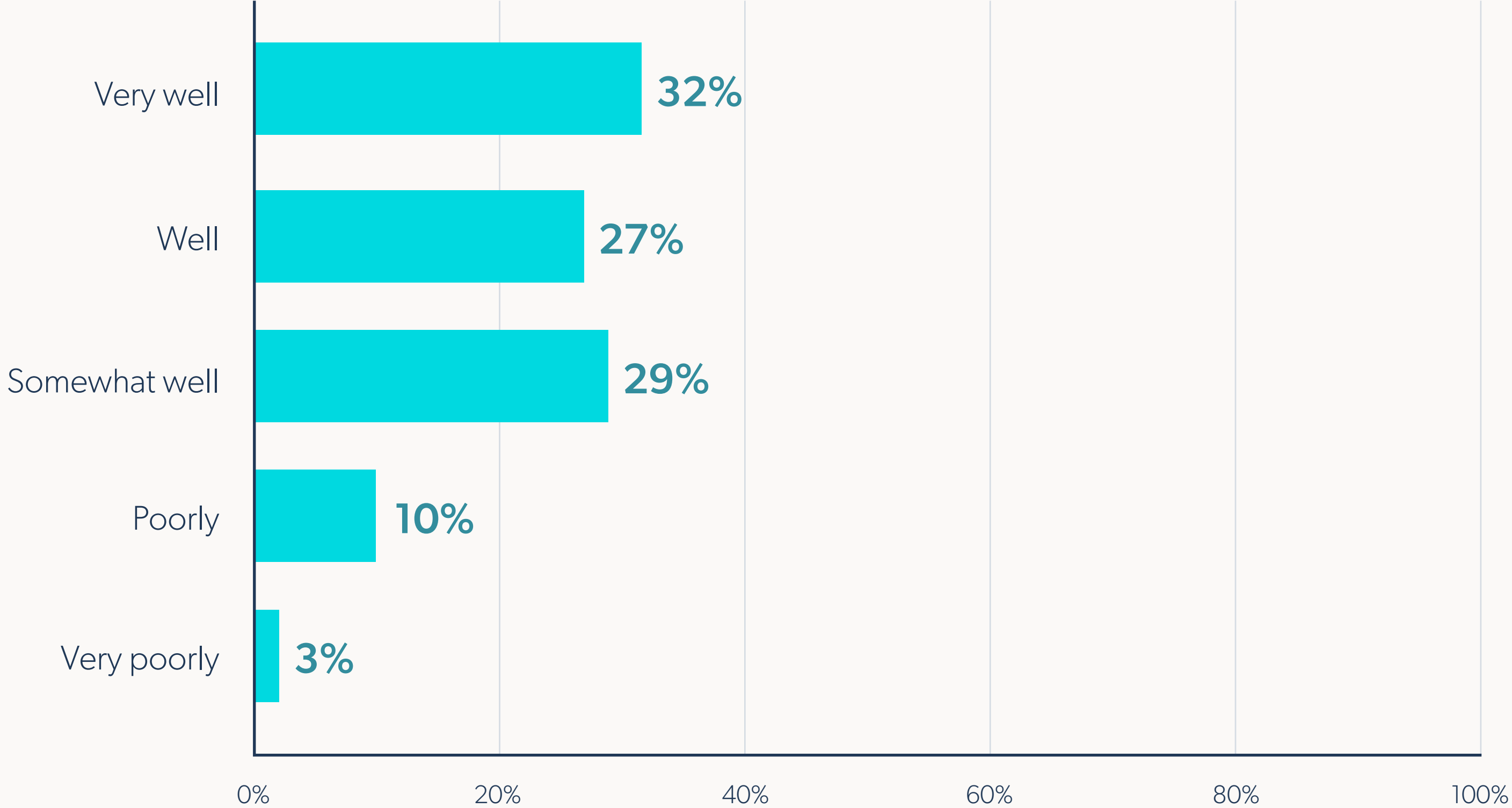
Over the last week, how many times have you had to work after hours, like late nights, early mornings or on weekends?



Most PR pros believe leadership understands their work

88% say leadership understands their work at least somewhat well.

How well does company leadership understand your work?

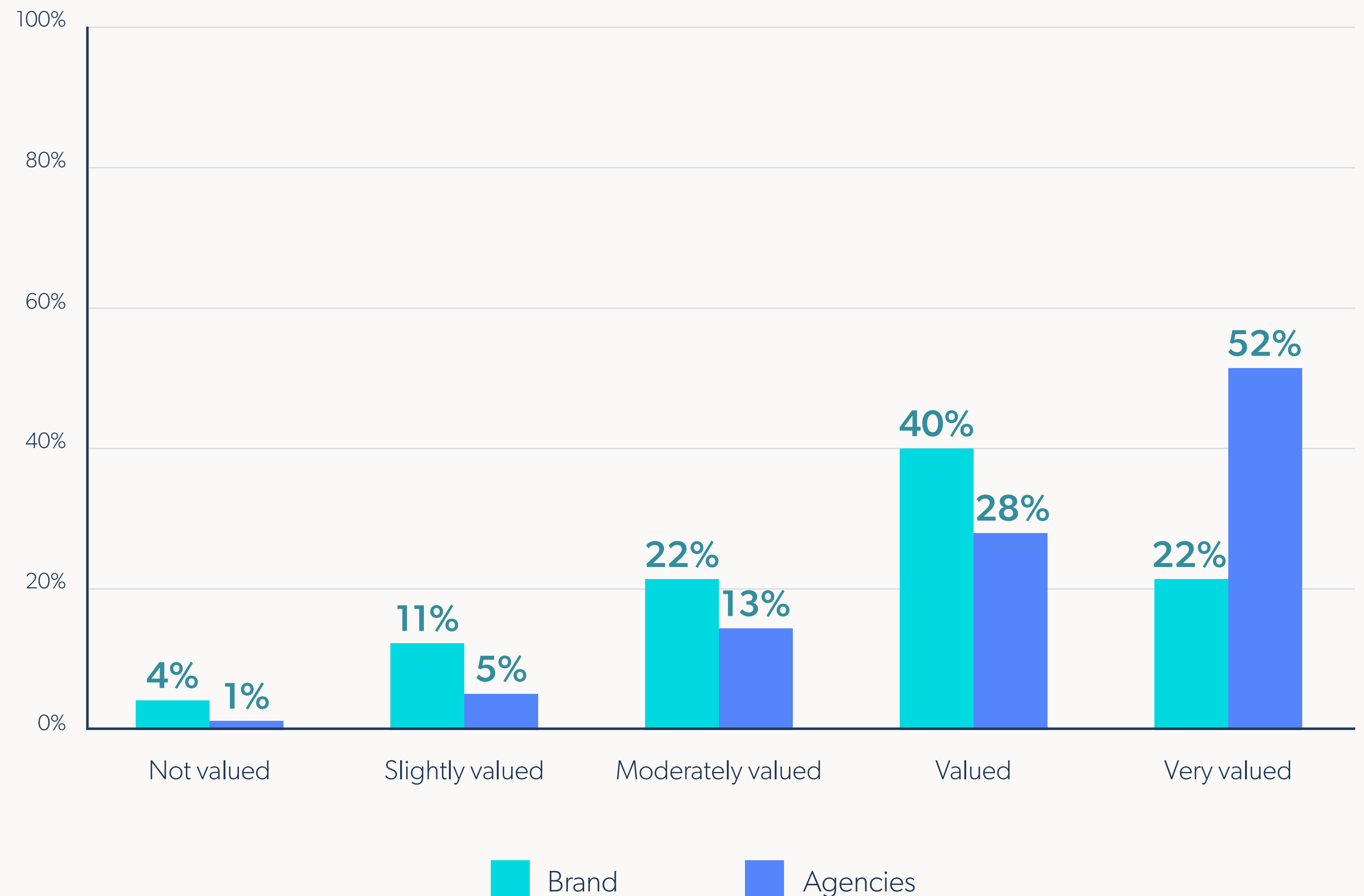


PR pros at agencies are more likely to feel very valued than those at brands

Overall, most PR pros feel valued by their company's leadership. But at agencies, **30%** more say they feel very valued compared to those at brands.

52% of PR pros at agencies say they feel very valued, compared to **22%** at brands. The number of PR pros at agencies who feel very valued dropped by **7%** compared to last year.

How valued do you feel the PR/Communications function is by your company's leadership?



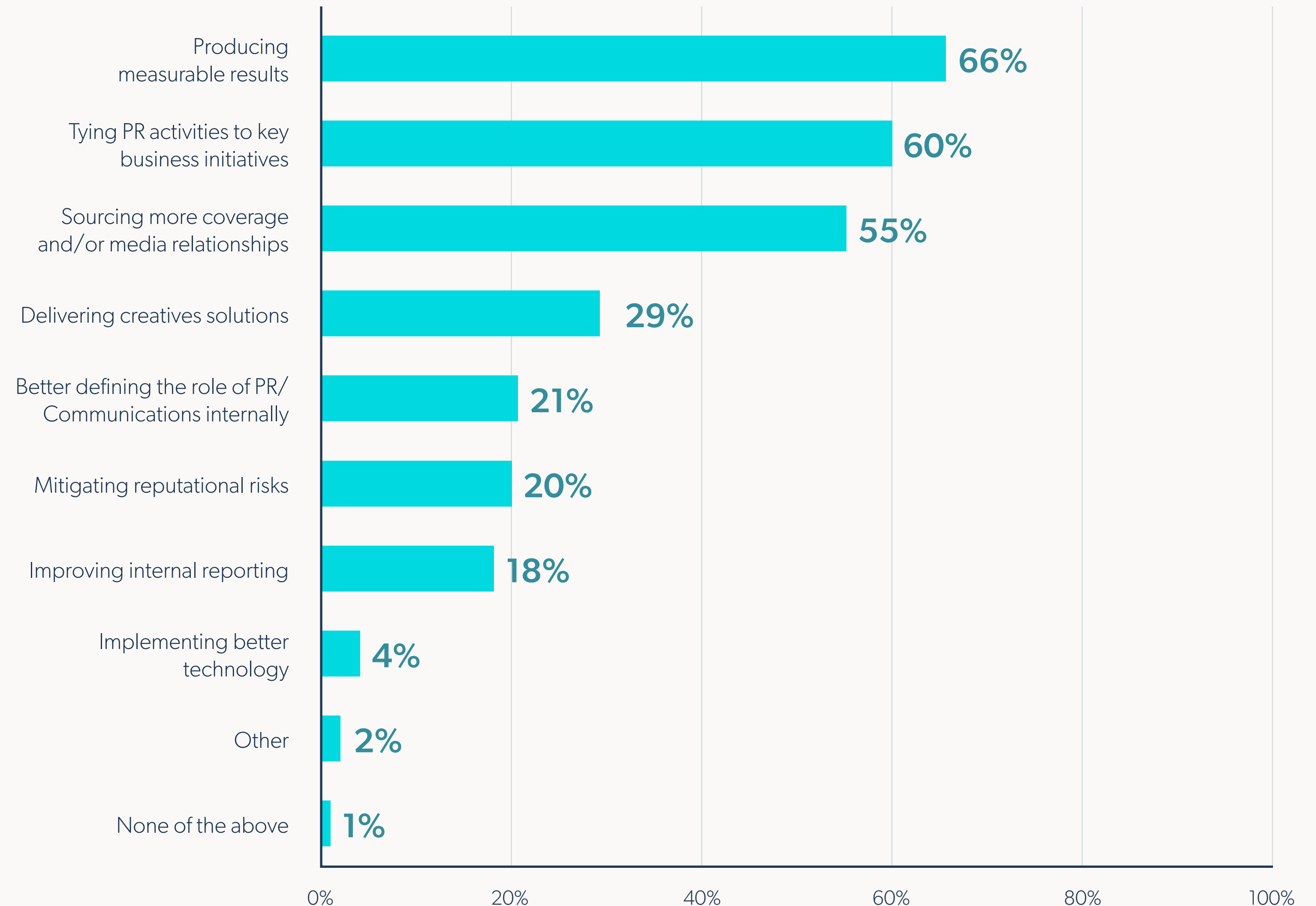
Most say the best way to increase PR's value to stakeholders is by producing measurable results

Brands and agencies agree on most points, but they diverge in two ways.

25% of PR pros at brand mention managing reputation risk as a good way to increase PR's value while **12%** at agencies say the same.

Agencies on the other hand are **more than twice as likely** as their brand counterparts to say delivering creative solutions can add value.

Which of the following helps increase the value of PR among key stakeholders in your or the client's company? (select the top 3)

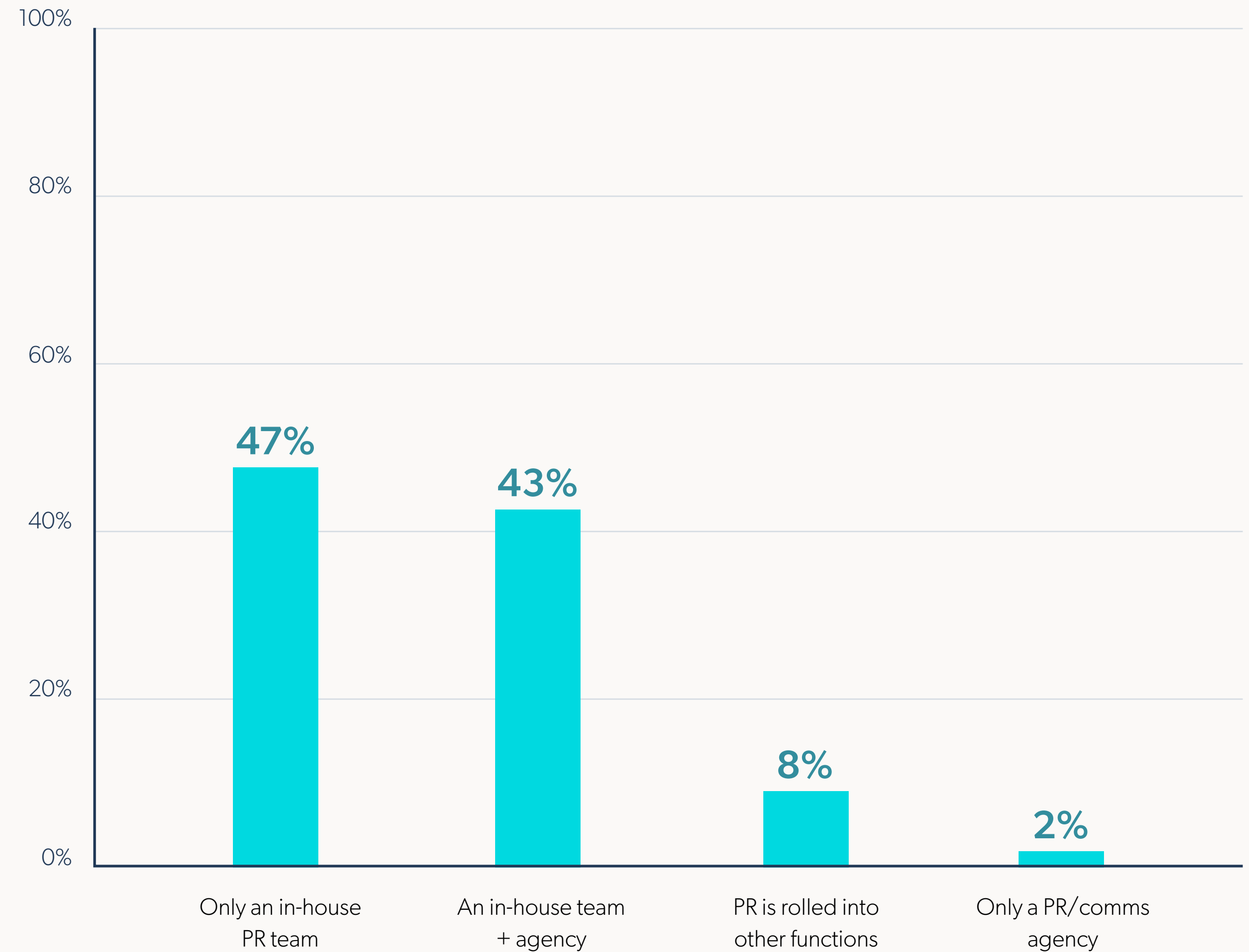


Very few brands rely solely on an agency

Only **2%** of PR pros at brands say their company only uses a PR/comms agency.

