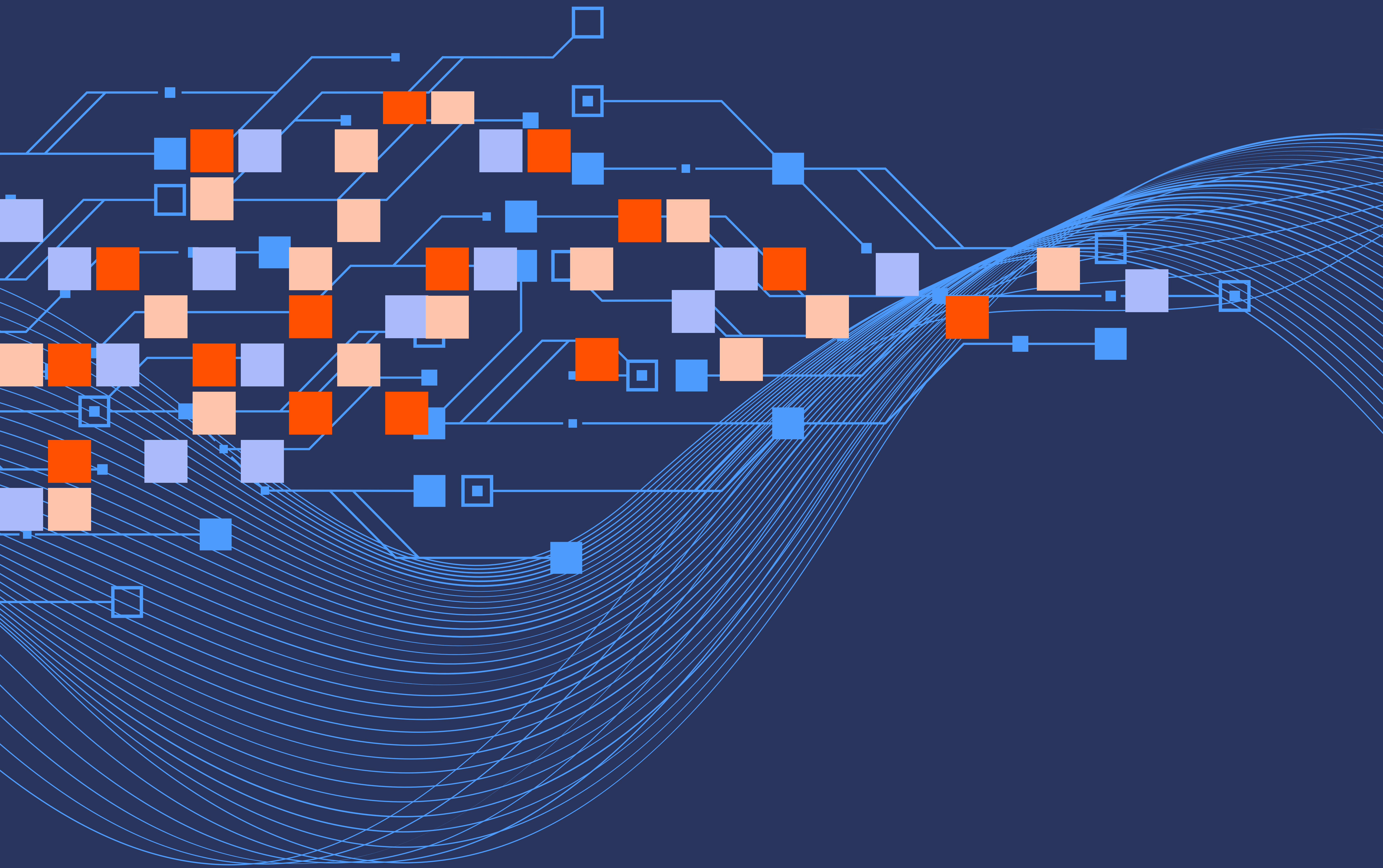


AI and Small Business Adoption

2025



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Survey Overview



Thryv's second annual AI and Small Business Adoption Survey finds a 40% surge in AI usage from 2024 to 2025. This marks a notable shift in how small businesses are leveraging technology to reach new customers and meet their rising expectations for speed and personalization.

Many also see AI as offering a strategic advantage in uncertain times, particularly among white collar and service businesses, where over 70% see AI as a clear strategic edge.

While not generally regarded as early technology adopters, this embrace of AI demonstrates that small businesses see its clear and present value not just as a time saver but as a business enabler.

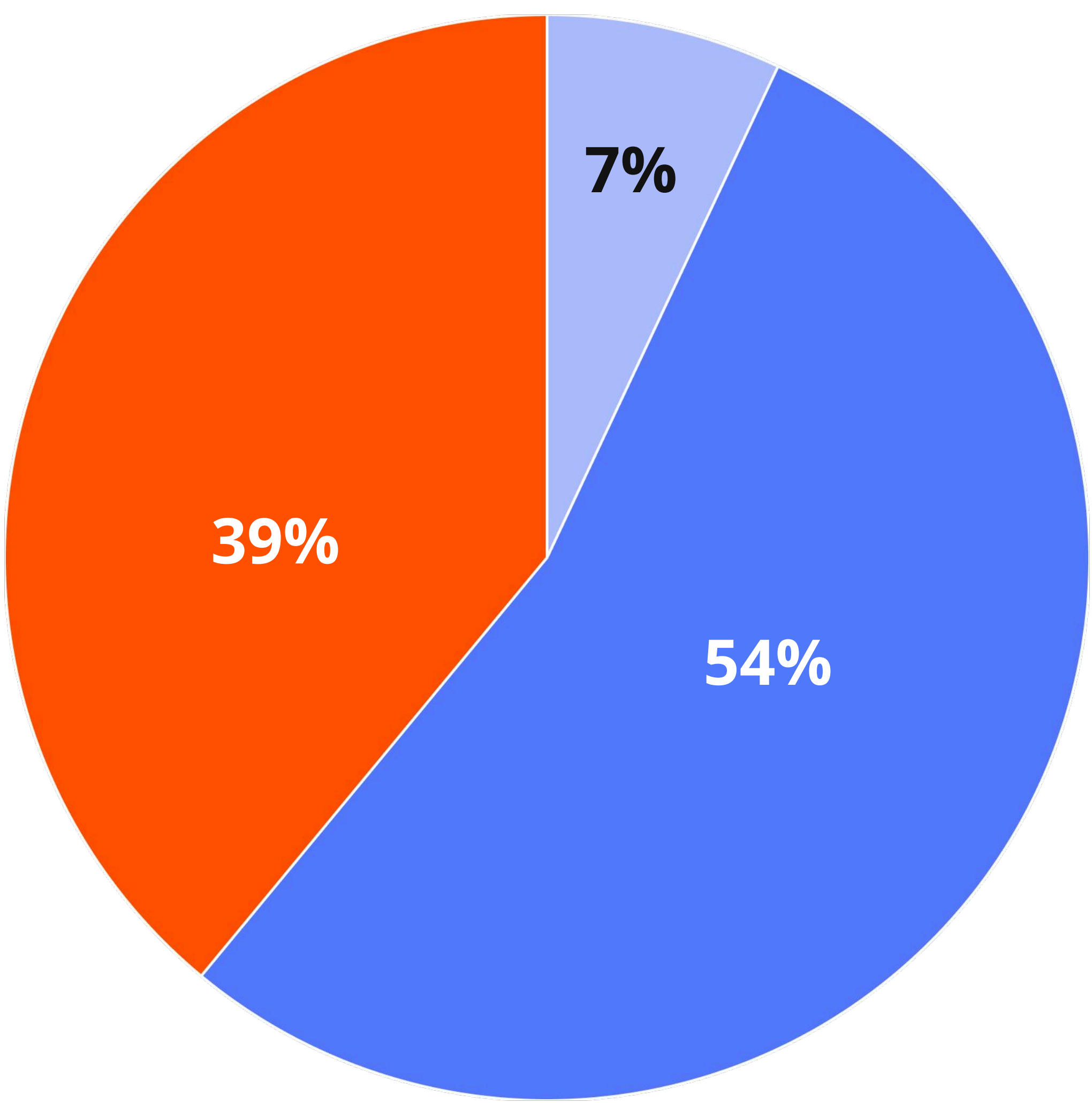
Small Business AI Adoption

Question Asked: Are you currently using artificial intelligence (AI) in your business, including software you have been using that now uses AI?

41%
increase

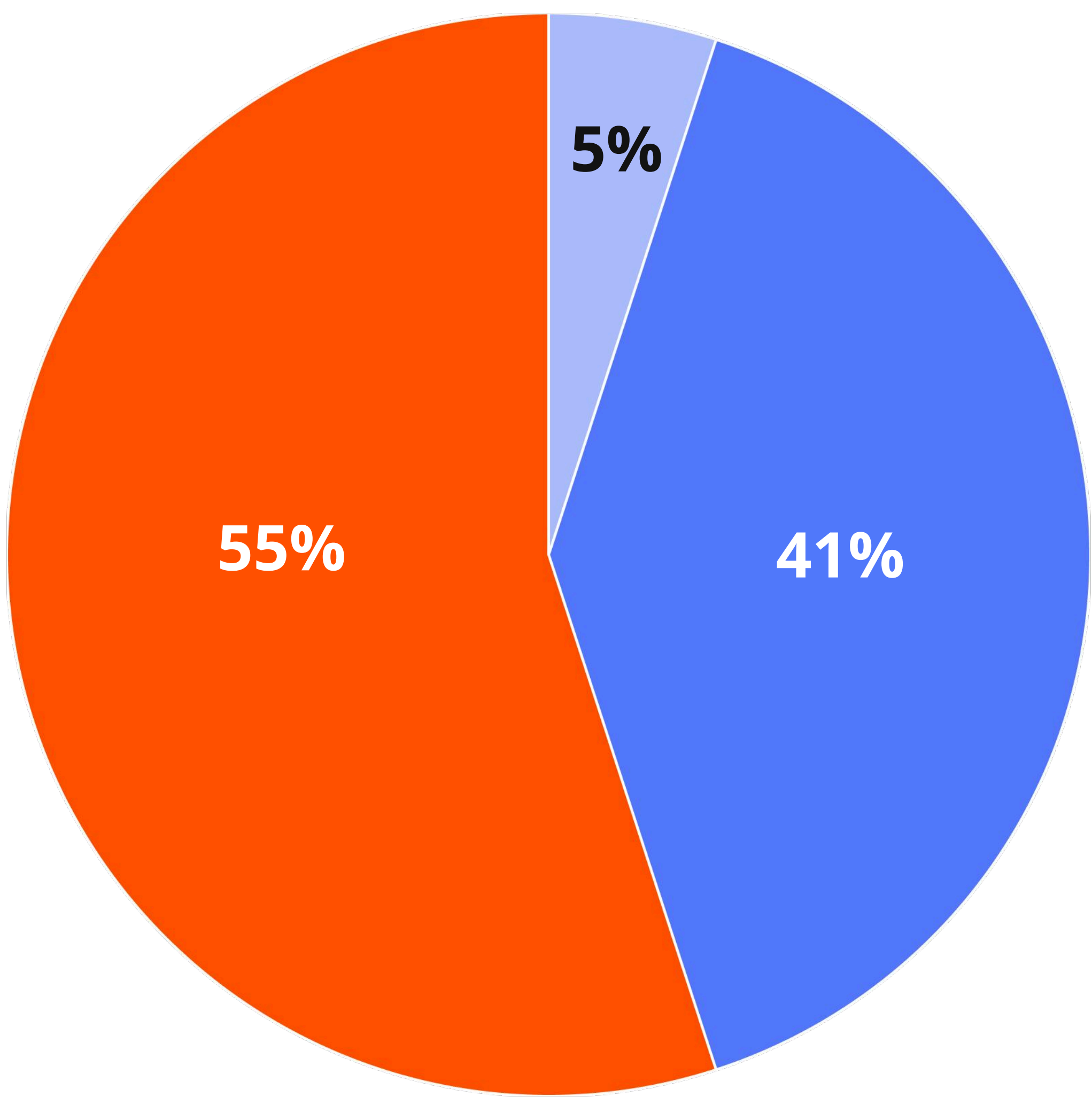
Usage of AI jumped from 39% in 2024 to 55% in 2025

2024



- Don't know
- Do not use AI now
- Use AI now

2025



- Don't know
- Do not use AI now
- Use AI now

Current Use of AI – By Industry

Question Asked: Are you currently using artificial intelligence (AI) in your business, including software you have been using that now uses AI?