Instead, brands are evenly split between using only an in-house team or dividing work among an in-house team and an agency.

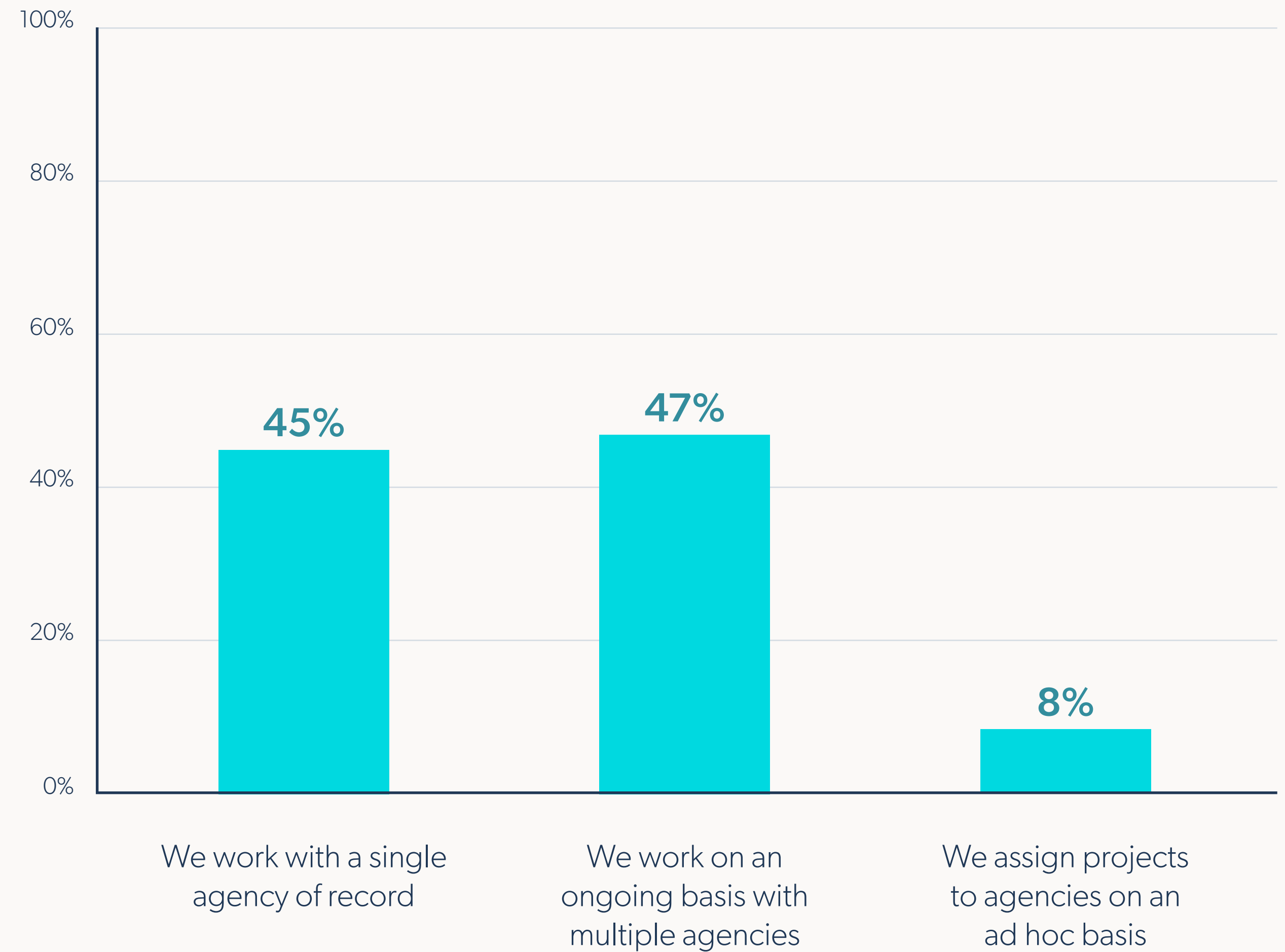
My organization's PR is managed by:



Brands work with agencies in many different ways

Similar to last year, brands' opinions differ on whether to employ one agency or many. Only a small portion, **8%**, assign project ad hoc to agencies.

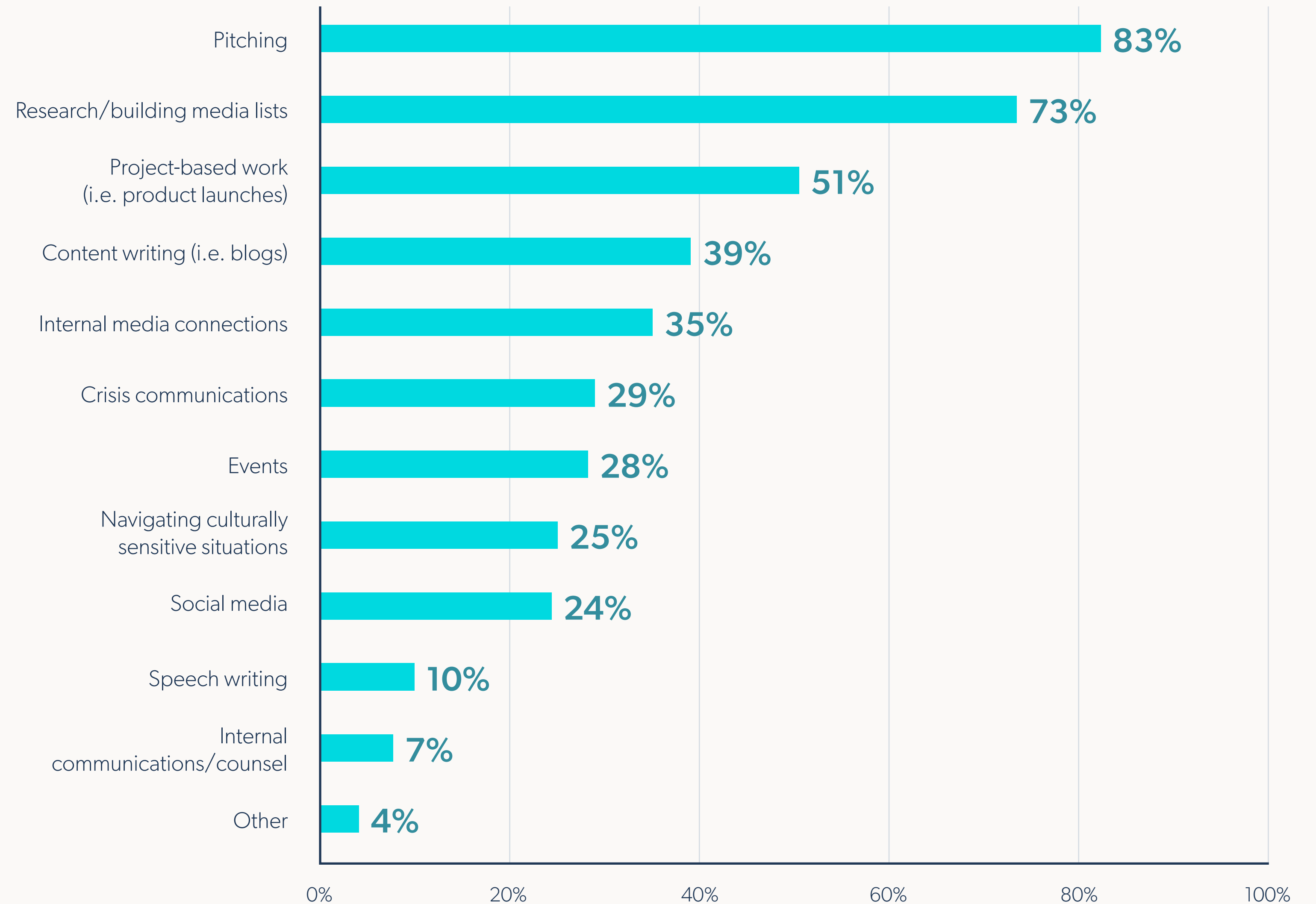
How do you work with agencies?



Agencies handle an average of four types of work for brands

Similar to last year, brands rely on agencies for **pitching, building media lists** and **project-based work**.

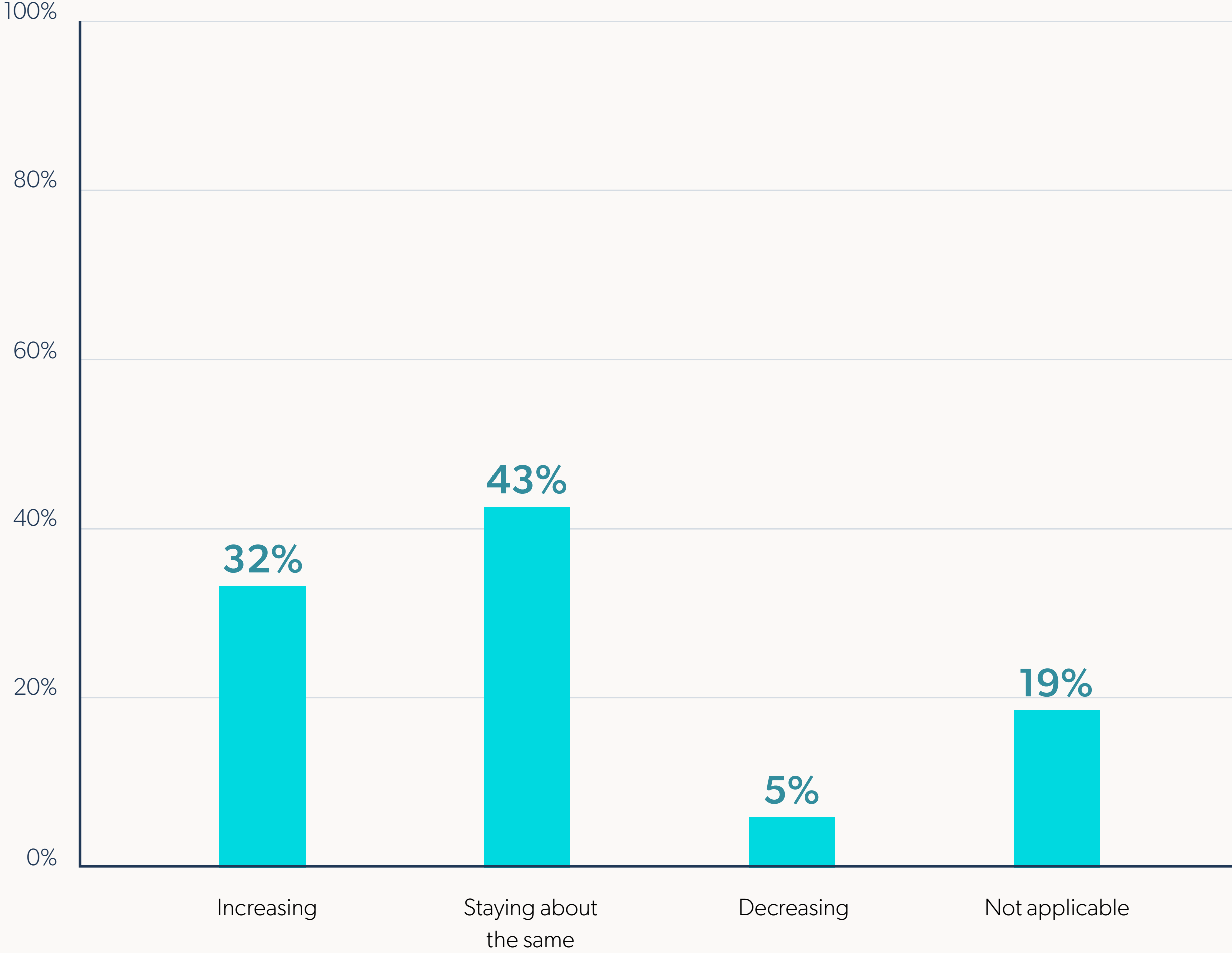
What types of work do you rely on PR agencies for? (select all that apply)



A third of PR pros are spending more time on internal comms

About half of PR pros say the time they spend on internal comms is staying the same or decreasing. The results are similar compared to last year.

Is the amount of time your team spends on internal communications:

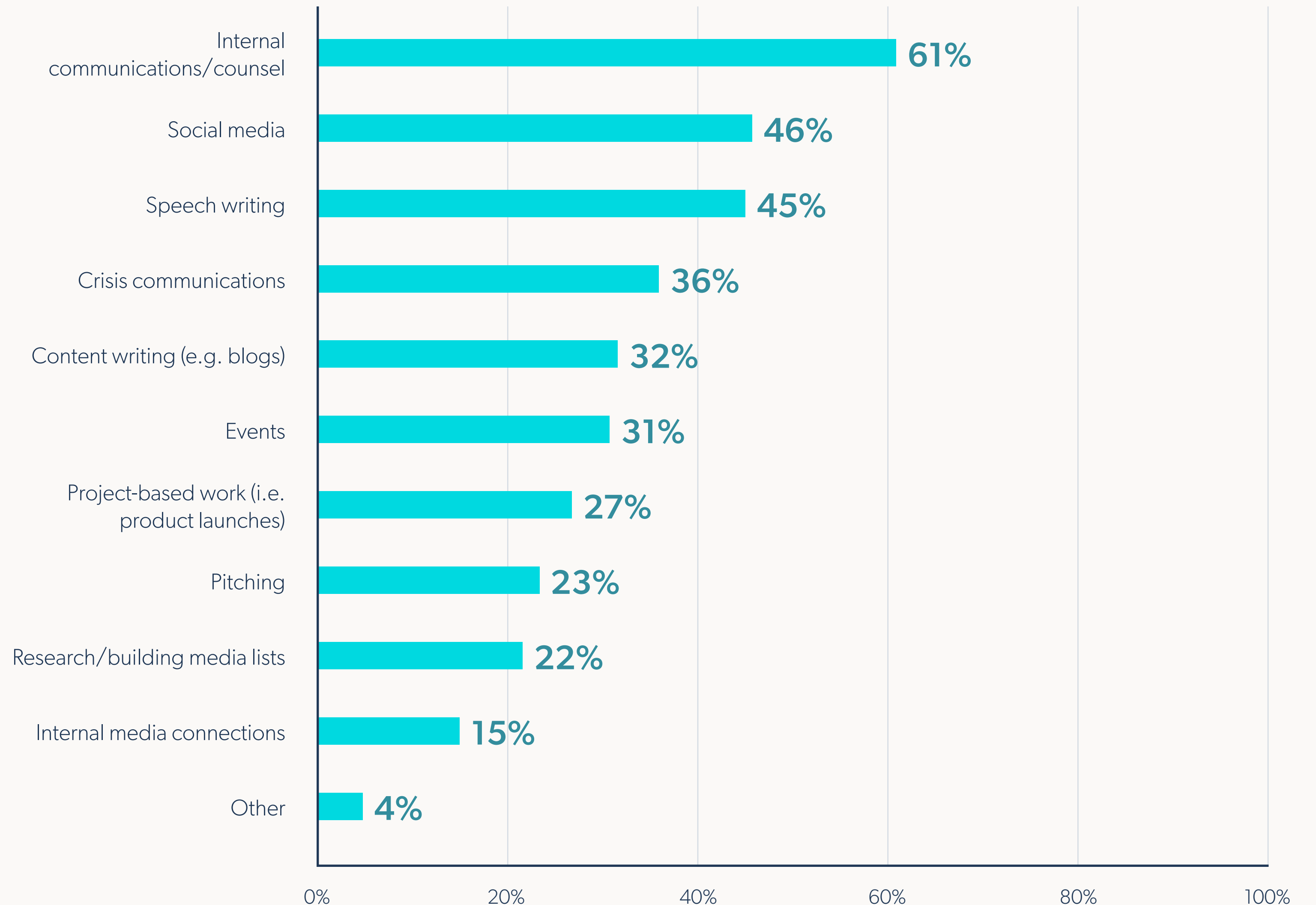


Most brands want to keep internal comms in-house

More than half of PR pros at brands say internal communications is something they would be unlikely to outsource to PR agencies.