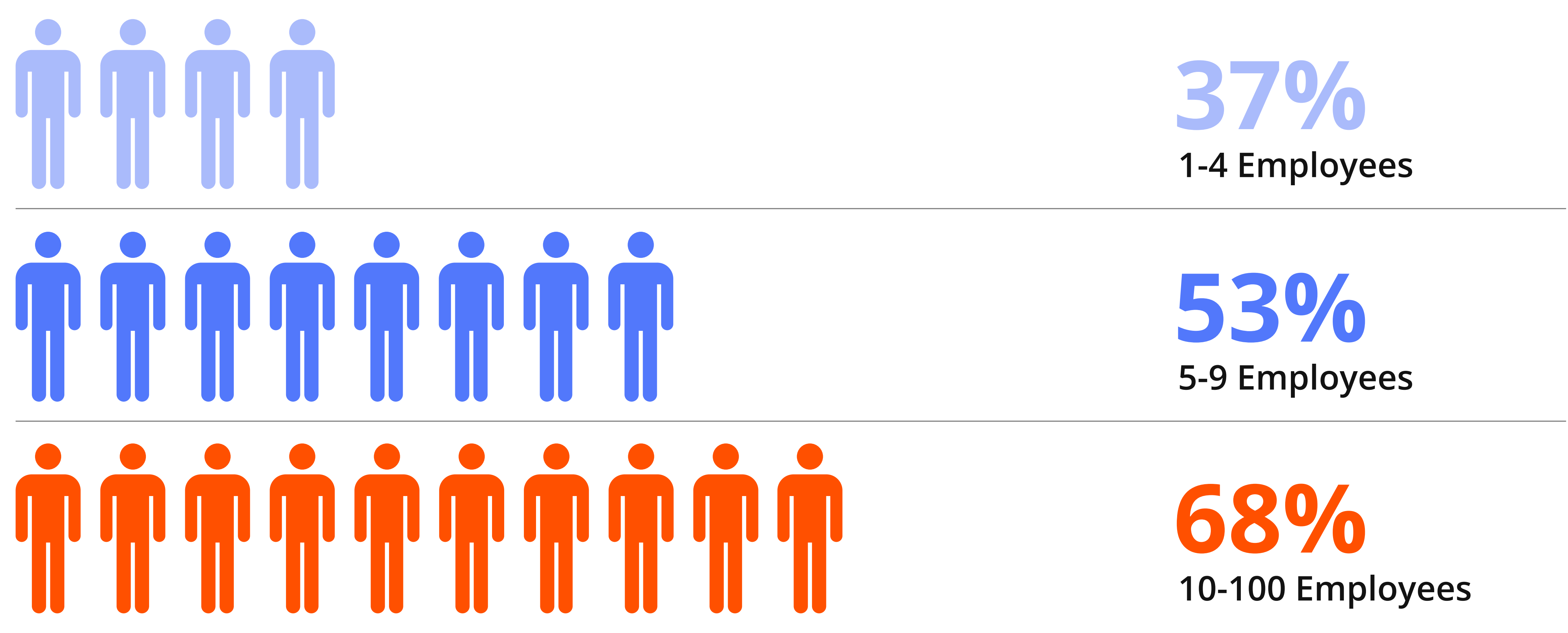
Professional services and restaurants/retail establishments are more likely to be using AI.



Current AI Users - By Number of Employees

Question Asked: Are you currently using artificial intelligence (AI) in your business, including software you have been using that now uses AI?

Growth in AI usage has come primarily from firms with 10 to 100 employees.

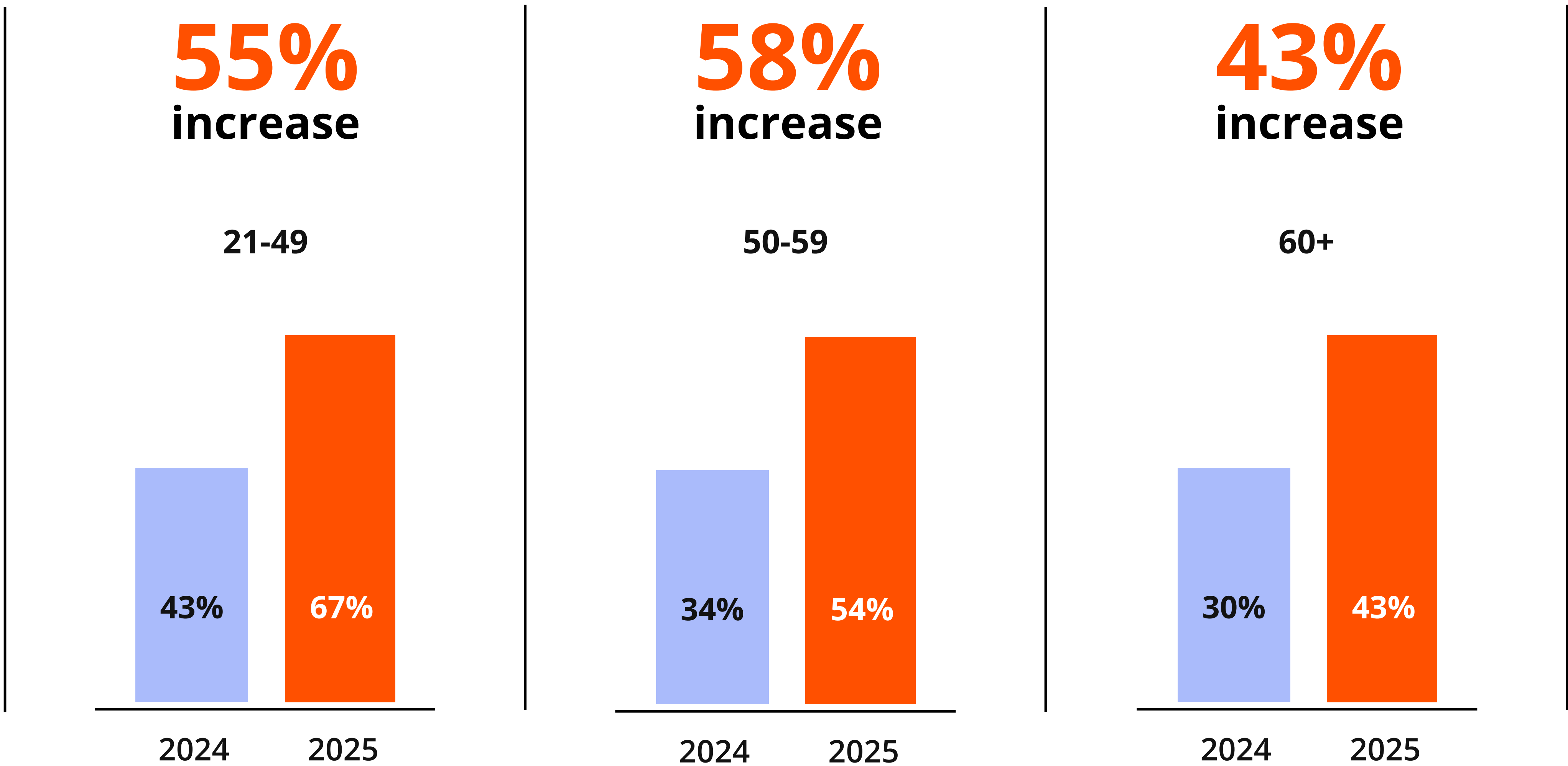


Current Use of AI – By Age of Respondent

Question Asked: Are you currently using artificial intelligence (AI) in your business, including software you have been using that now uses AI?



Highest percentage increase in usage was among those aged 50 to 59.

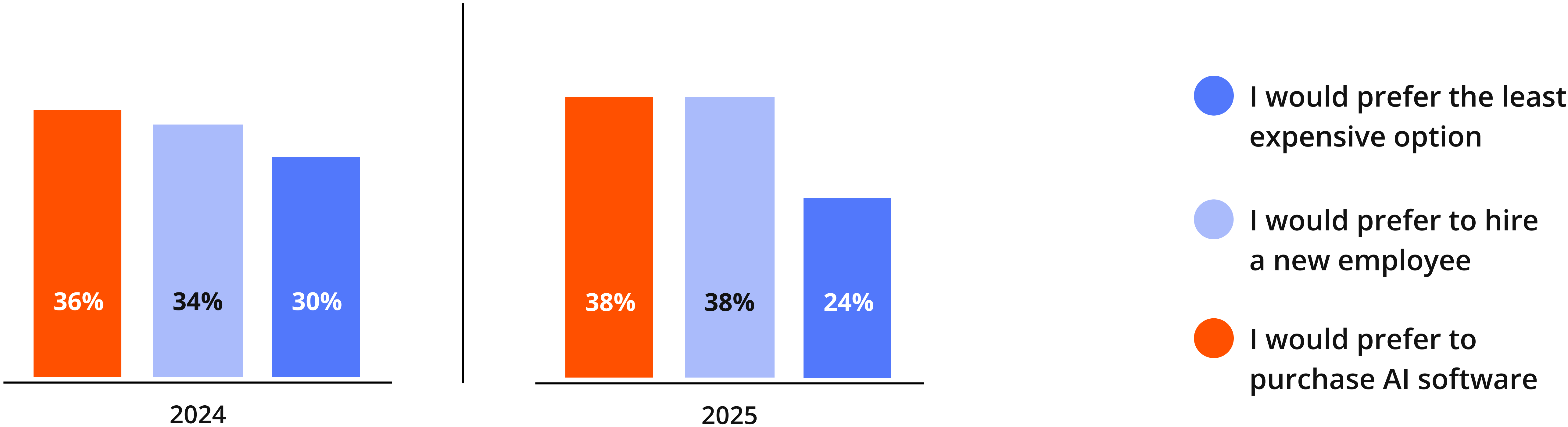


AI's Impact on Hiring Views

Opinions on hiring remain largely unchanged YoY, with respondents evenly divided on using AI vs. hiring a new employee.

Preference for AI Versus an Employee

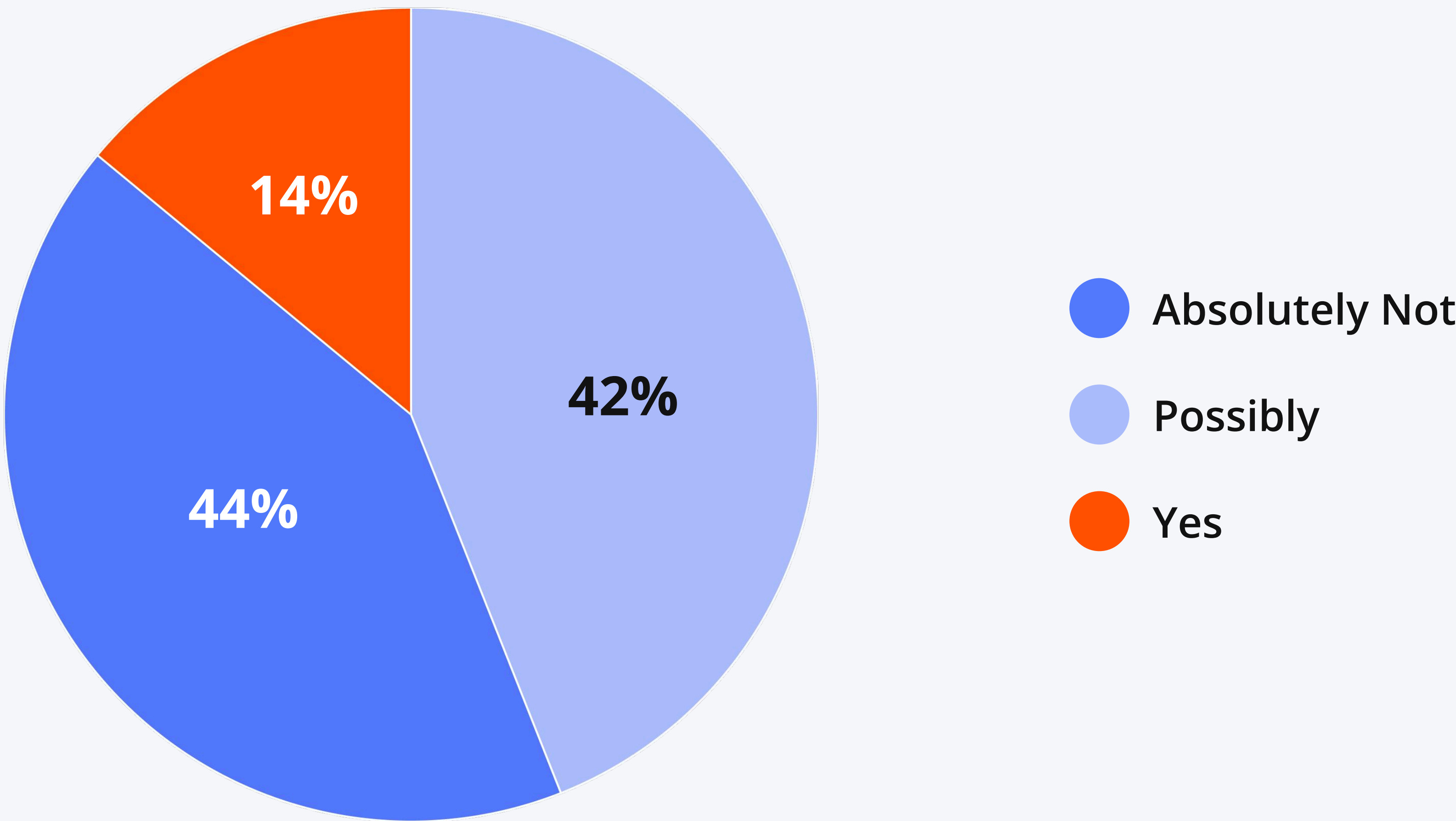
Question Asked: If you needed to add a new resource to your business, and either a person or AI software could perform the task equally with no measurable difference between the two, would you prefer to hire a new employee or purchase AI software?



Could you replace an employee with AI?

Question Asked: If one of your current employees left your business, could you replace that person's responsibilities with AI?

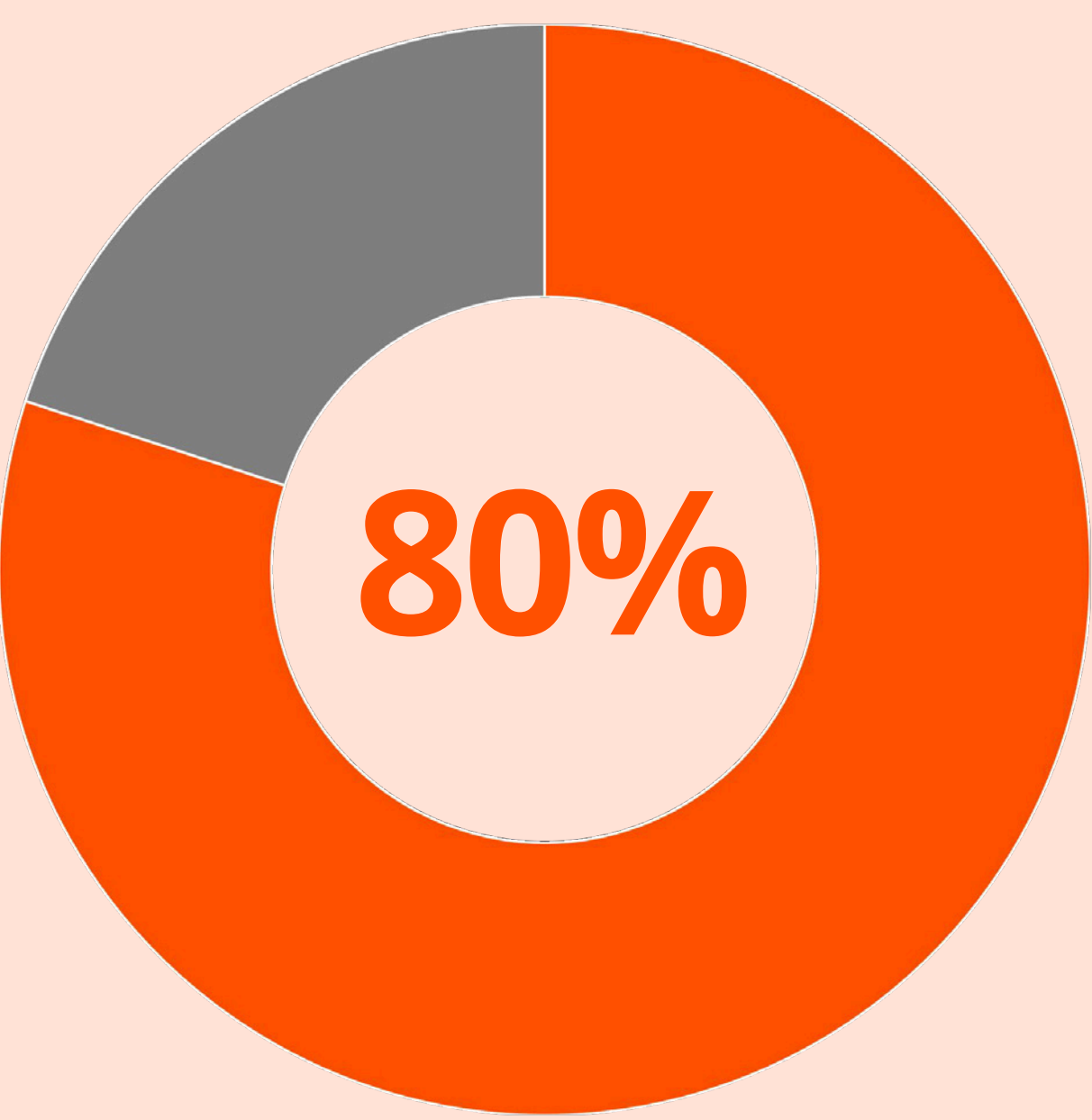
Only
14%
said AI could
replace an
employee



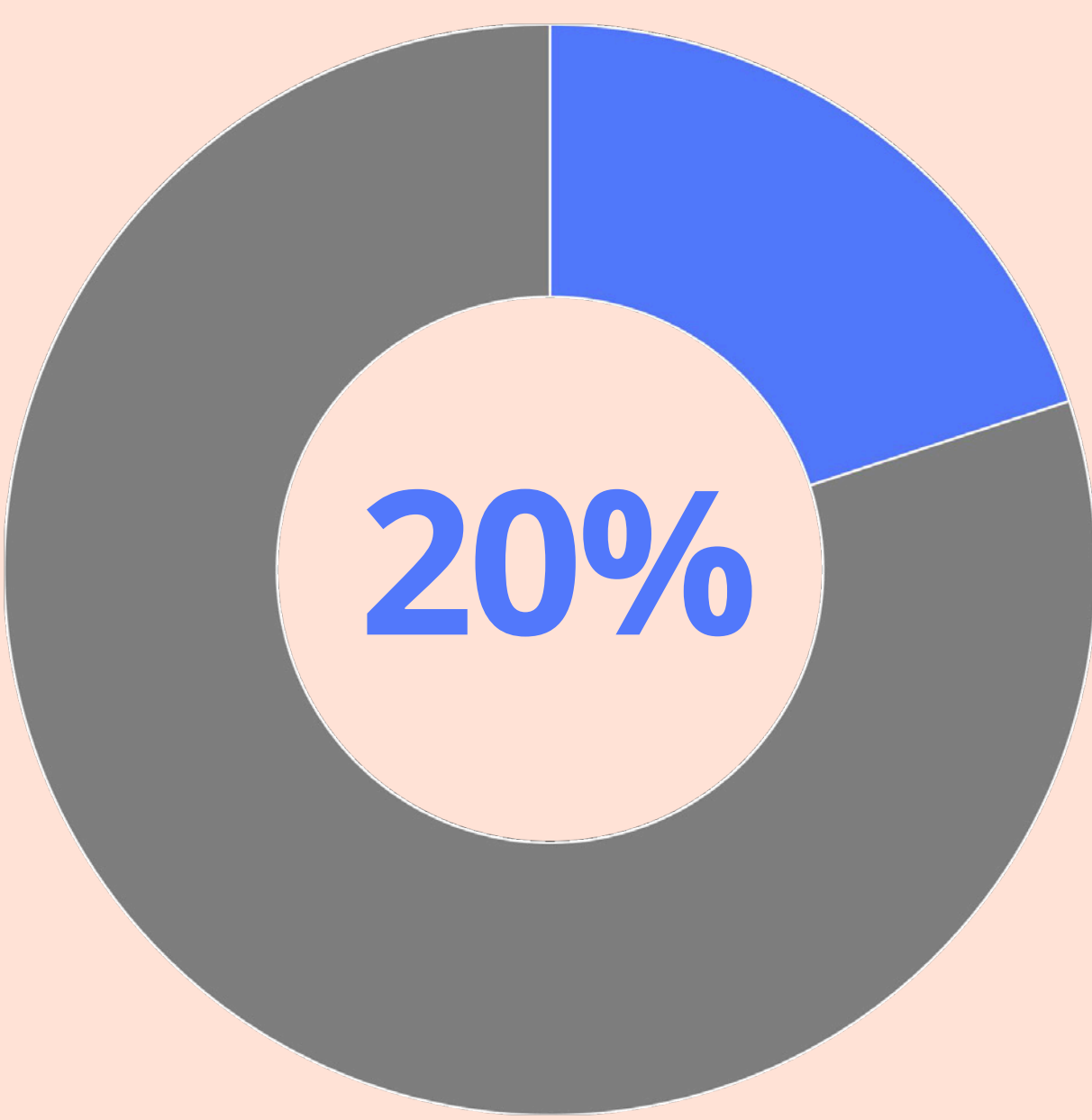


AI and Customers

Question Asked: Do you feel like AI is necessary for you to reach new customers and grow your business?



Yes

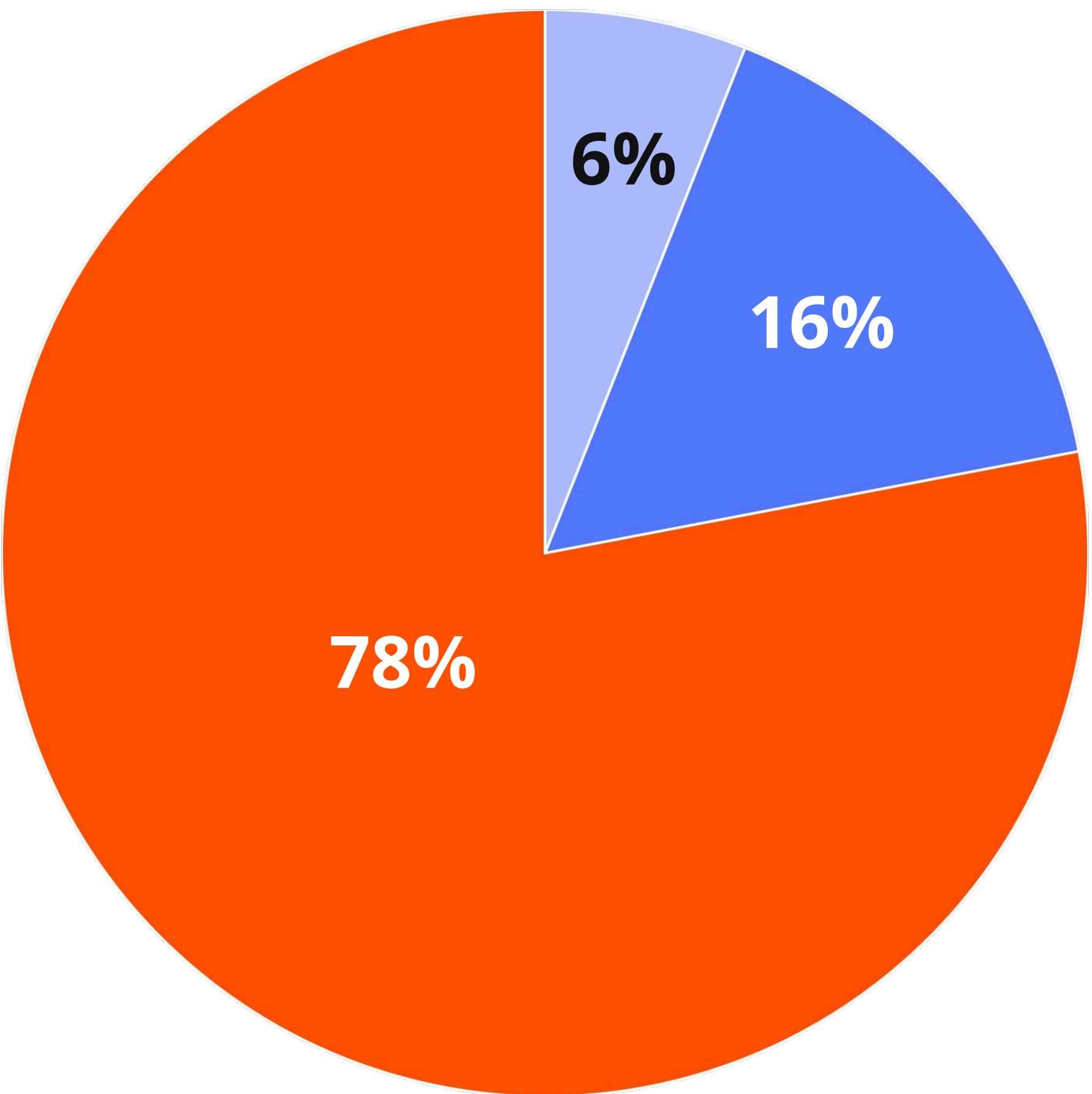


No

AI is seen as necessary to reach new customers.