Overall, the results are similar to last year.

Which types of work would you be very unlikely to outsource to a PR agency? (select all that apply)



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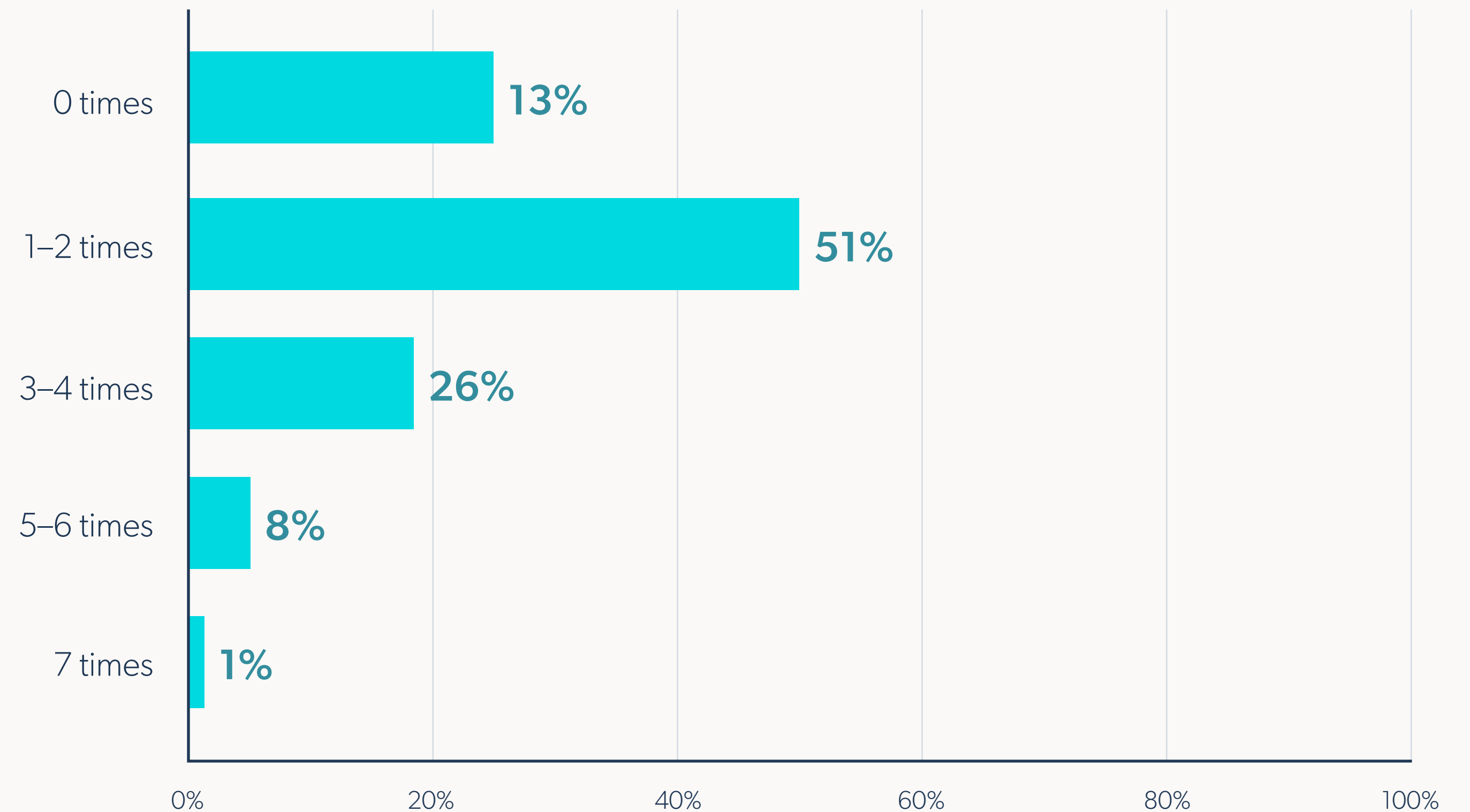
Connecting with journalists

Most PR pros pitch 1 or 2 days per week

More than one third of PR pros pitch three or more days a week. Only a small portion of respondents, **9%**, say they pitch five or more days per week.

People at agencies pitch more often. More than half of PR pros at agencies pitch 3+ days per week compared to **21%** of people at brands.

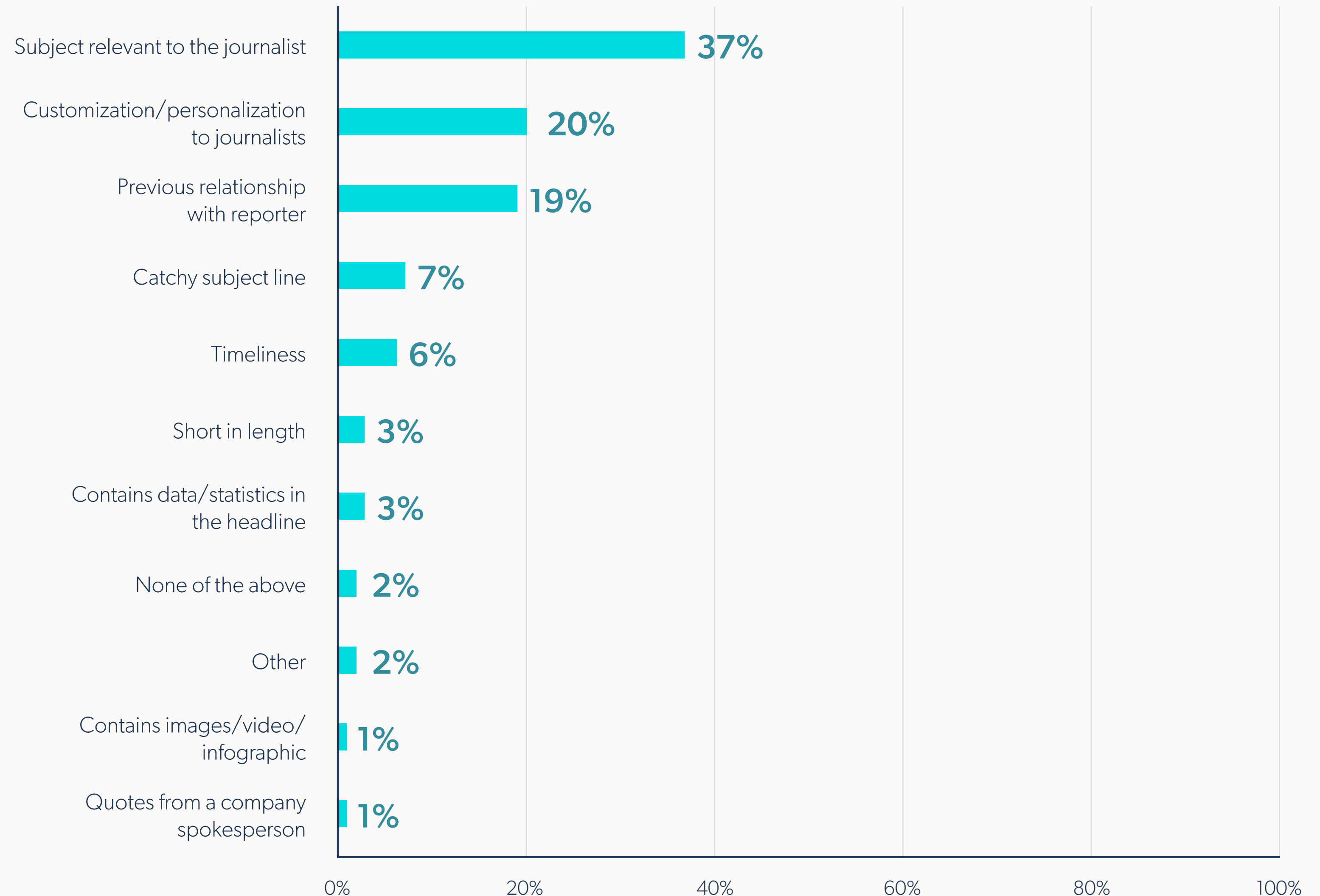
How many days a week do you pitch?



Subject matter relevance is the key to securing coverage

37% of PR pros say marrying the pitch topic to the coverage area of the journalist is the most important factor in securing coverage.

Which of the following components do you believe is the most important in securing coverage with a pitch?

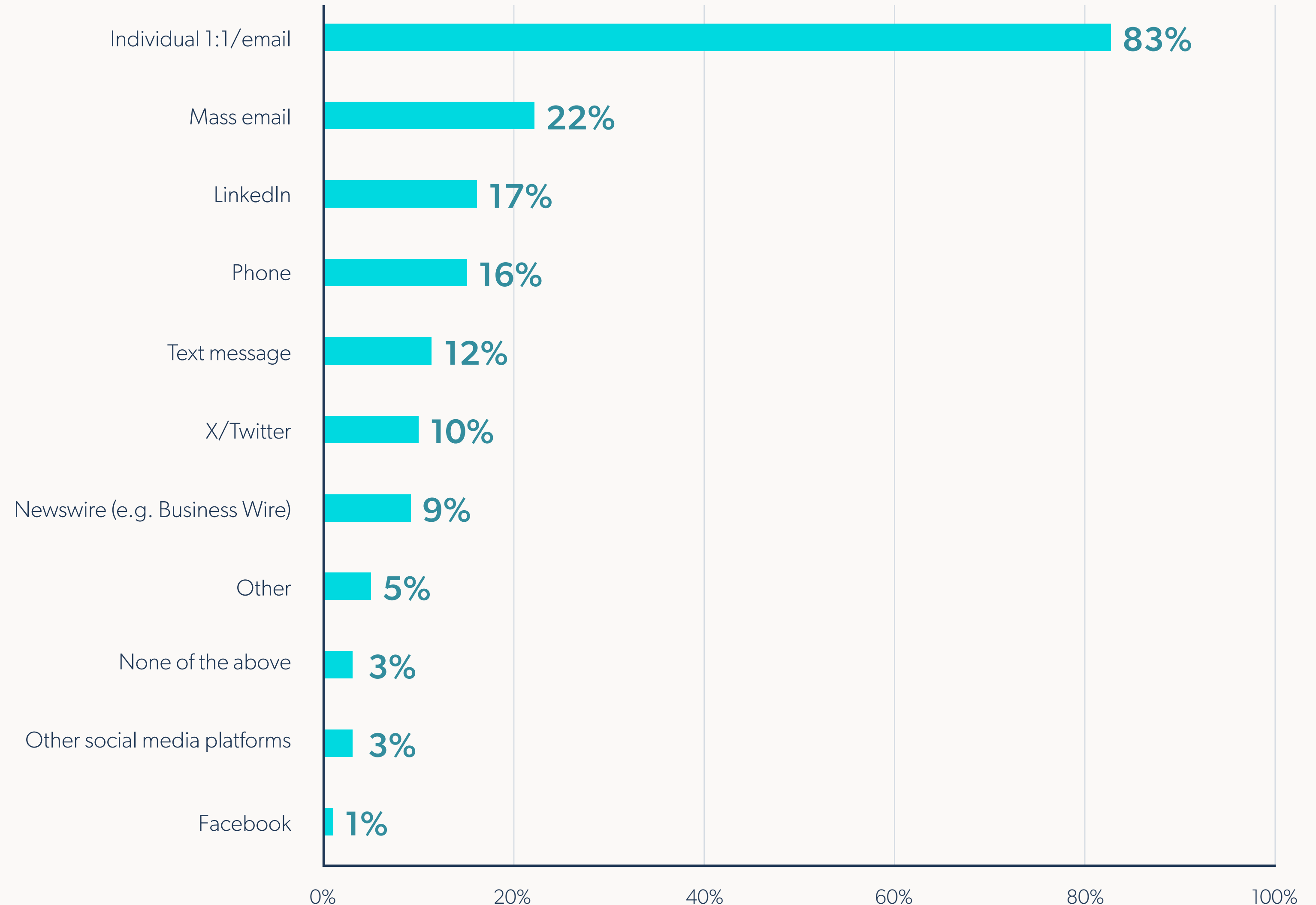


X no longer a preferred pitching channel

While 1:1 emails are the gold standard pitching method for nearly all PR pros, X has long held up second place. However, X dropped from **28%** in 2022 to **10%** in 2024, below even phone calls and text messages.

Mass email, mentioned by **22%** of PR pros, is similar to last year's results, but moved into second place this year.

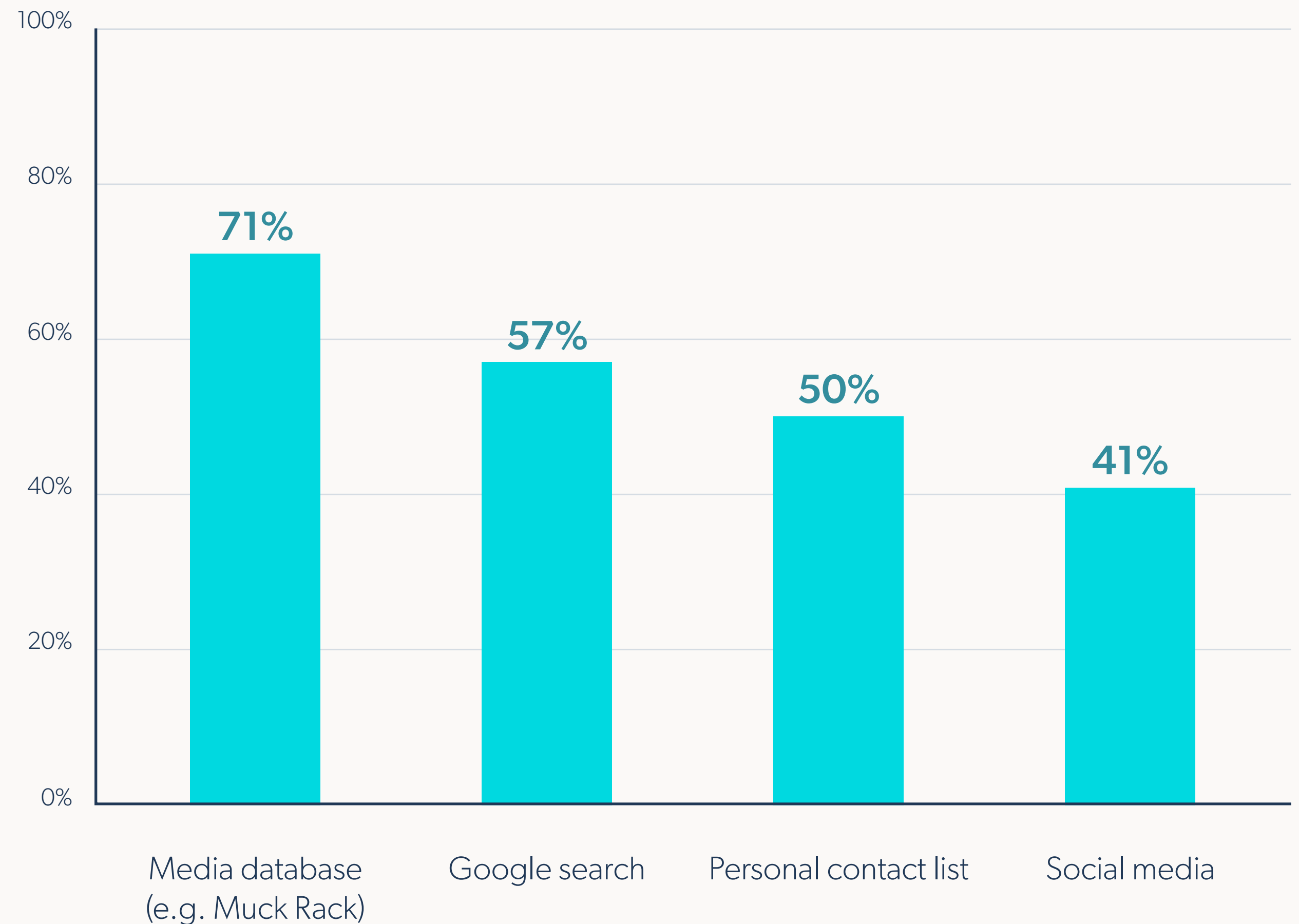
Which of the following channels do you find to be the most effective for pitching journalists? (select all that apply)



PR pros use a variety of methods to find journalists

While media database tools like Muck Rack are the most widely used by PR pros, they're not the only tools they use. **57%** rely on Google, **50%** prefer personal contact lists and **41%** use social media, meaning most PR pros are mixing a variety of tools to find the perfect journalist.