Question Asked: As consumer demand for high touch experiences and immediate response rises, do you feel like you need AI in order to keep up with customer expectations?

AI is seen as necessary to keep up with customer expectations.



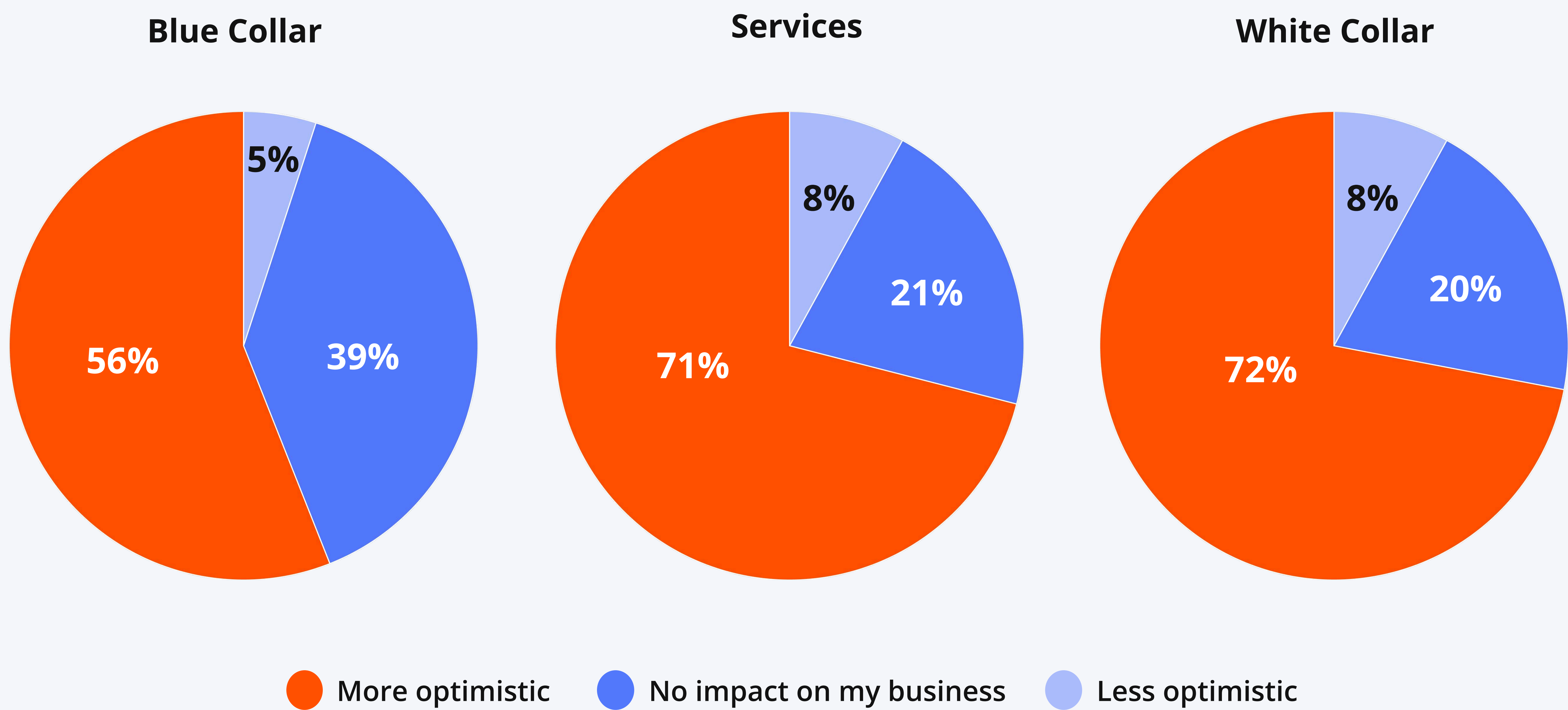
- Don't know
- No
- Yes



AI and the Economy

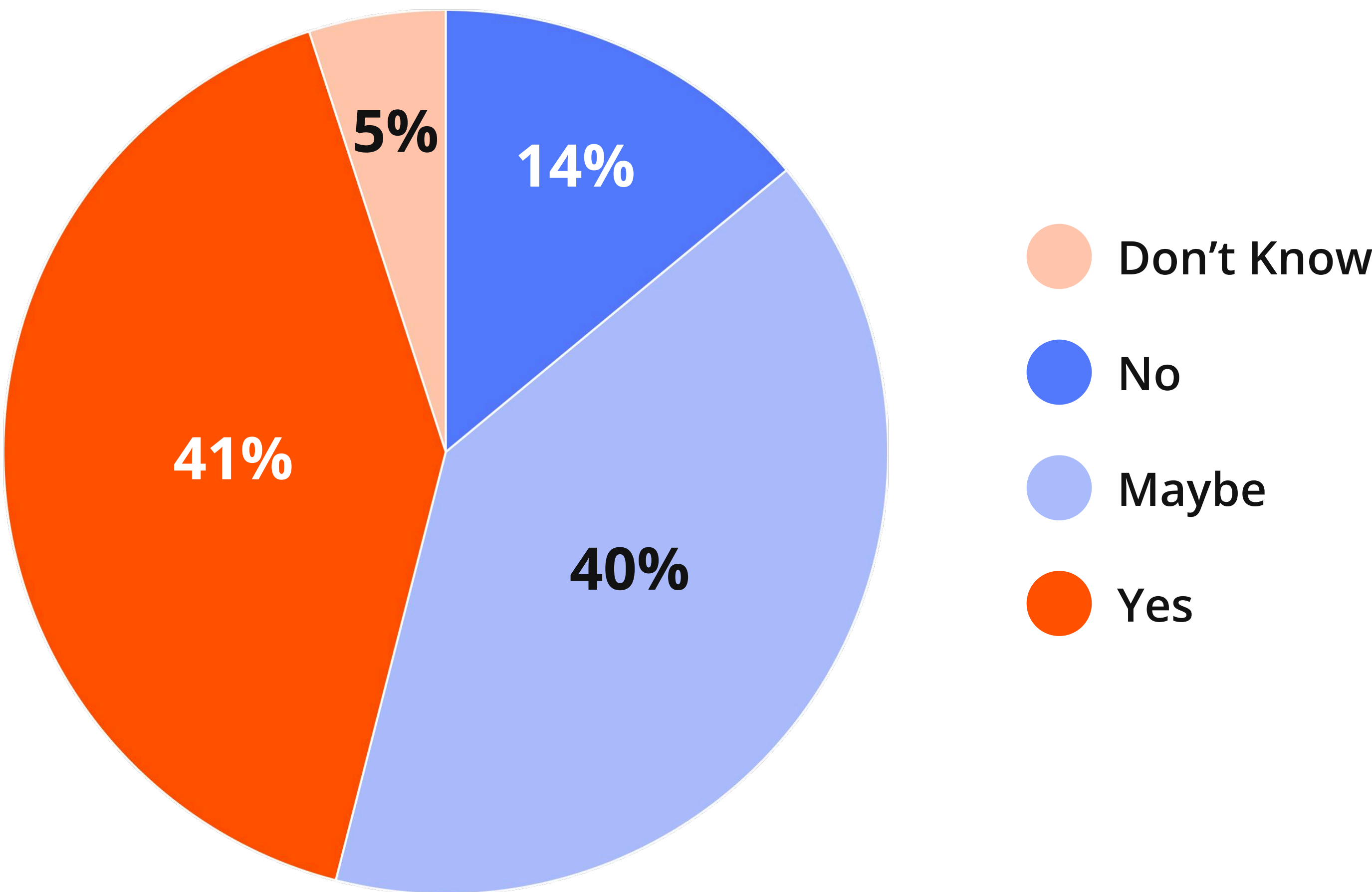
Optimism is especially high among white-collar and service-based businesses, where over 70% see AI as a clear strategic edge.

Question Asked: Thinking about artificial intelligence (AI), how do advances in AI make you feel about being able to run your business?



Question Asked: In light of current economic conditions, do you think AI can play a meaningful role in helping your business overcome economic uncertainties?

41%
believe AI can help
them overcome
economic uncertainty

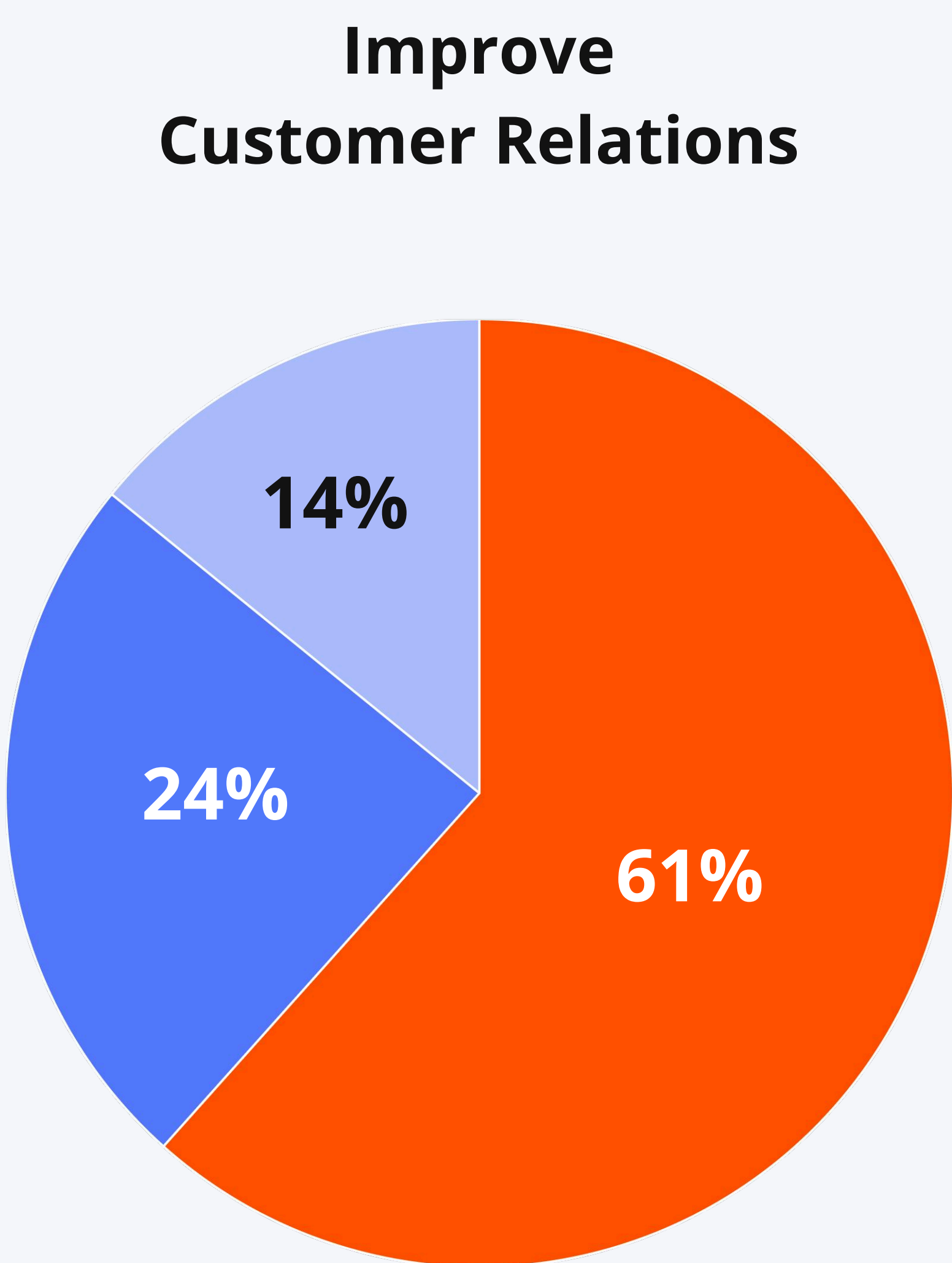
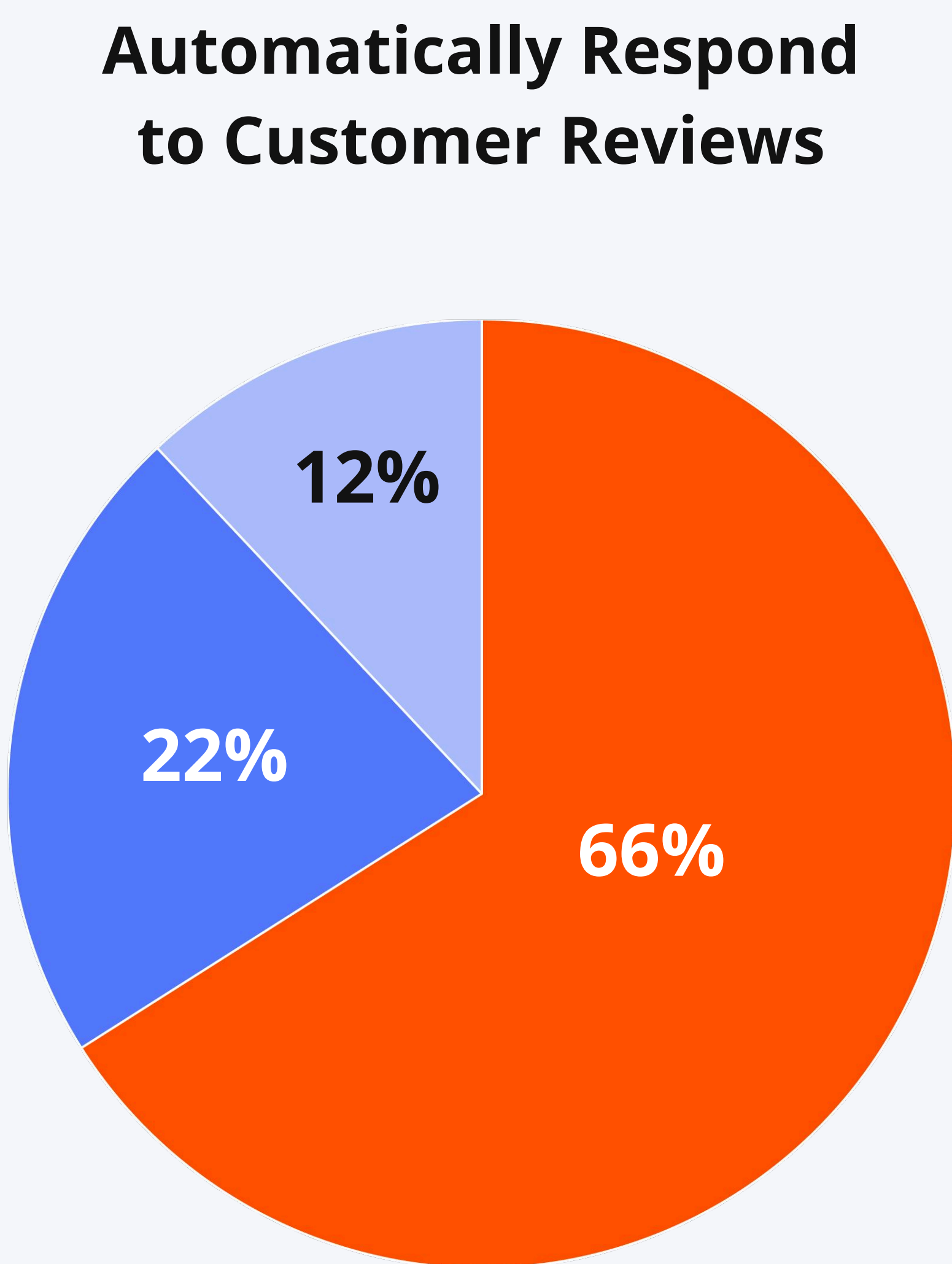
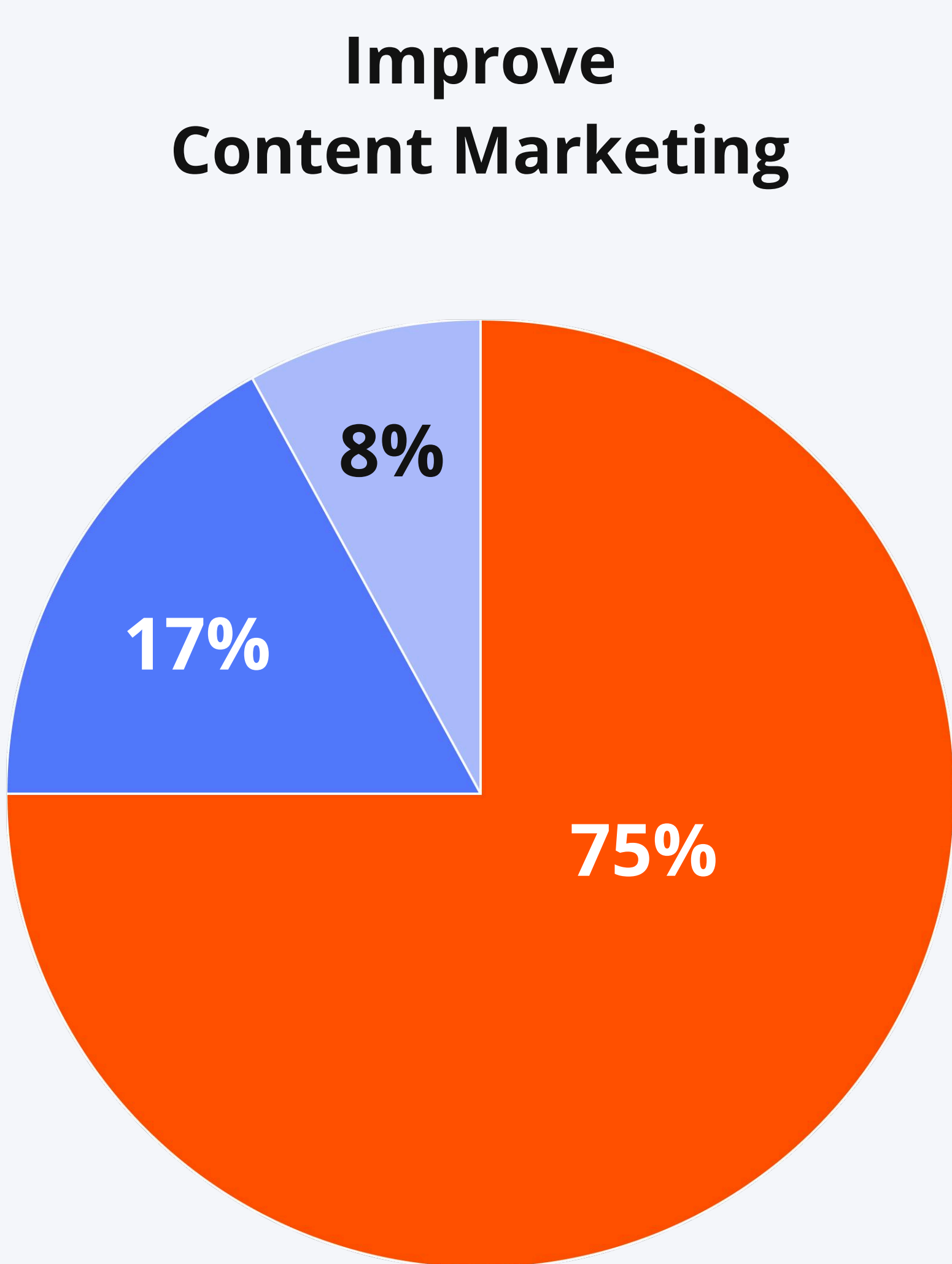




**Content marketing
seen as a top area
where AI can benefit
an SMB.**

Areas Where SMBs See AI as Helpful

Question Asked: Here are a few statements that might describe how AI could benefit your business. How much do you agree or disagree that AI will benefit your business in this way?