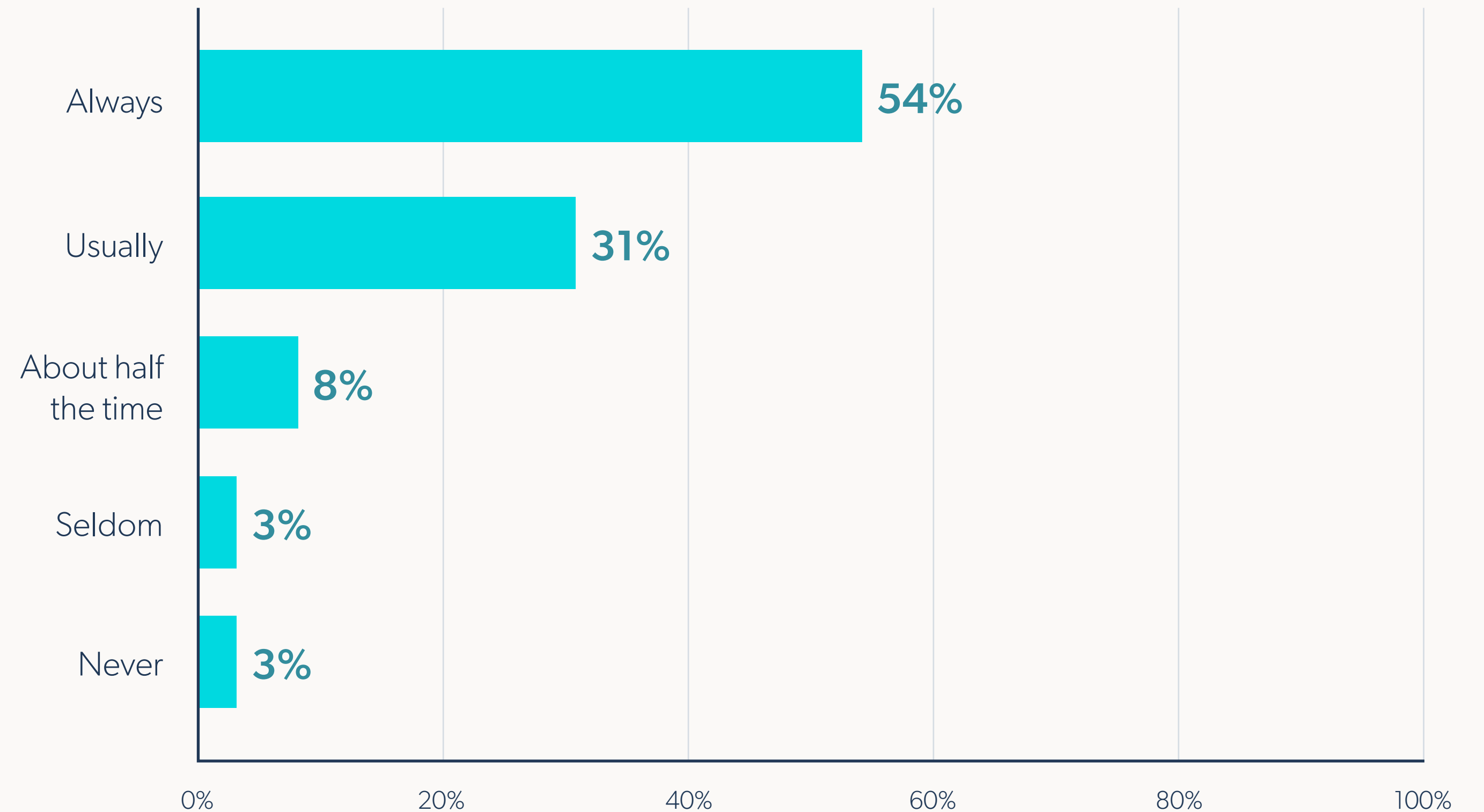
How do you find the right journalist to pitch? (select all that apply)



Most PR pros research journalists before pitching

More than half say they always research the journalists and **31%** usually do. **14%** do their research about half the time or less often.

Do you research journalists before you pitch them?



When it's time to research, PR pros prefer media databases

More than half, **52%**, say media databases like Muck Rack are their preferred research tools. Google is preferred by **29%**.

What tools do you use to research journalists?



52%

Media database
(like Muck Rack)



29%

Google



10%

LinkedIn



6%

Other



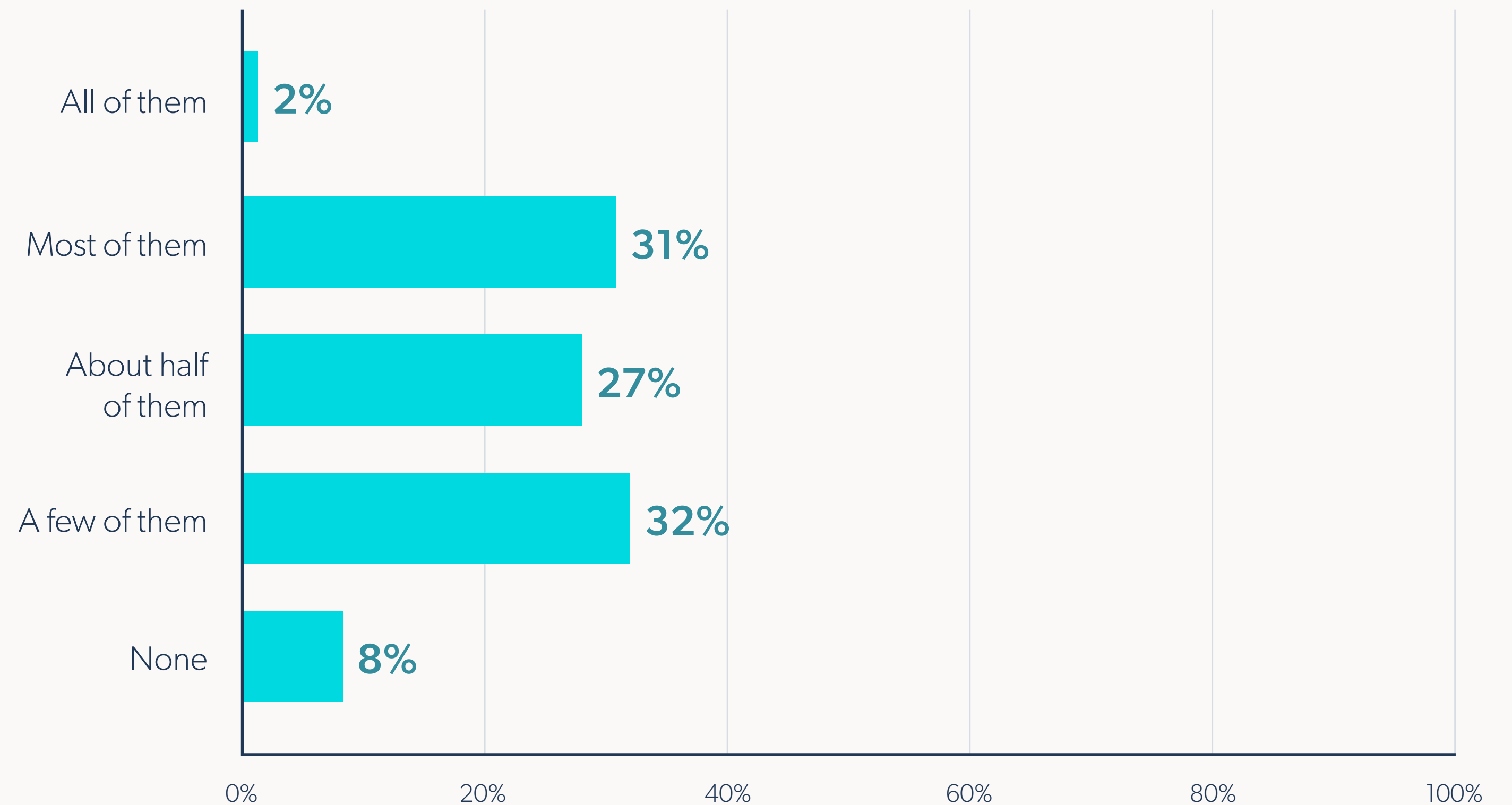
3%

X/Twitter

PR pros prefer to keep a stable of known journalists

Just **2%** of PR pros pitch only to journalists they know, and **8%** pitch solely to those they don't. The majority of PR professionals keep a mix, regularly pitching to known journalists.

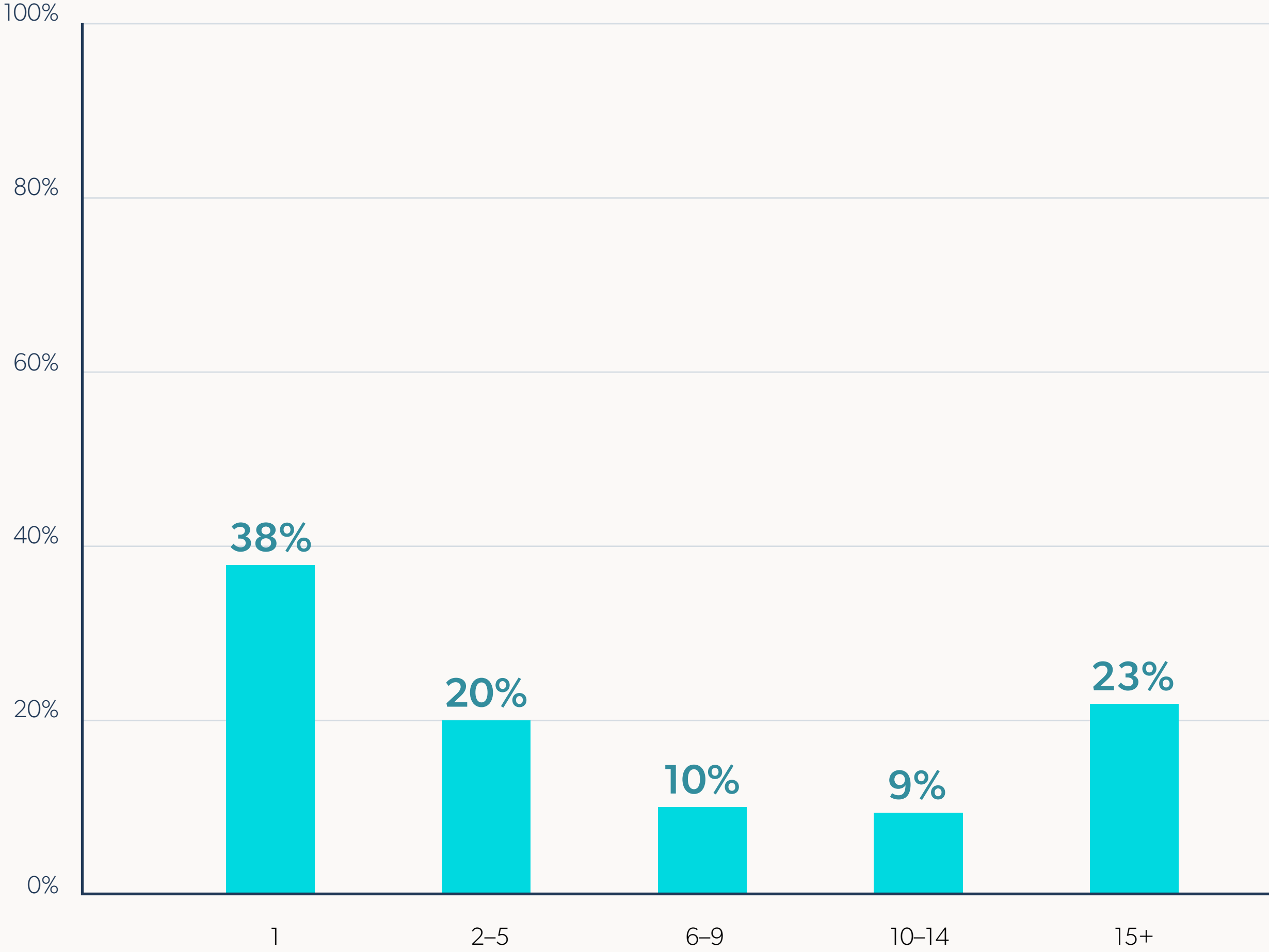
Out of the reporters that you pitch, about how many have worked with before?



Despite most saying 1:1 emails are best, more than half pitch more than one journalist per email

About **one in five** PR pros pitch 15 or more journalists with a single email while about **one in three** pitch 1:1.