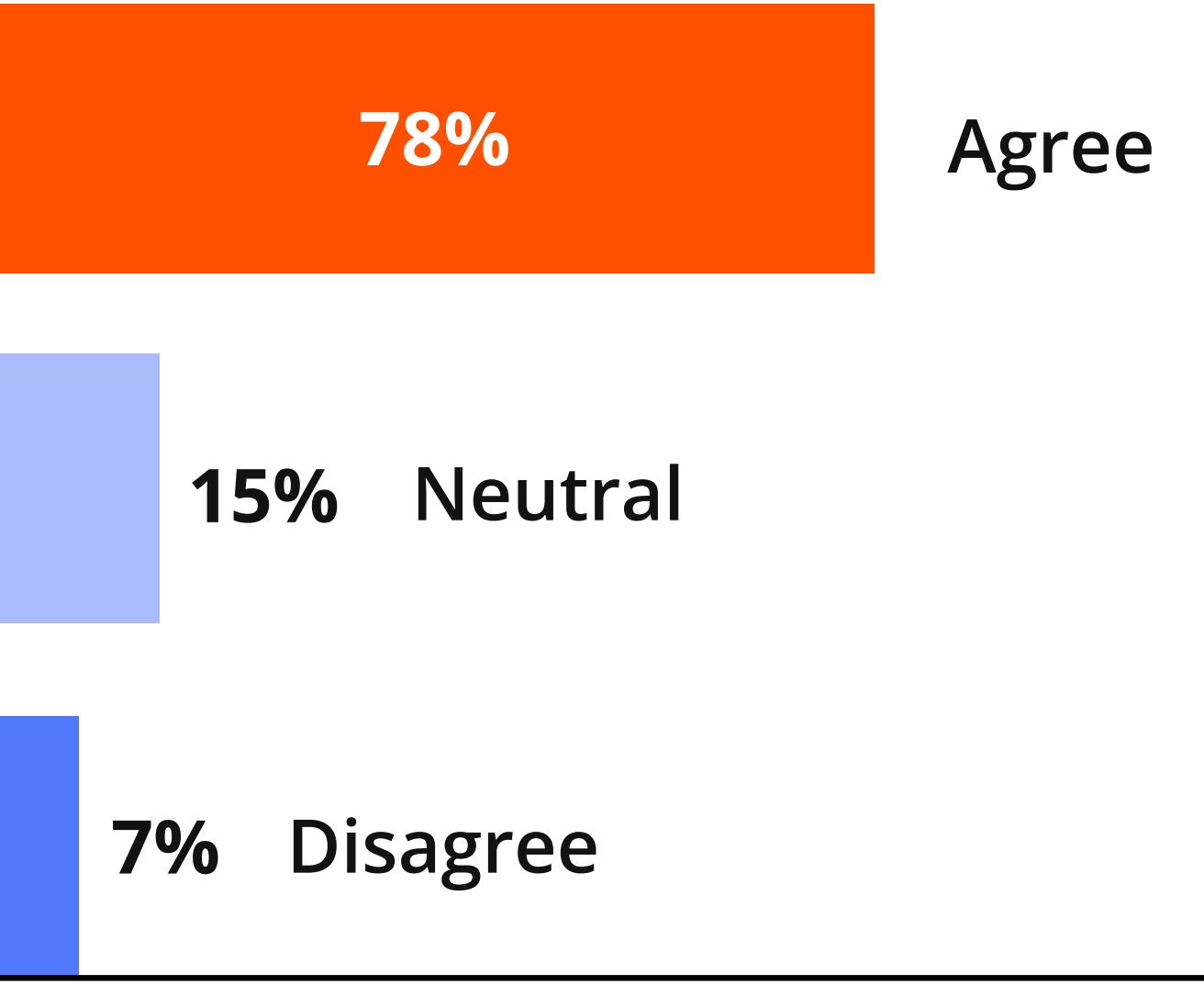


● Agree ● Disagree ● Neutral

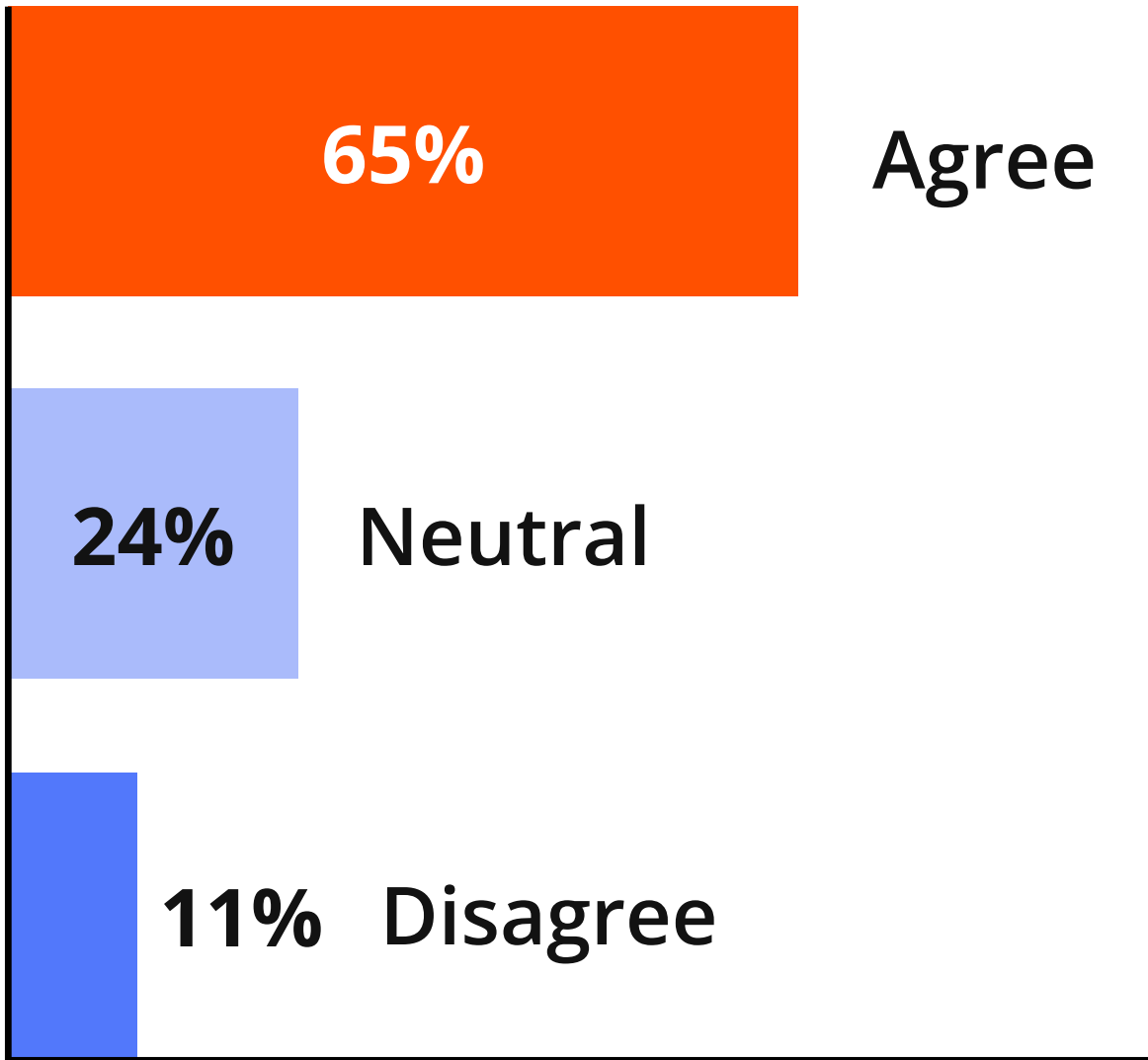
Areas Where SMBs See AI as Helpful

Question Asked: Here are a few statements that might describe how AI could benefit your business. How much do you agree or disagree that AI will benefit your business in this way?

Improve My Business's Efficiency

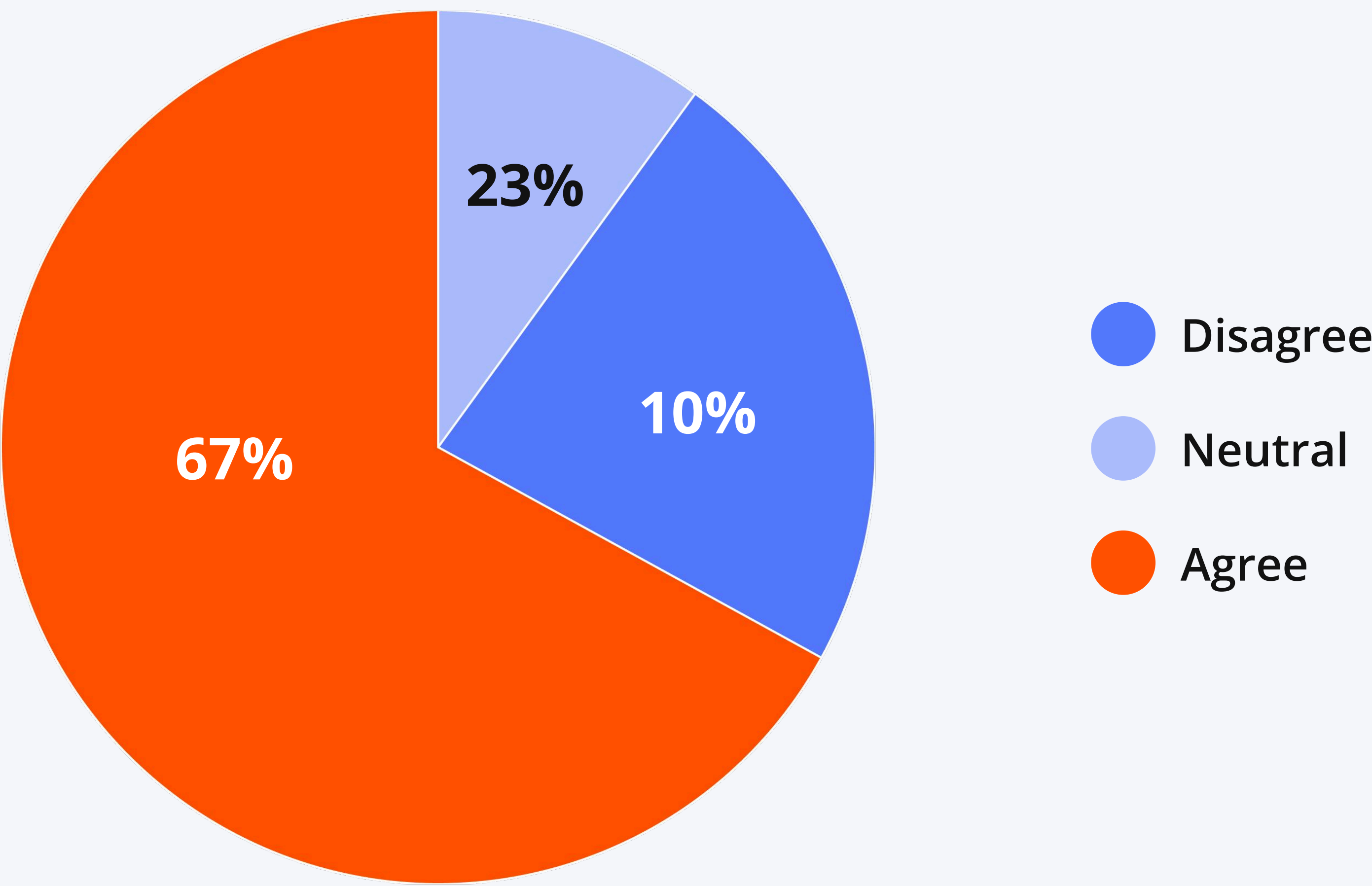


Improve Competitiveness with Larger Businesses



Question Asked: Here are a few statements that might describe how AI could benefit your business. How much do you agree or disagree that AI will benefit your business in this way?

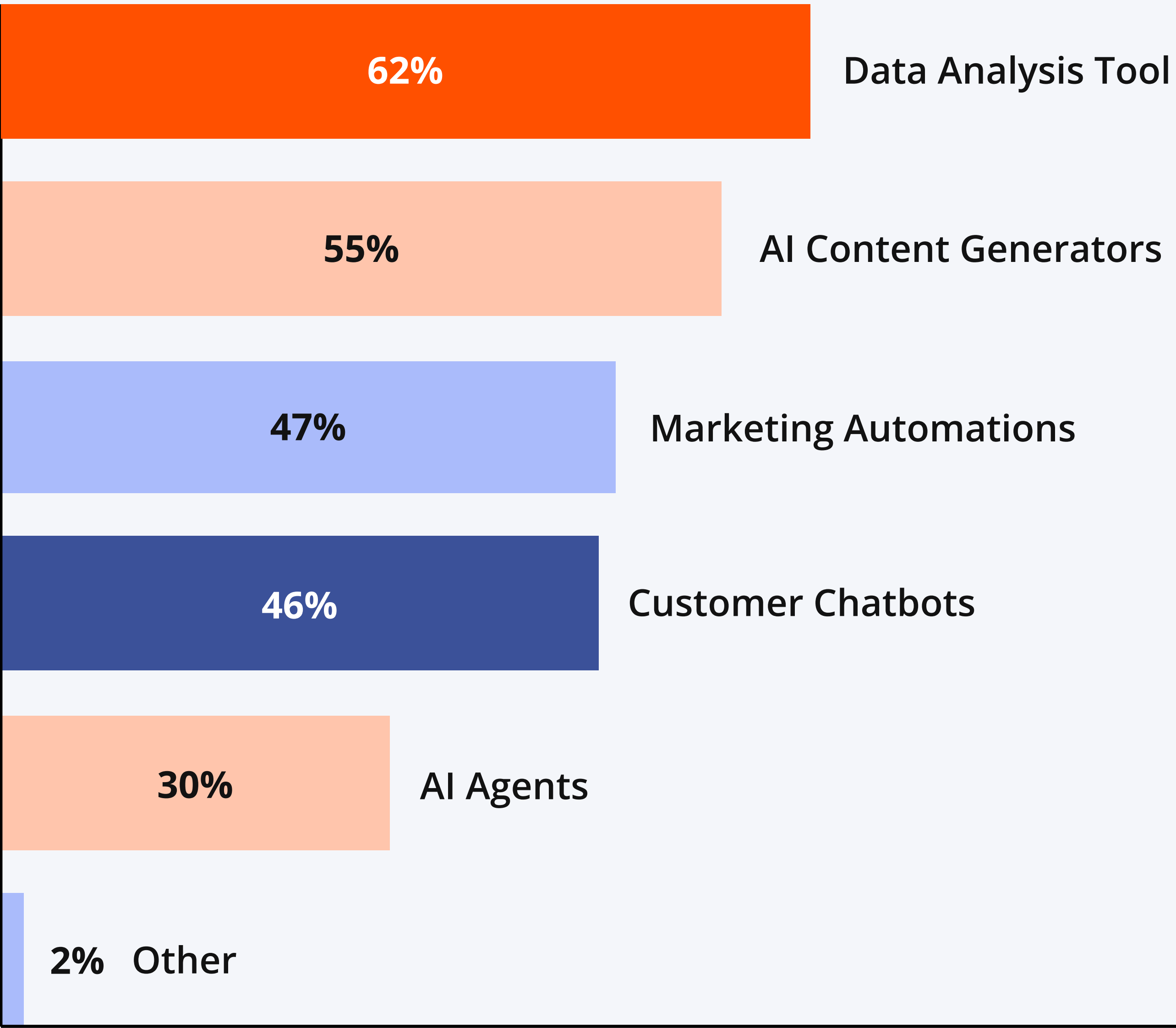
67%
agree that AI will take pressure off themselves and their staff



Types of AI SMBs are Using

Question Asked: Here are a few statements that might describe how AI could benefit your business. Do you agree that AI will benefit your business in this way?