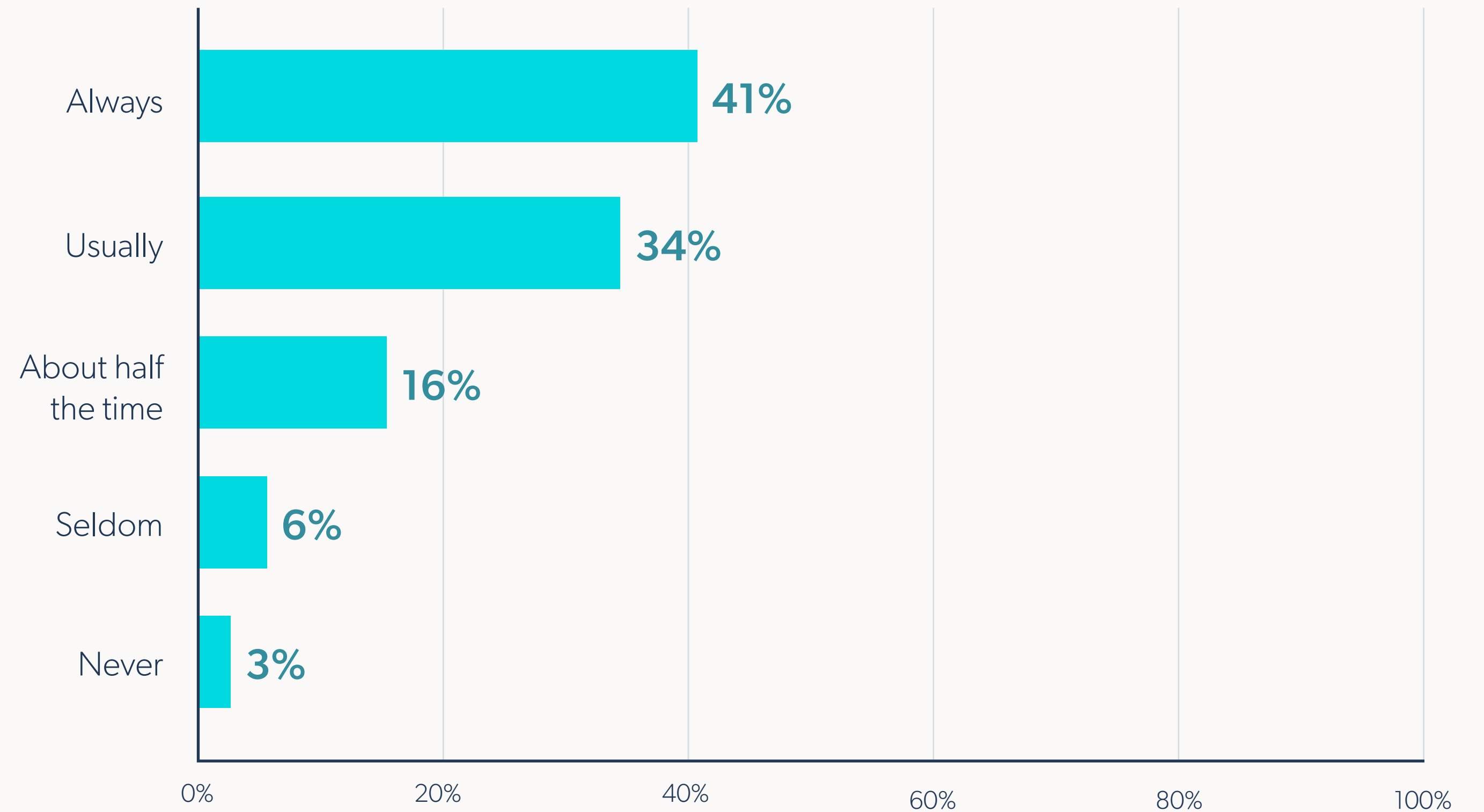
How many reporters do you typically pitch with a single email?



Most are personalizing their pitches

Three out of four PR pros personalize their pitches usually or always, while less than 10% do it seldom or never.

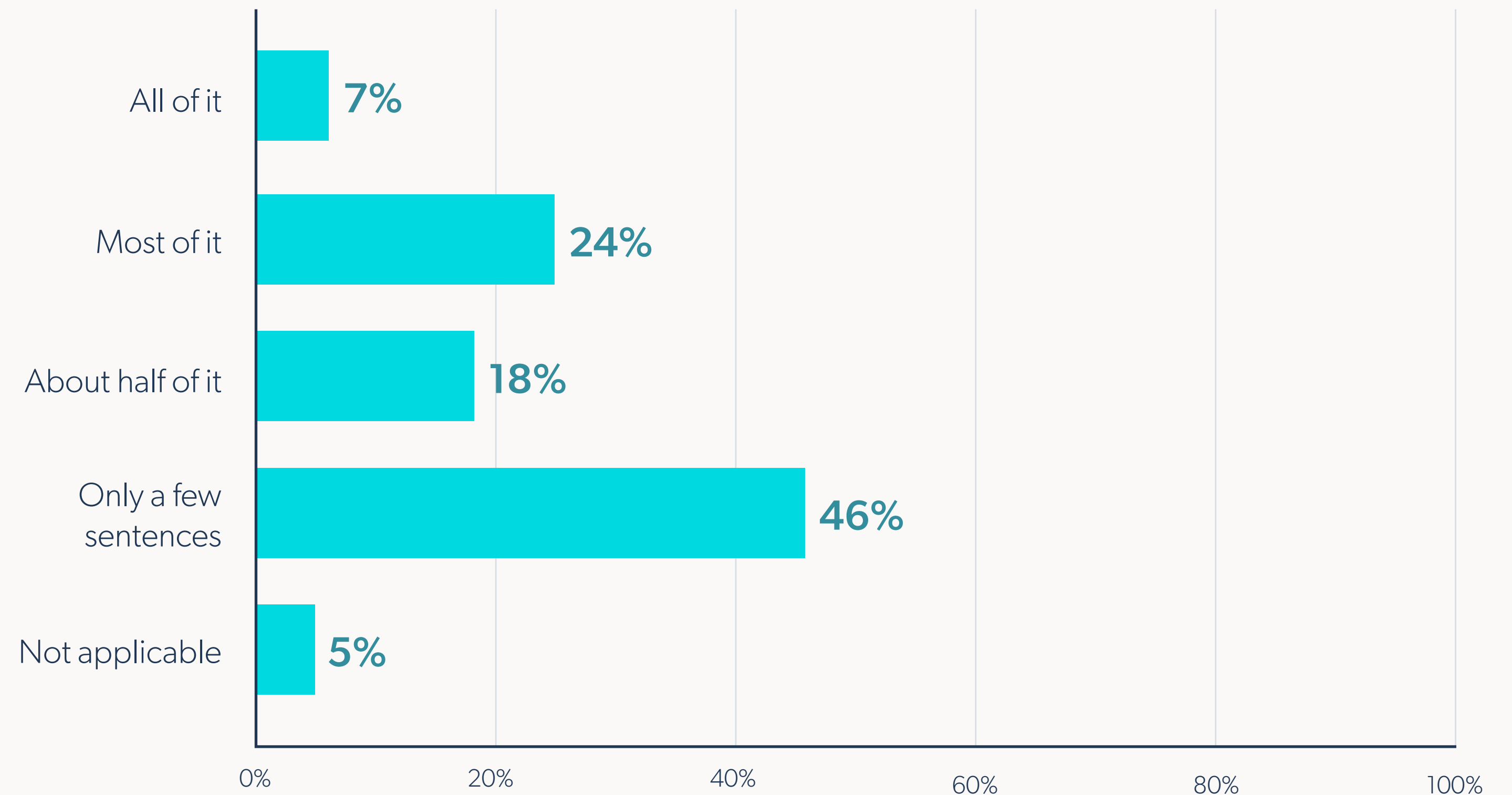
How often do you personalize your pitches?



Only a few sentences change in many personalized pitches

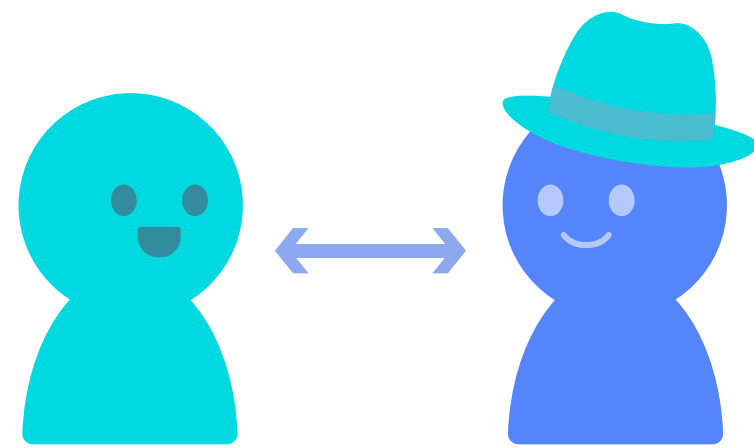
Only **7%** of PR pros personalize each part of their pitch to every journalist. **Nearly half** only change a few sentences to suit the journalist they're pitching.

If you personalize your pitches, how much of it do you personalize?

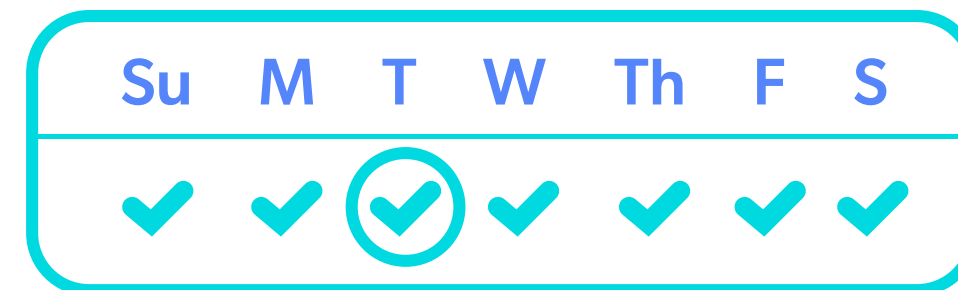


HOW TO PITCH

According to a survey of 1,000+ PR professionals



Almost **83%** prefer to pitch via 1:1 emails



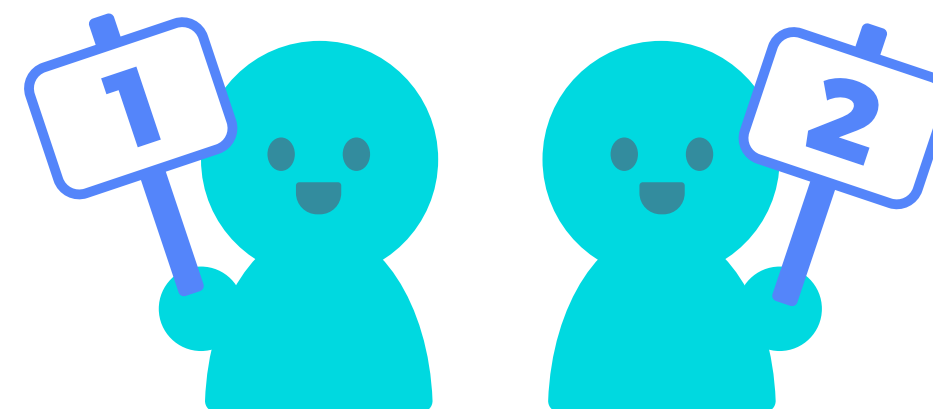
51% prefer to pitch on Tuesday



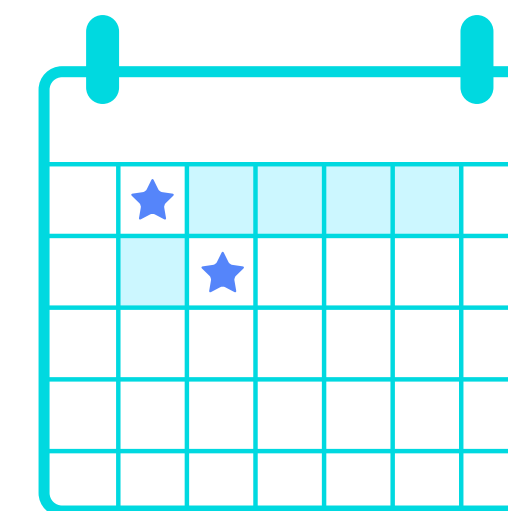
81% prefer to pitch before noon



94% keep their pitches under 300 words



PR pros are split when it comes to follow-ups: **46%** say one is acceptable, **44%** say two



50% send their first follow up 3–6 days later

What's one thing you wish journalists knew?

"Sometimes our clients **insist** we pitch you even though we know it's not a good fit."

"I hate feeling like a pest with follow-ups—I'd rather they just say "**no thanks**" and that's that."

"We truly do work hard to try and be **good partners.**"

"So many PR pros have the **utmost respect** for journalists and the news industry, especially those who were once in their shoes"

"My job is to make their job easy, so if they need something or want something specific, **please ask** instead of guessing or going without!"

3

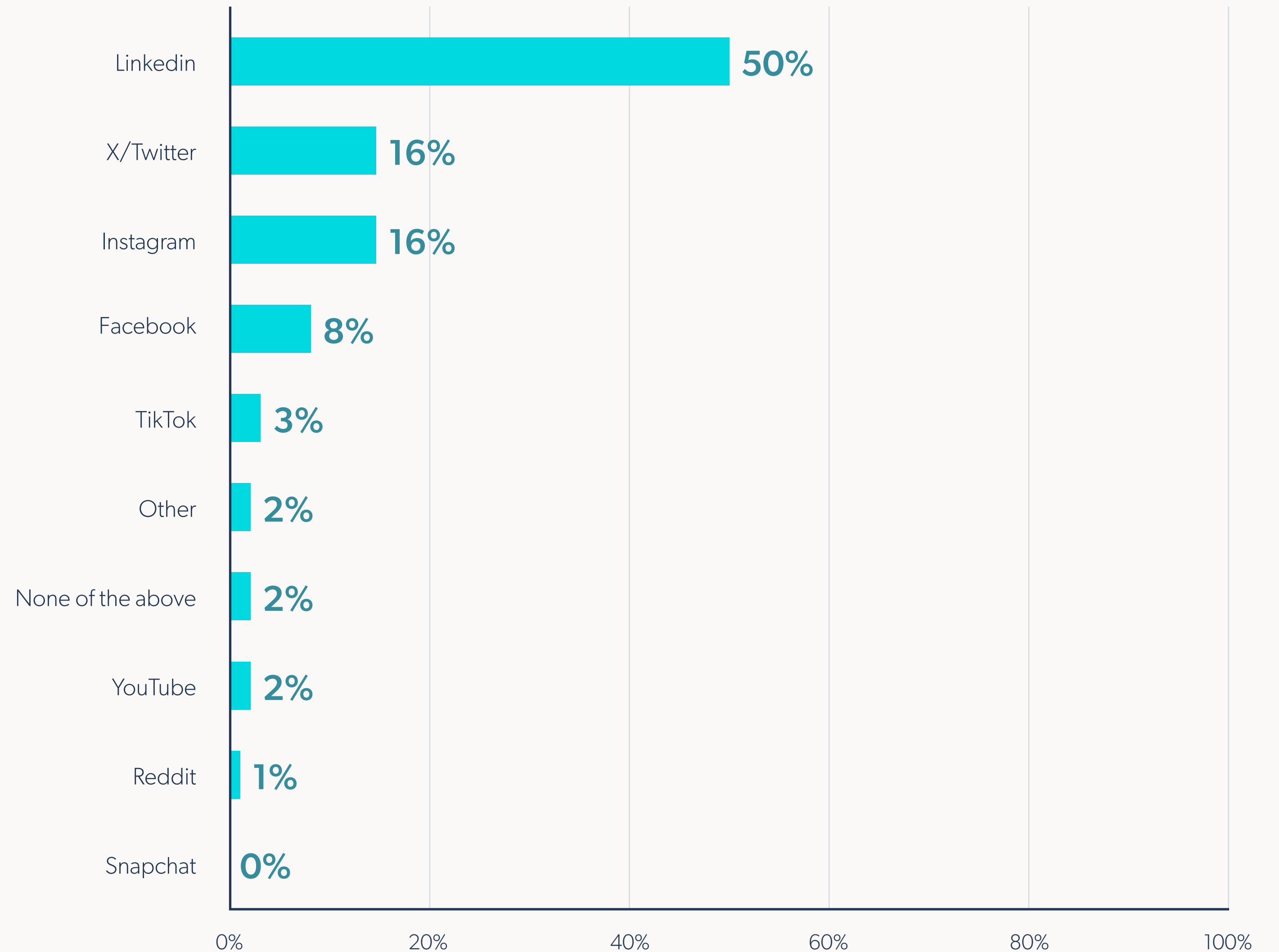
Social media usage

LinkedIn is the top social network for PR pros

Half of PR pros say LinkedIn is the social media platform they value most, more than X, Instagram, Facebook and TikTok combined.

Snapchat brings up the bottom of the pack. Only two PR pros said Snap is their most valuable social media network.

Overall, which social media is most valuable to you as a PR pro?



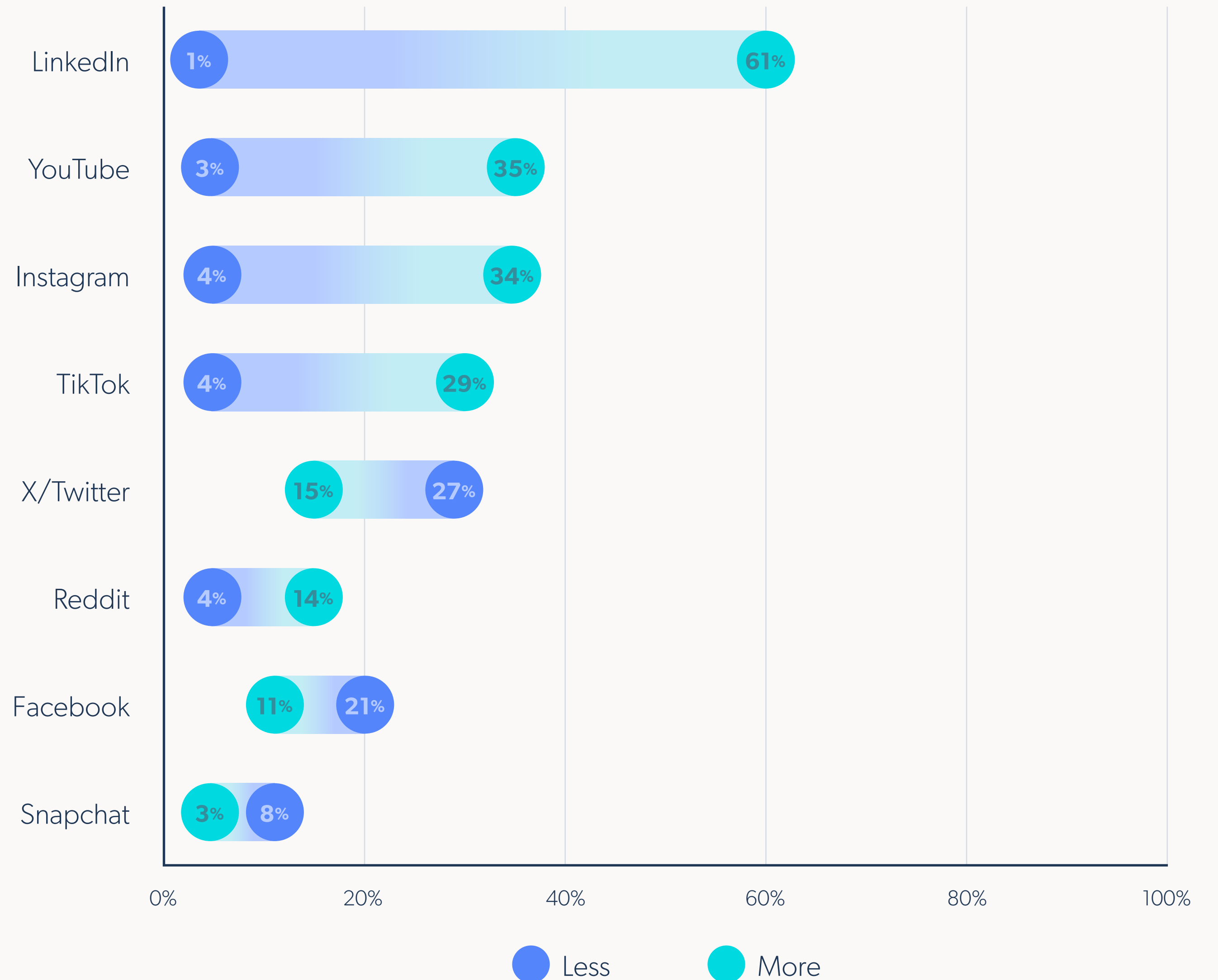
LinkedIn continues its ascent showing the most potential growth

In 2022, **47%** of PR pros said they planned to spend more time on X/Twitter compared to **11%** who said they'd spend less time.

In 2023, the "more" camp shrunk to **24%** while **21%** said "less." This year is the first year where the growth trend has inverted for X. In 2024, Only **15%** of PR pros say they'll spend more time on X this year while **27%** say "less."

LinkedIn on the other hand continues its growth streak. Over the same period that X's lead evaporated, The number of people who say they'll spend more time on LinkedIn has grown from **52%** in 2022 to **53%** in 2023 and **61%** in 2024.

For each of the following social platforms, please select whether you plan to use it more, less or the same as you have in previous years.



LinkedIn is also an integral part of comms strategies

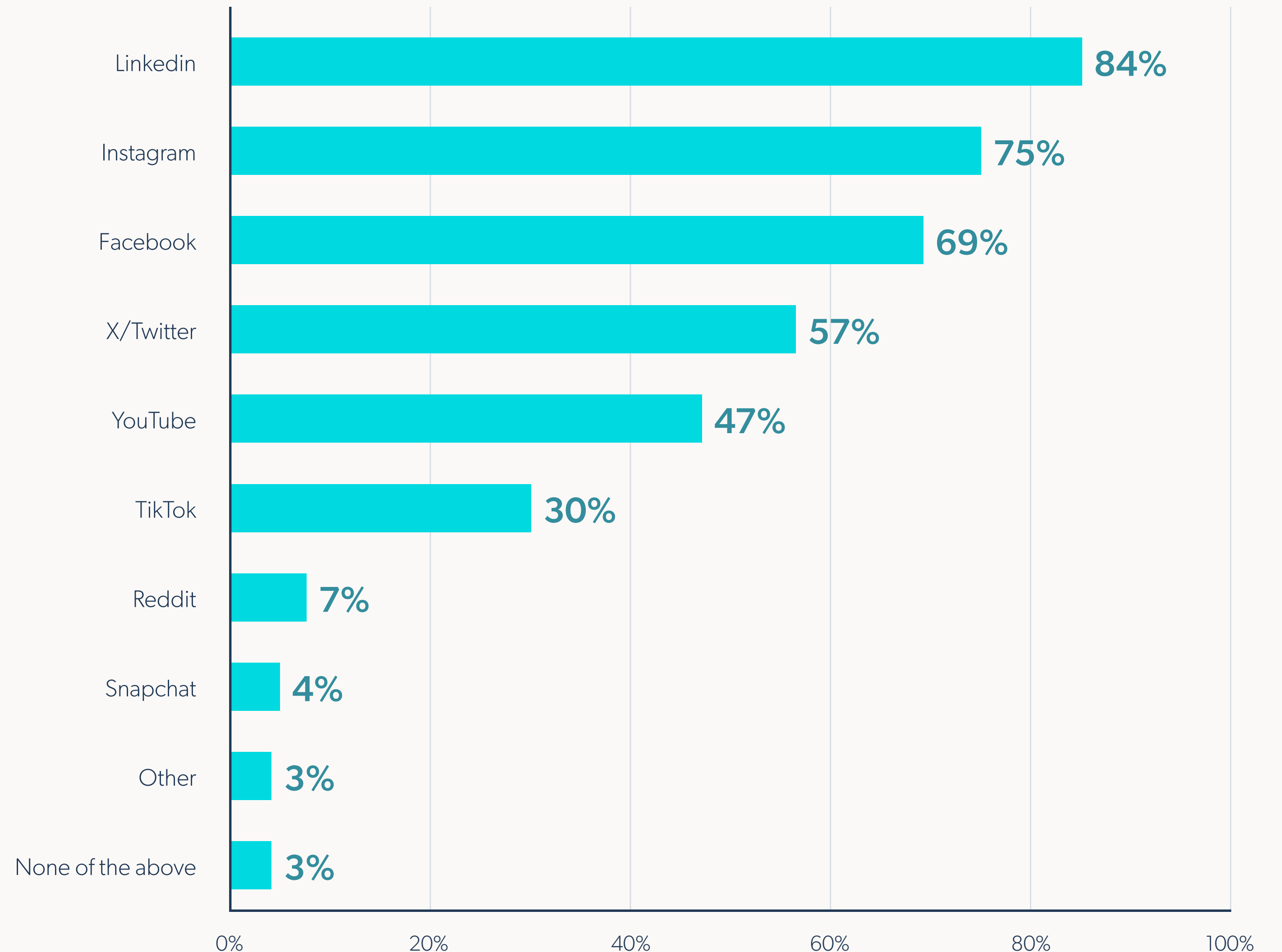
LinkedIn is far and away the most used social network for social media and communications strategies with **84%** of PR pros citing the platform.

Most figures stayed the same compared to last year with two notable examples. TikTok shows growing importance with **8%** growth year-over-year. While X slides out of the top 3 dropping **15%** compared to 2023.

While they agree on the importance of LinkedIn and Instagram, brands and agencies differ on a few key platforms. **71%** of PR pros at brands use Facebook compared to **59%** at agencies.

People at brands are also more likely to use X with **64%** citing the network compared to **46%** at agencies.

Which of the following social networks are part of your company's social media and communications strategy? (select all that apply)

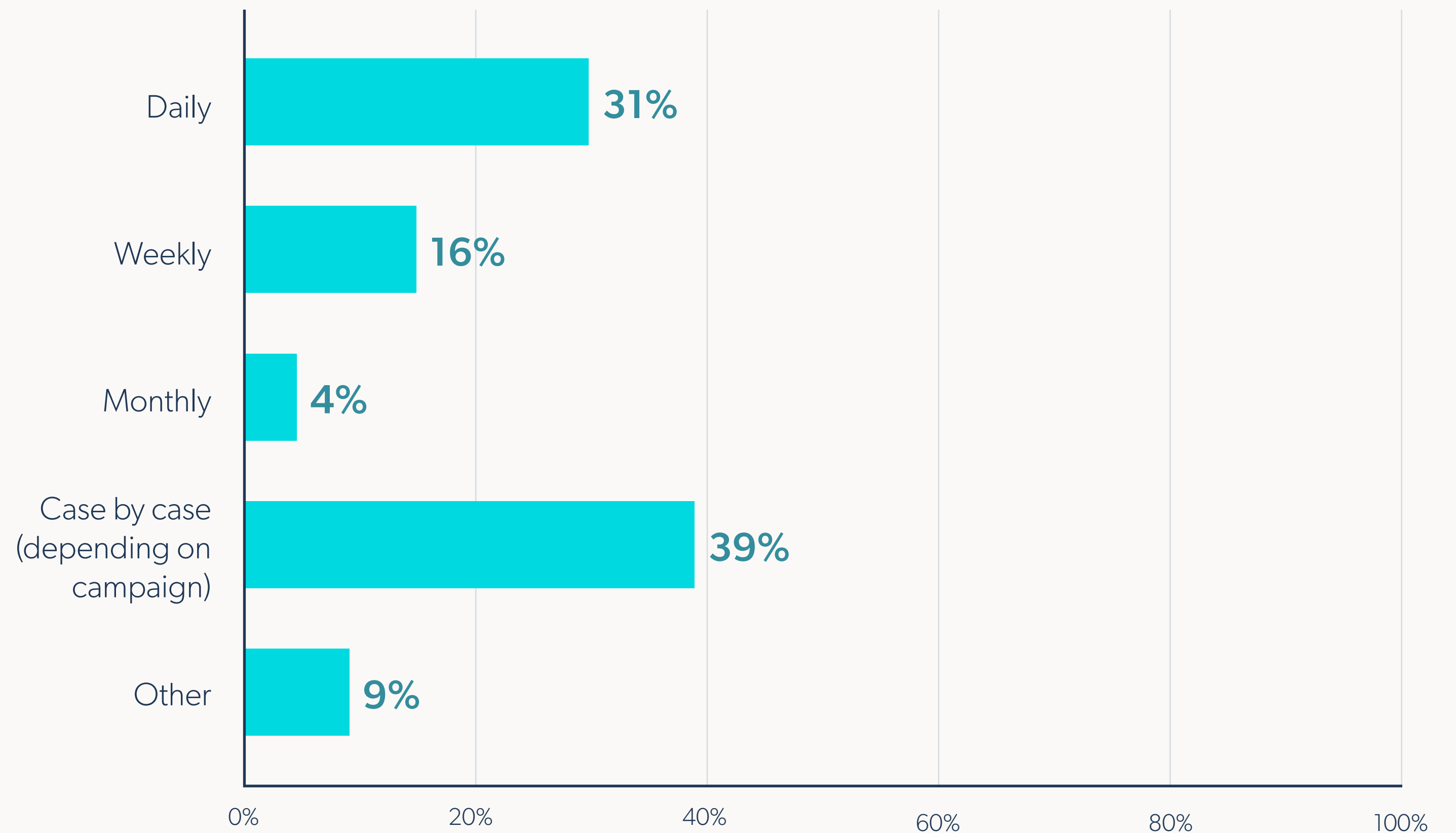


Social listening tools are used daily by about one-third of PR pros

While **39%** deploy social listening tools on a case-by-case basis, **31%** use them daily and **16%** say they use them weekly.

The “other” category includes mostly respondents who do not use these tools.

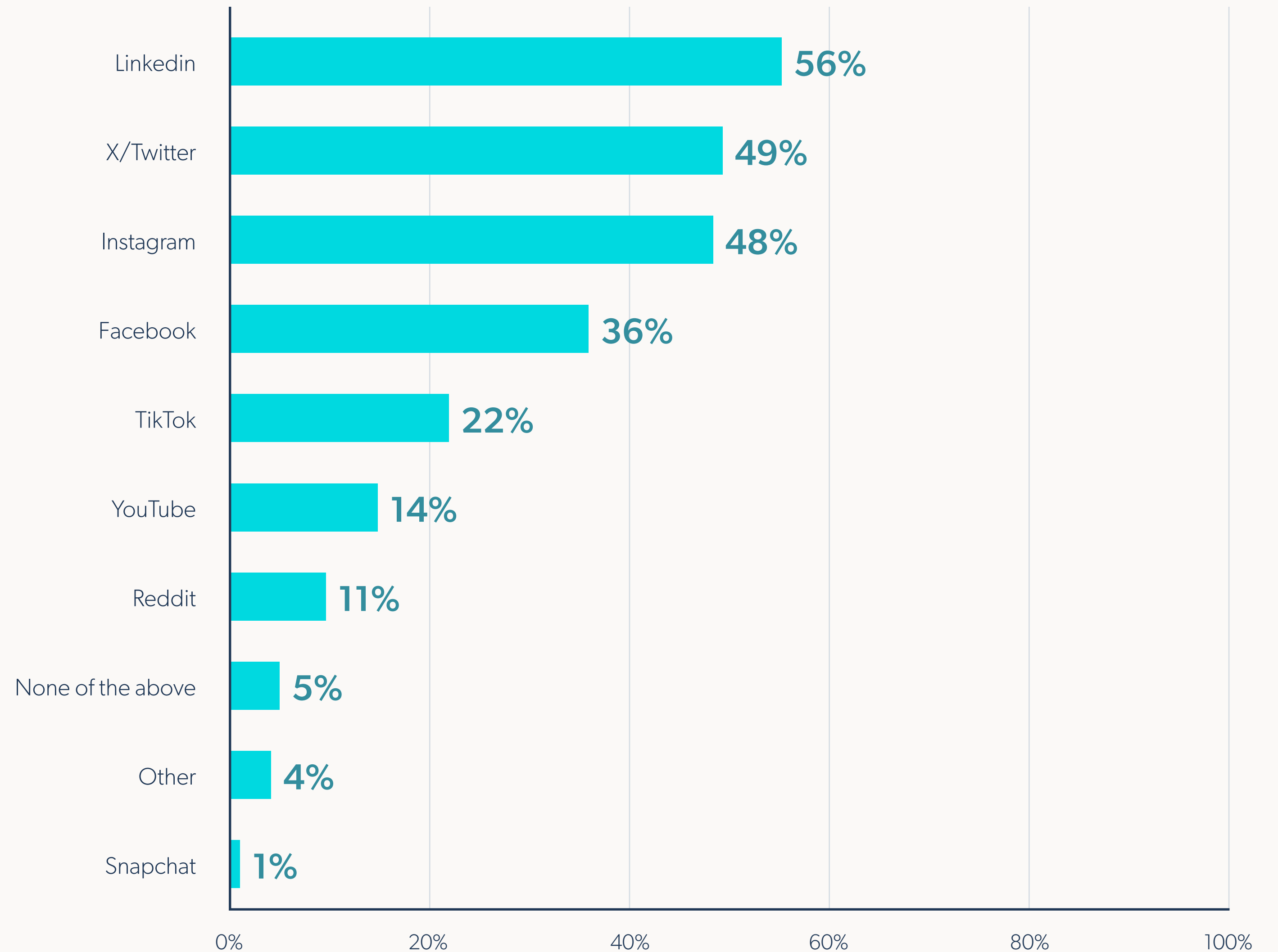
How often does your team use social listening tools?