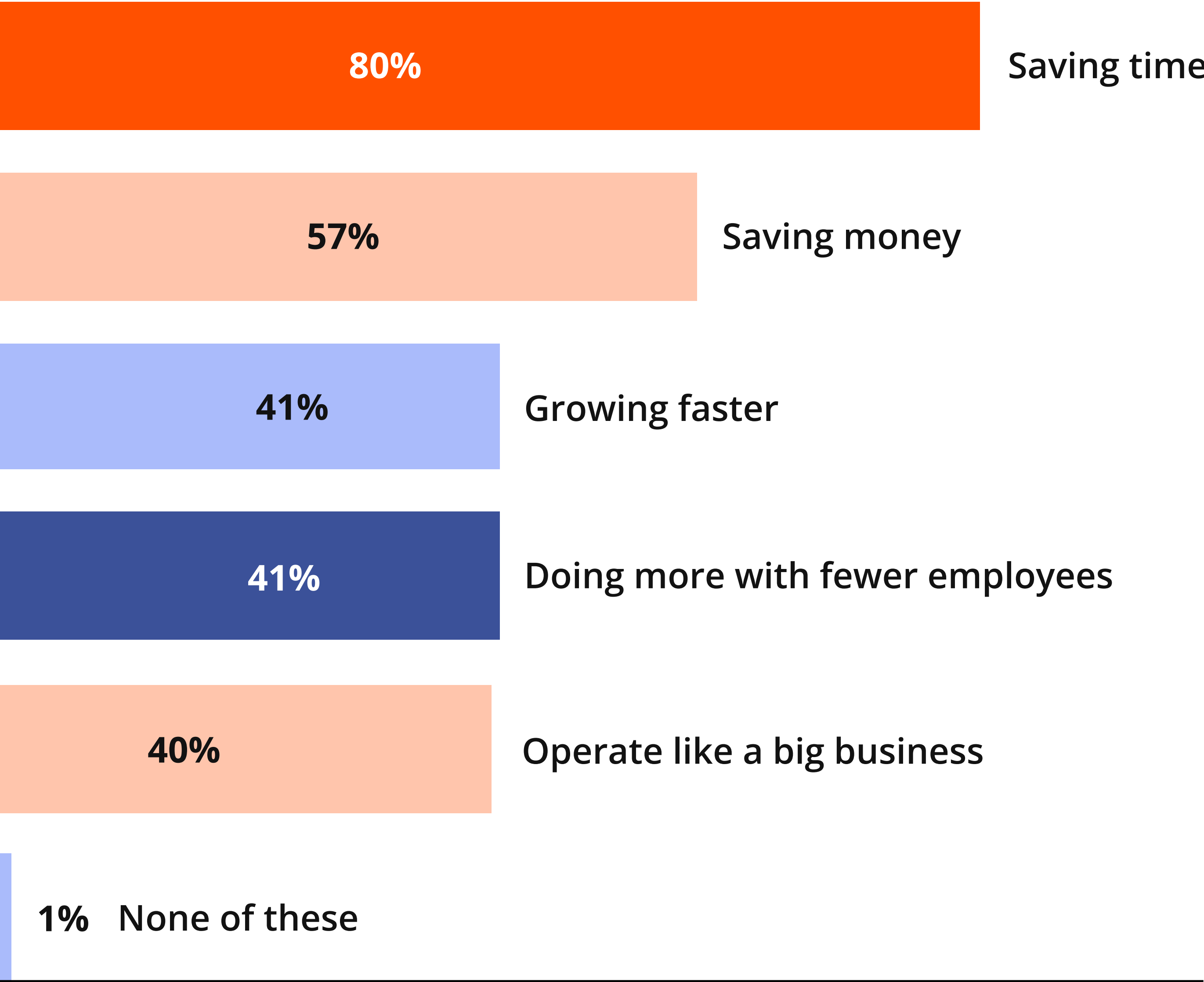
Data analysis
and content
generation are
top use cases.



Benefits of AI

Question Asked: Do you agree that AI will benefit your business in this way?

Saving time far outweighs saving money when it comes to AI's benefits to SMBs.

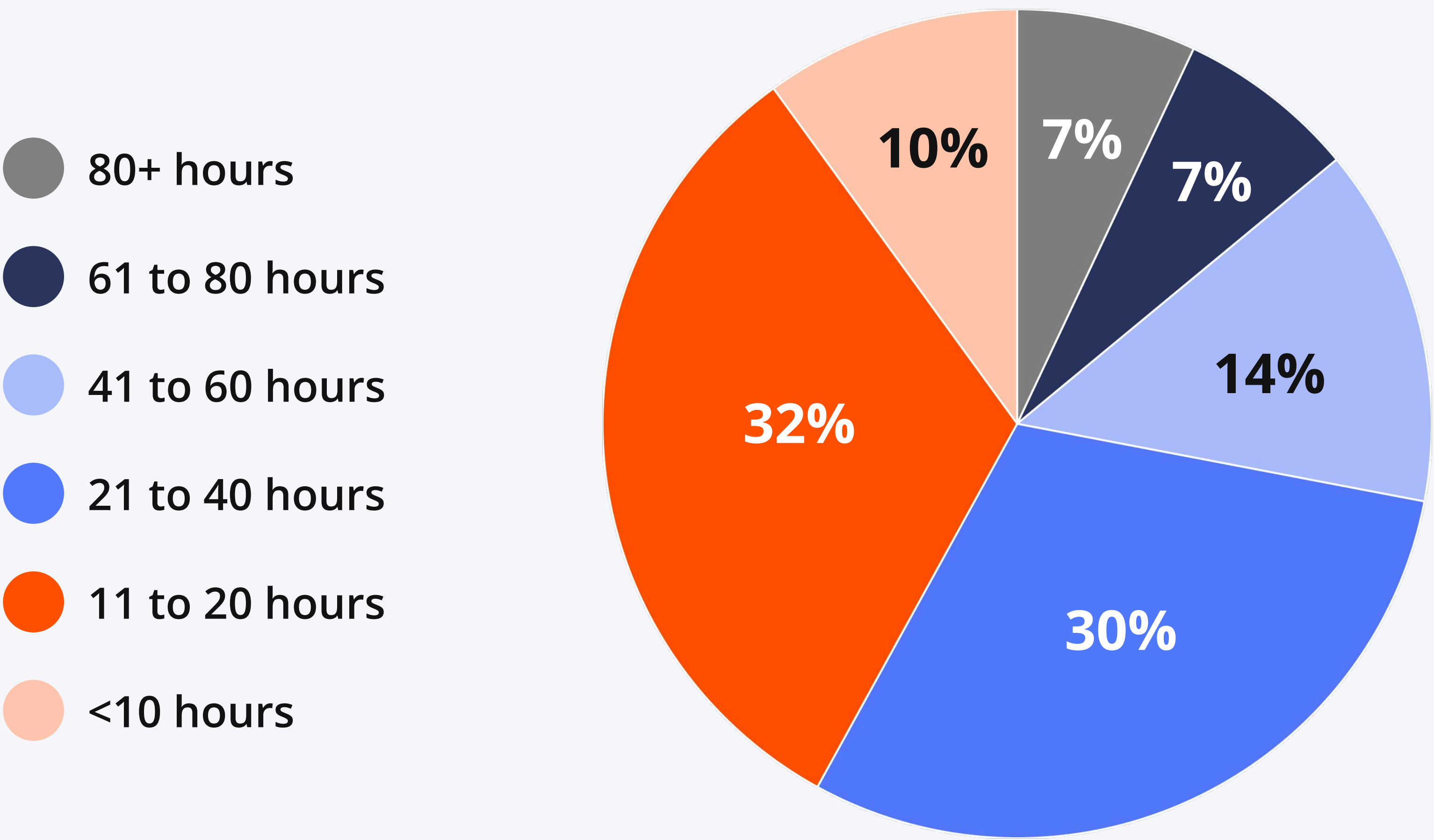


Time Saved and How it Was Used

Most save between 11-20 hours. More than half are using that time to get new customers.

Time Saved

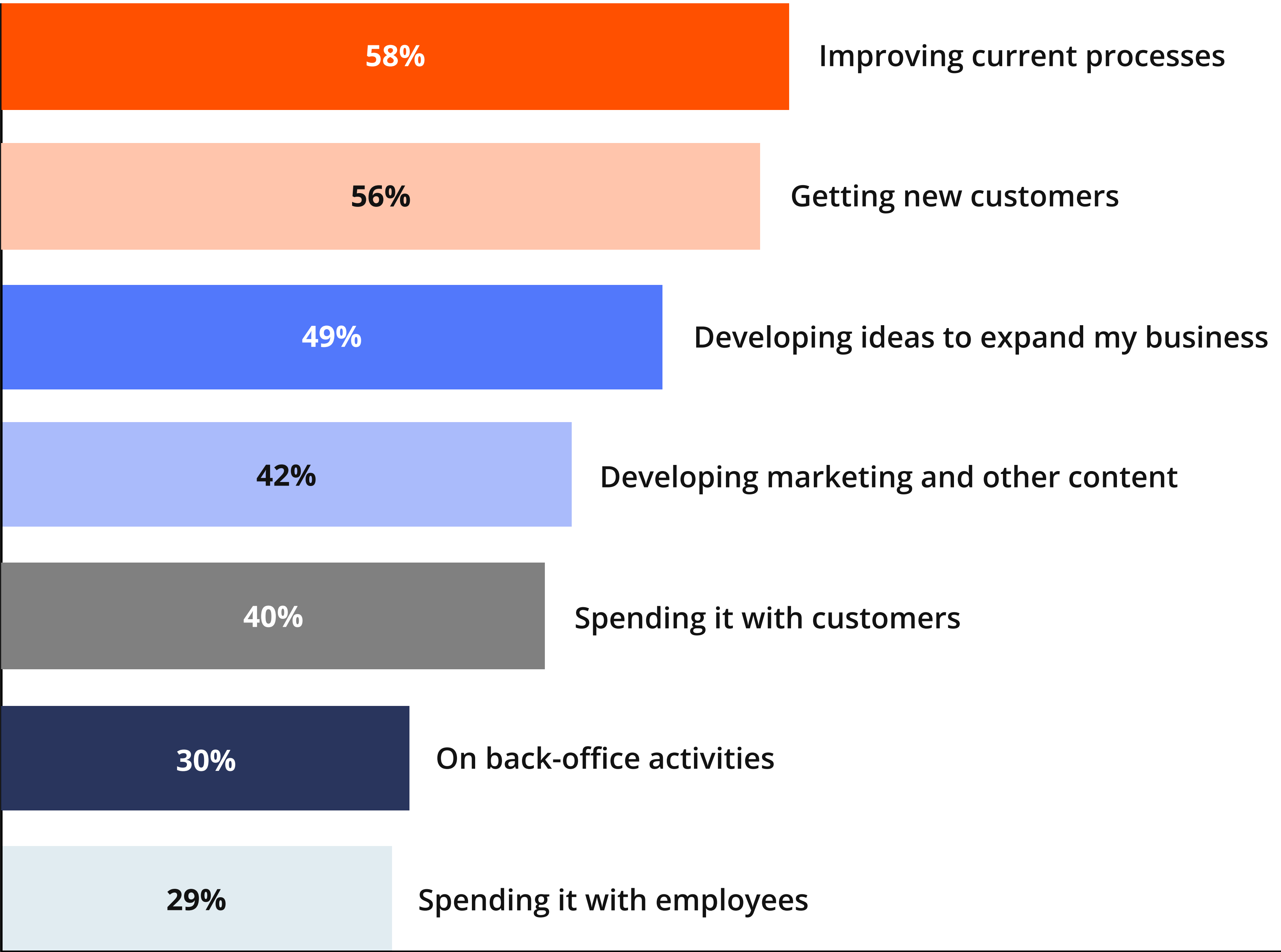
Question Asked: On average, how much time do you think AI saves your business each month?