PR pros still interested in listening in on X

While X lost ground in many ways for PR pros, it's still a platform they want to track. About half of them say they want social listening tools that work on X, while slightly more, **56%** want LinkedIn.

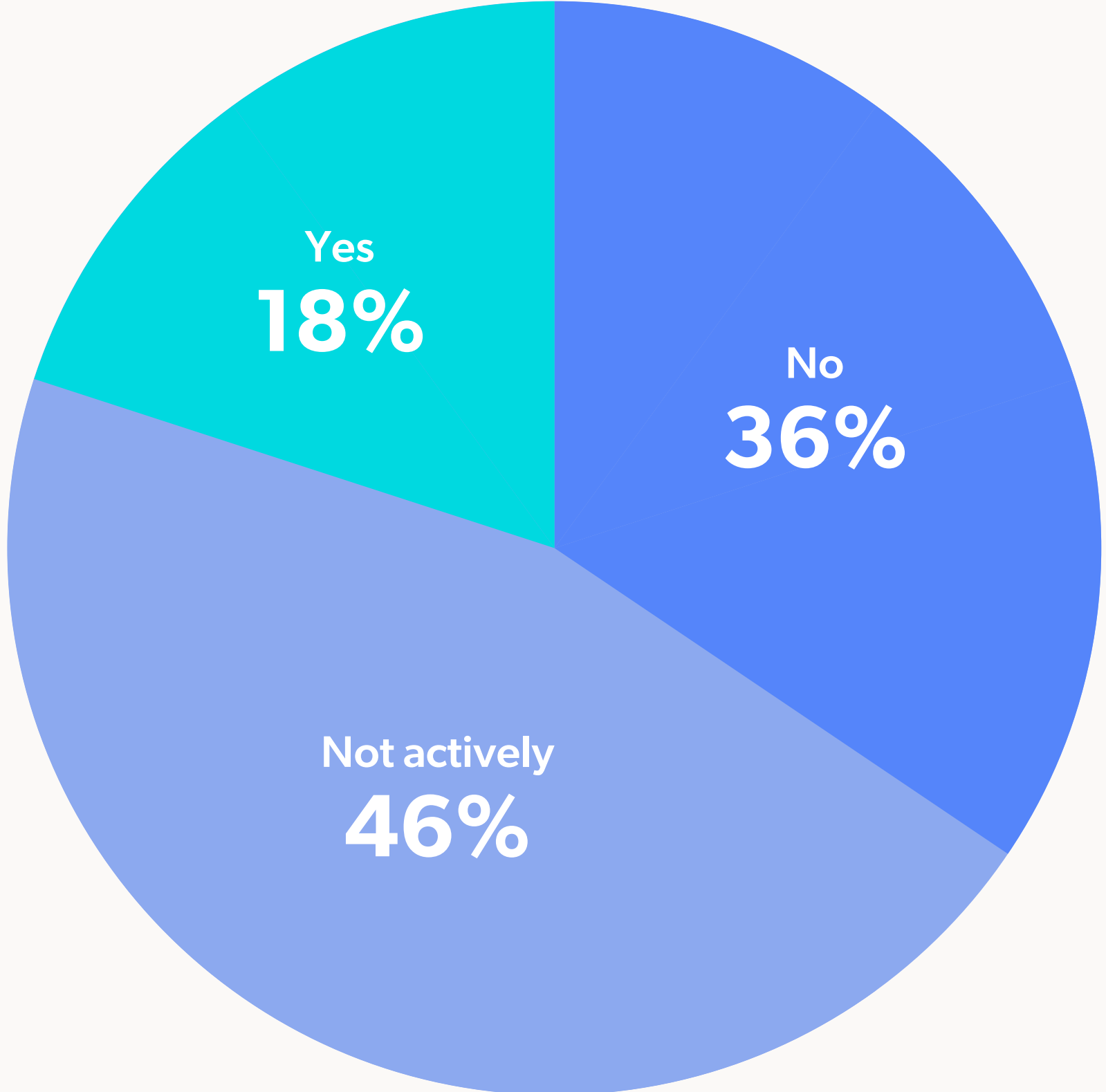
Which social networks are most important to you from a social listening perspective?



Most PR pros are not looking for an X alternative

82% say they are not looking for an alternative to the social media platform.

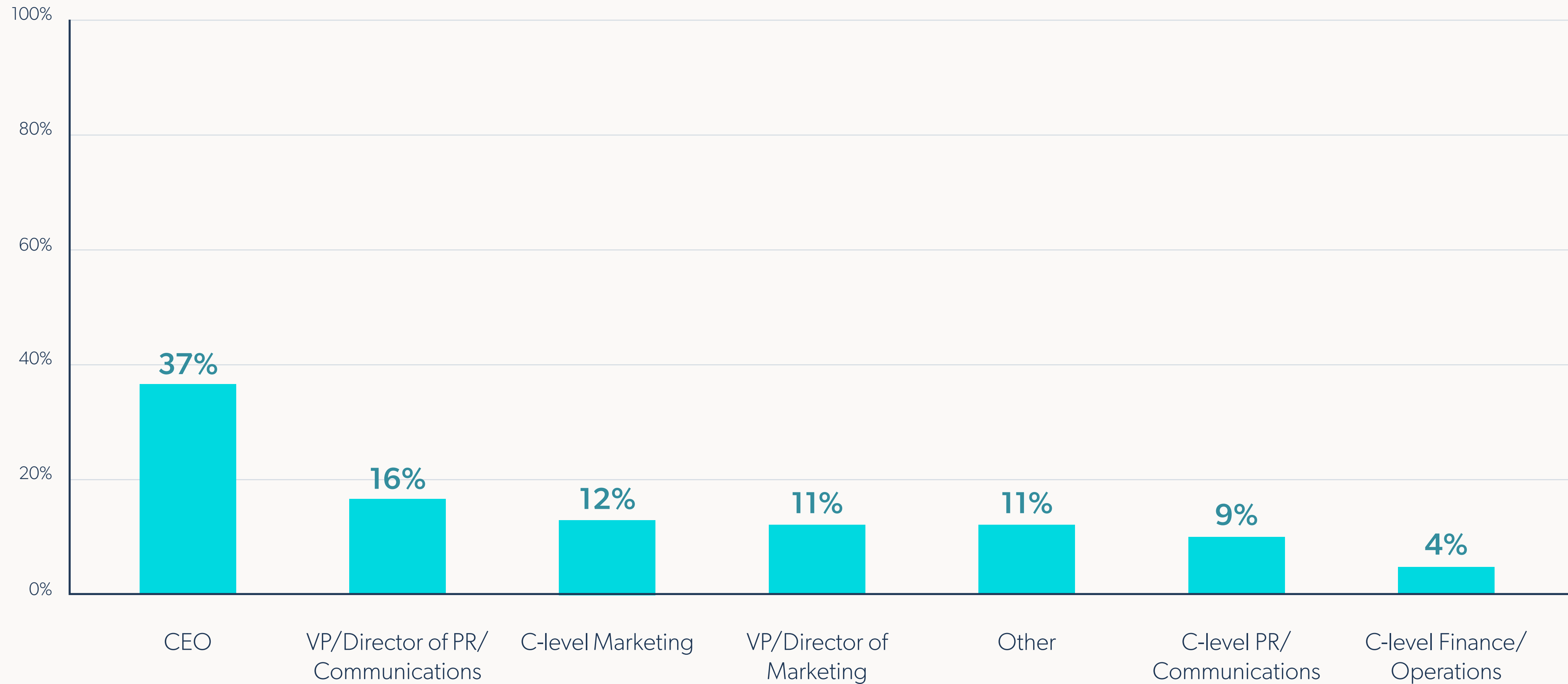
Are you looking for an X/Twitter alternative?



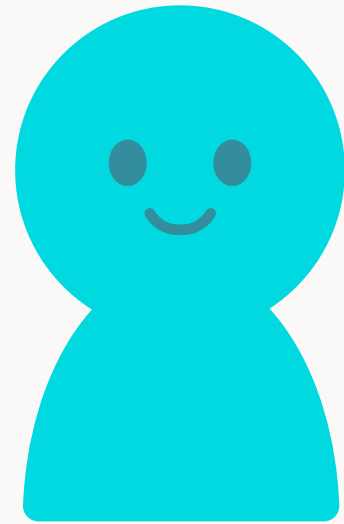
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**Budgets, salaries
and more**

Who is your company's decision-maker for spending on PR and earned media efforts?

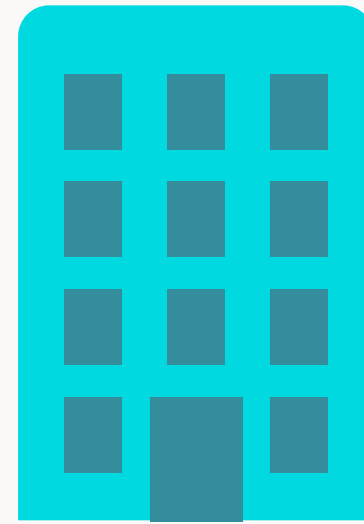


Salaries in PR



The average annual salary
for a PR pro

\$84,000



The average annual salary
for PR pros at **agencies**

\$90,000



The average annual salary
for PR pros at **brands**

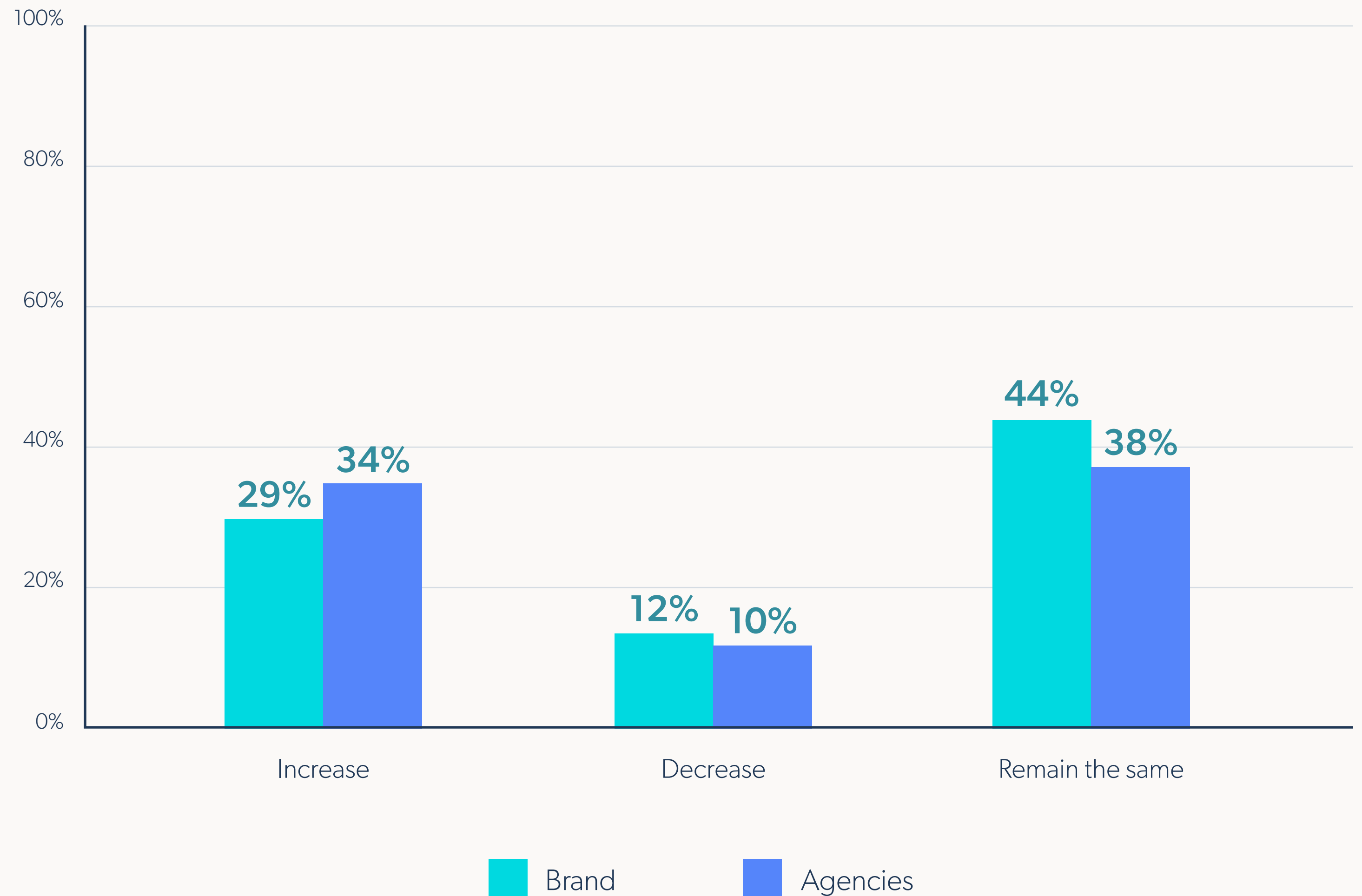
\$110,000

Based on U.S. salary data

Most are optimistic about their budgets

The majority of PR pros from both agencies and brands expect their budgets to **stay the same or increase** this year.

Over the next year, my company/client's budget for PR/communications most likely will:



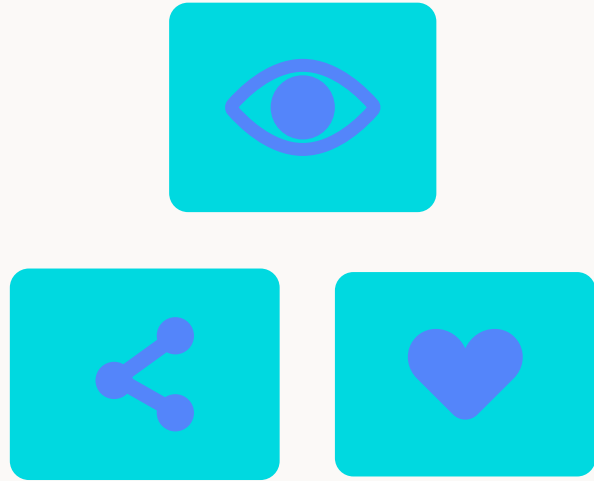
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Measuring success

What are the most useful metrics to measure PR success?



1 Number of stories placed



2 Reach/ impressions



3 Key message pull-through



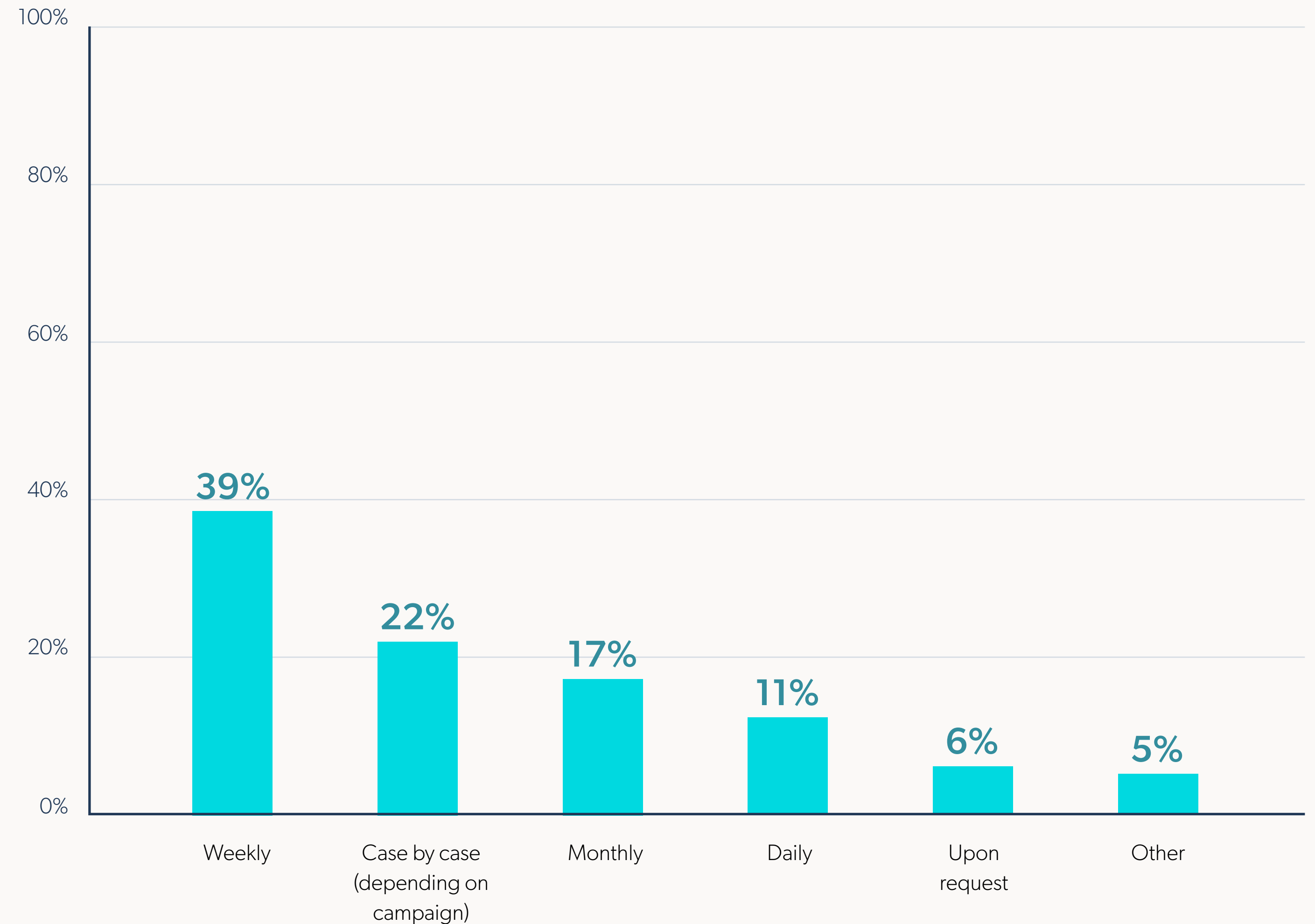
4 Website impact

People at agencies were 12% more likely than brands to rank number of stories placed highly

More than one third of teams brief leadership weekly

Case-by-case updates is the **second most** prevalent scenario. PR pros at brands and agencies report similar figures.

How often is your (or your client's) executive team briefed on PR and communications activities?



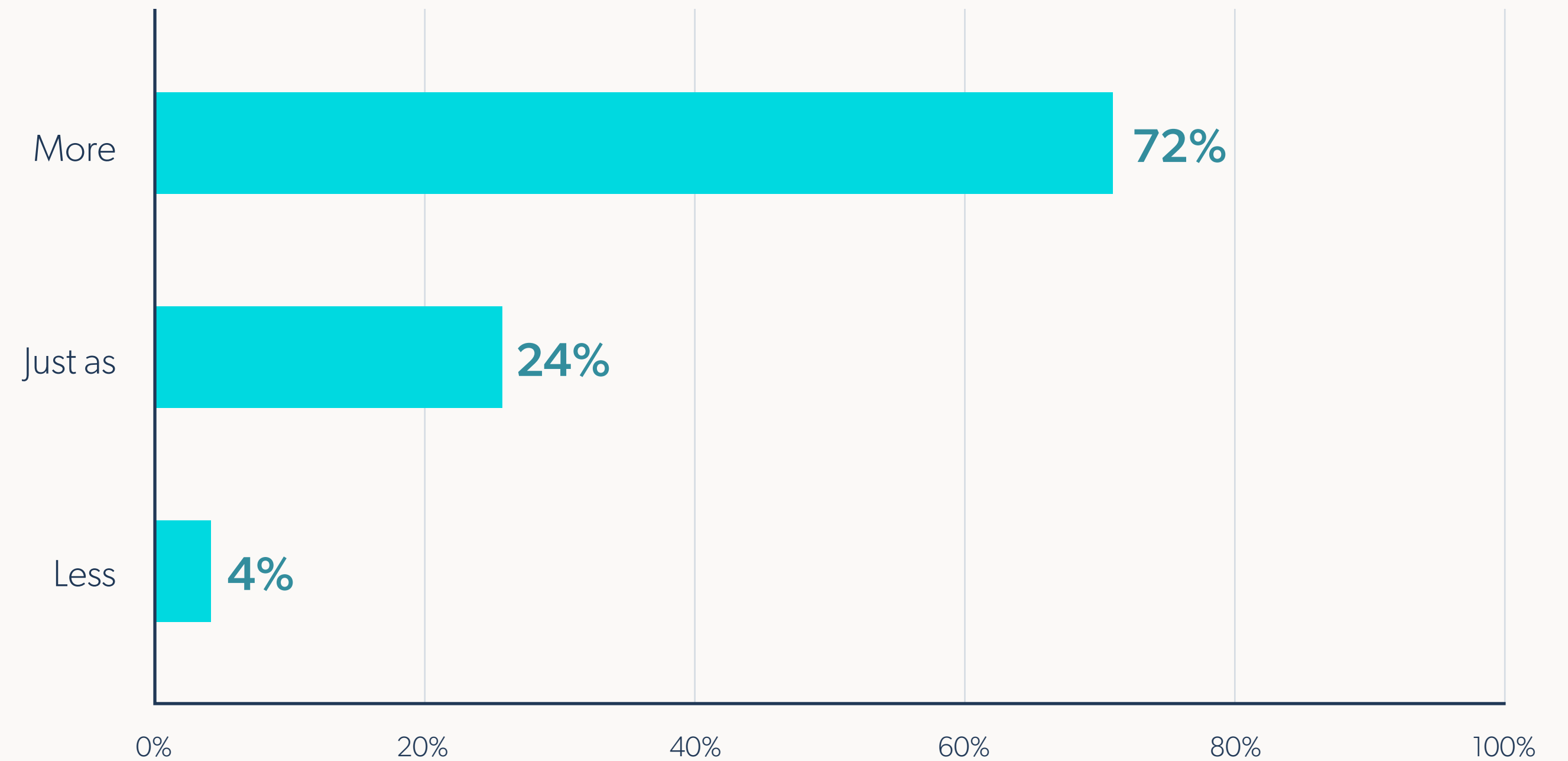
6

The future of PR

PR and marketing will continue growing closer

Similar to last year, **72%** of respondents said that the relationship between PR and marketing will be more important in the next 5 years.

PR's relationship with Marketing will be ___ important in the next 5 years

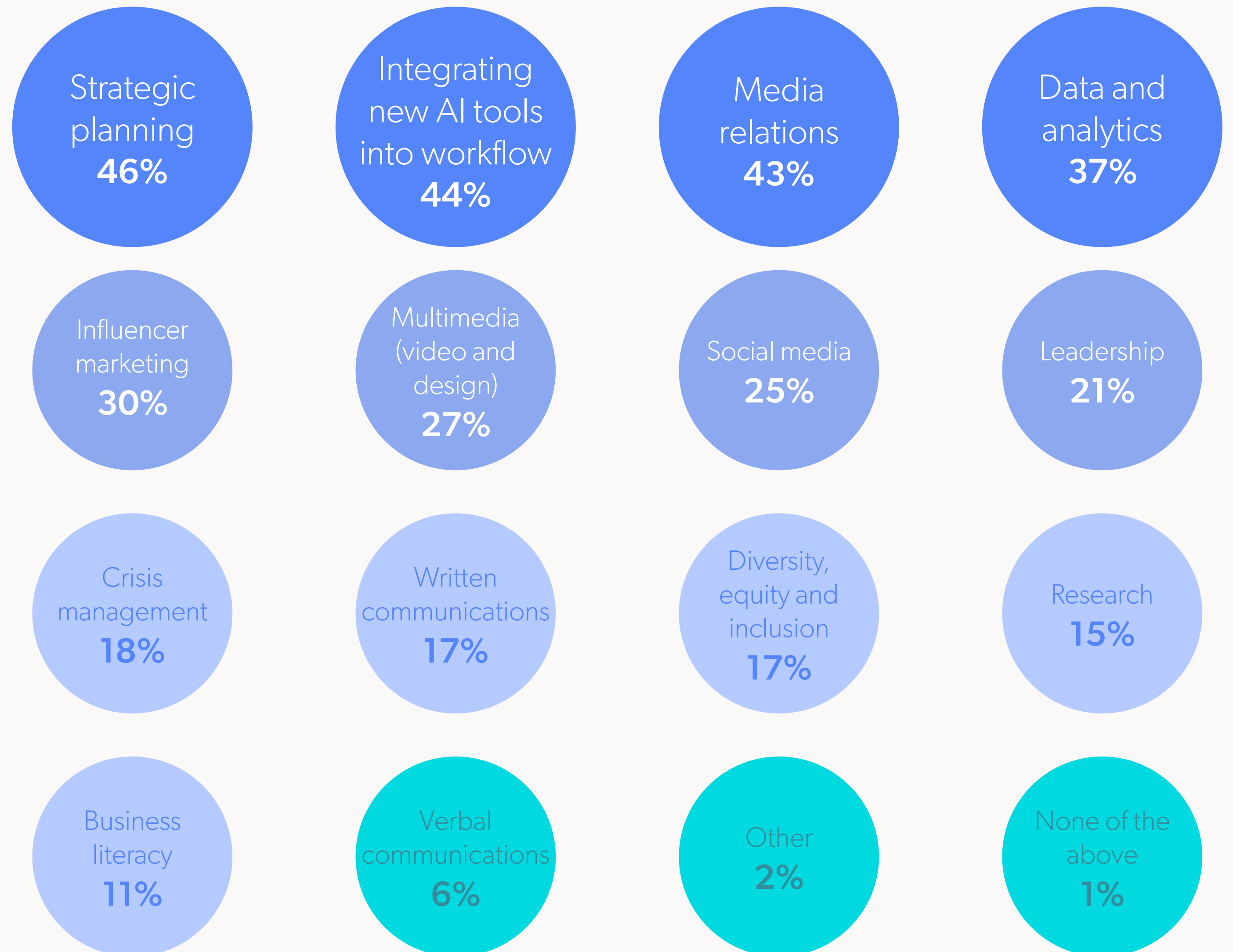


AI tops media relations as an important skill

After bursting onto the scene last year with **31%** saying their companies should focus on integrating AI tools into their workflow.

While last year **nearly one third** of PR pros said their companies should focus on integrating AI tools into their workflow, PR pros are doubling down. This year, **44%** said the same thing, neck and neck with those **43%** who said “media relations” should be a top focus.

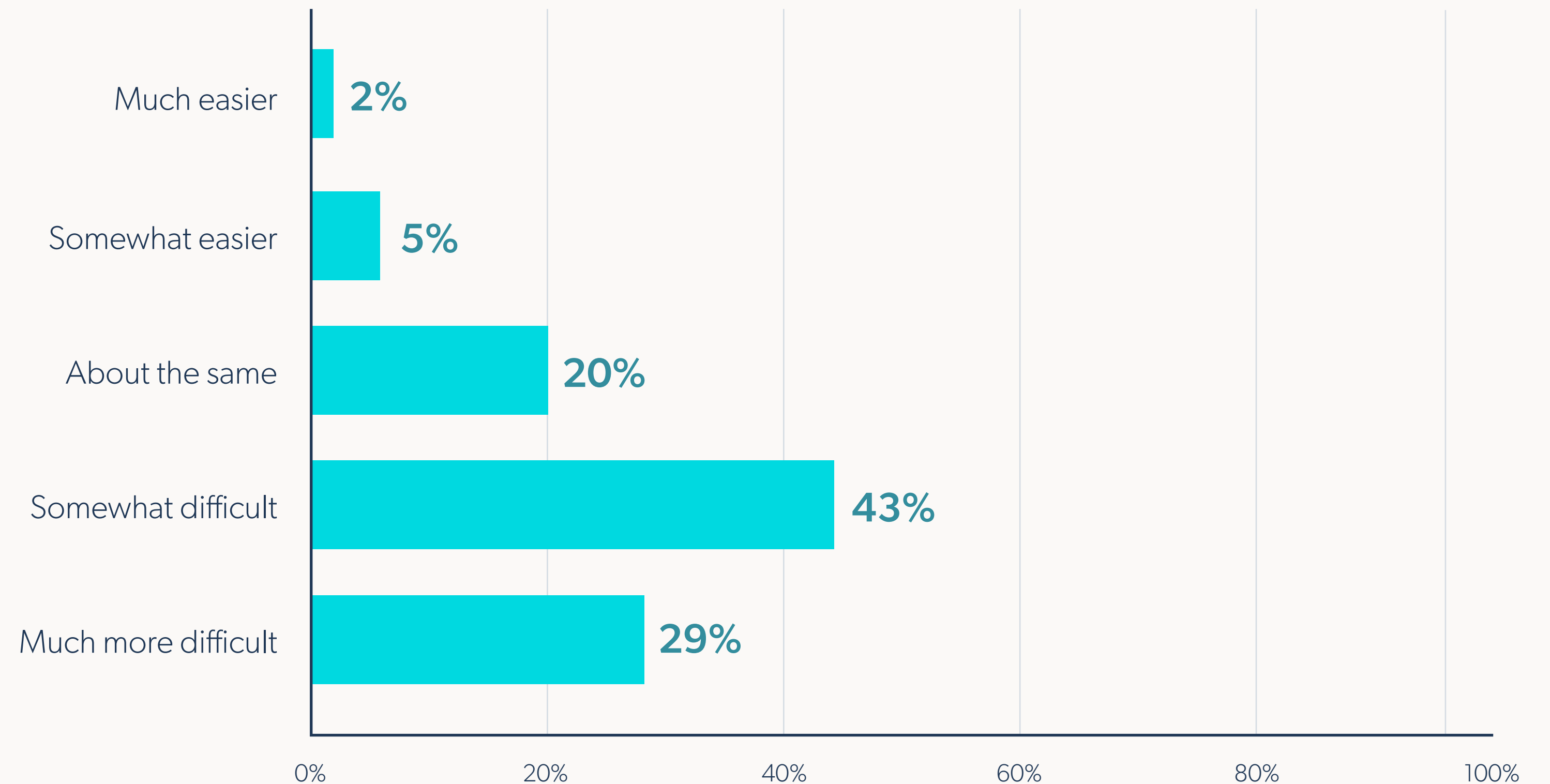
Which skills will your company need to focus on in the next 5 years to be successful? (select up to 4)



PR pros worry earned media will be harder to secure

72% of PR pros think it will be somewhat or much more difficult to secure earned media over the next five years. A similar number to last year.

Over the next 5 years, how do you think securing earned media will change? Will securing earned media be:



MUCK RACK

Thank you!

Muck Rack's Public Relations Management (PRM) platform enables PR teams to find the right journalists for their stories, send customized pitches, build meaningful relationships with the media, monitor news and quantify their impact.

[Learn more](#)