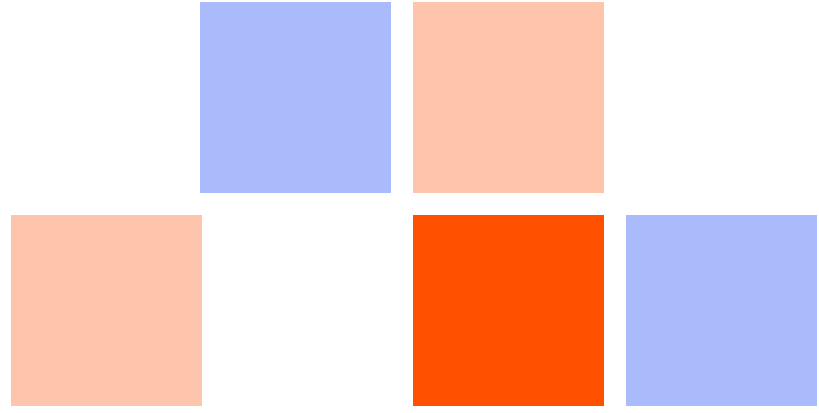


Most saved
between
**11-20
hours**

How Time Was Used

Question Asked: How are you using the time that AI saves your business?



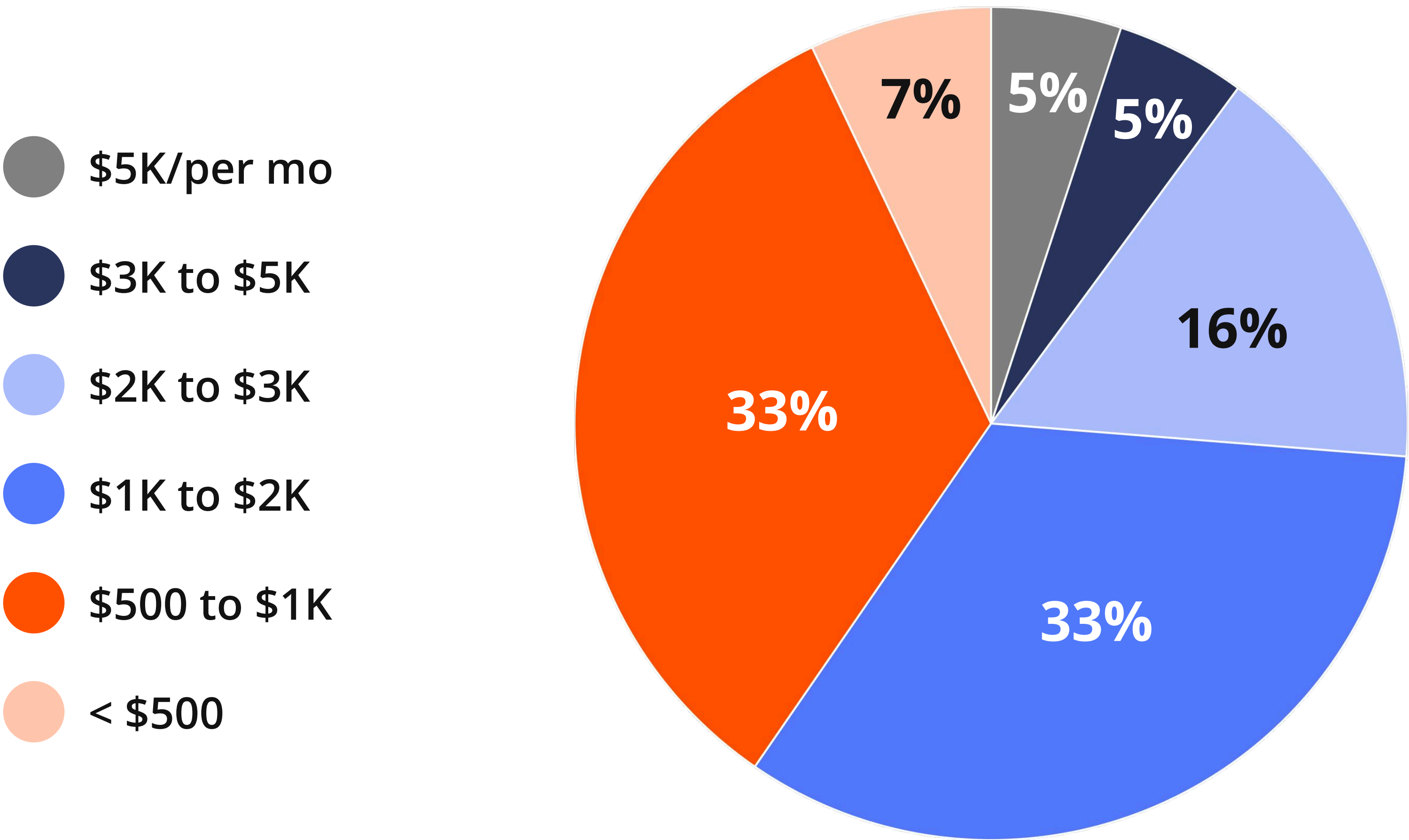


Money Saved and How it Was Used

Most save between \$500-\$2K. More than half use that money on additional marketing and advertising.

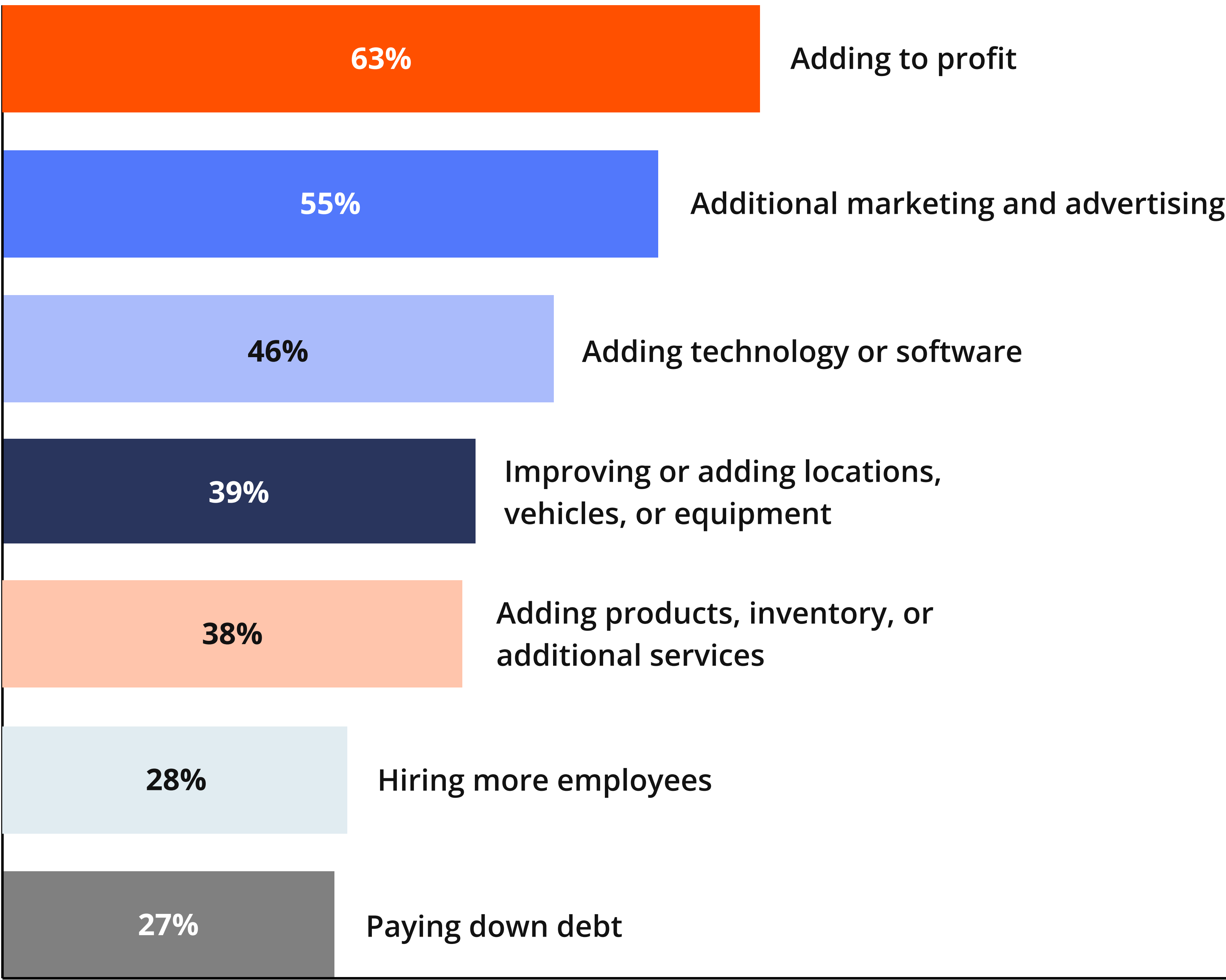
Money Saved

Question Asked: On average, how much money do you think AI saves your business per month?



How Money Was Used

Question Asked: How are you using the money that AI saves your business?



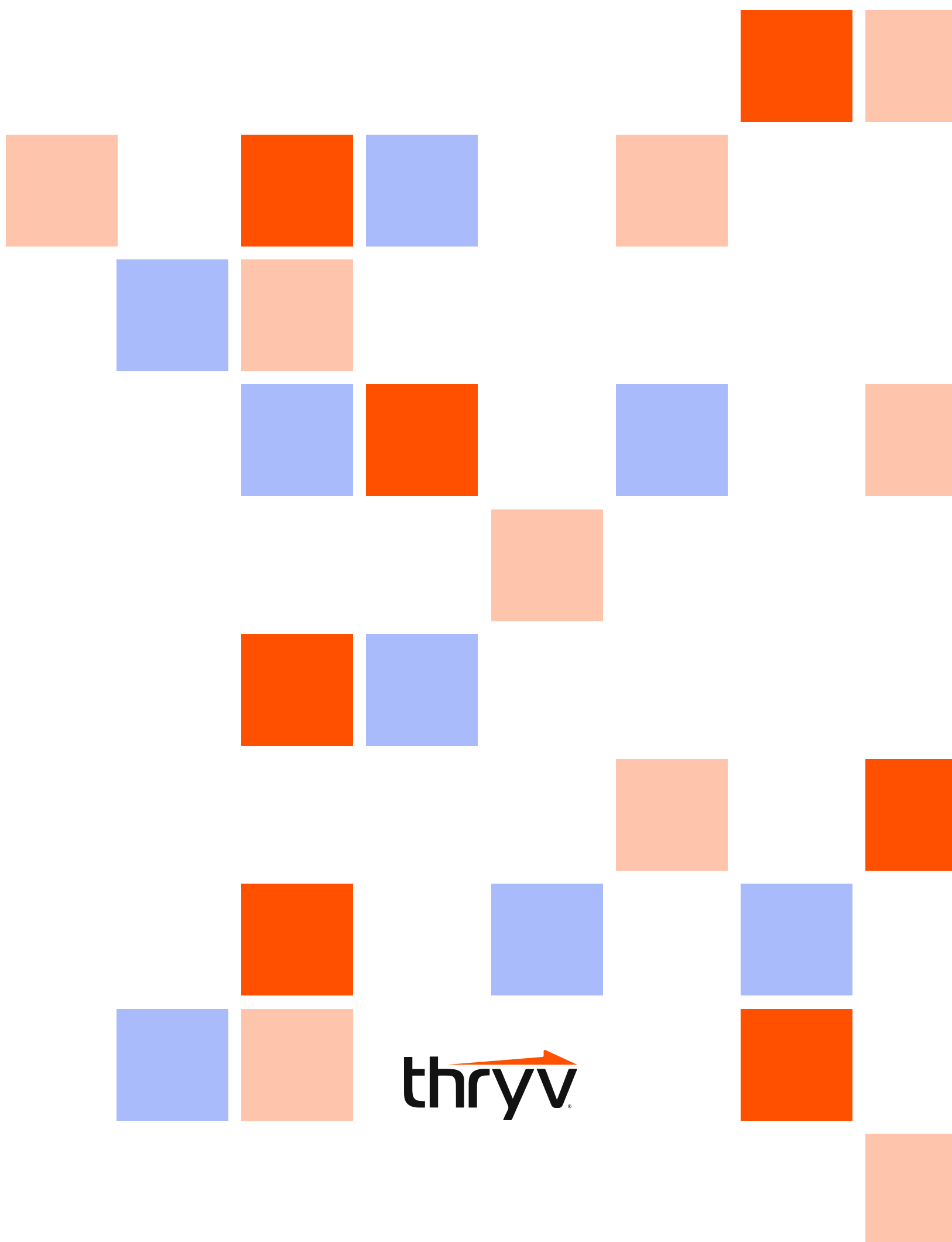
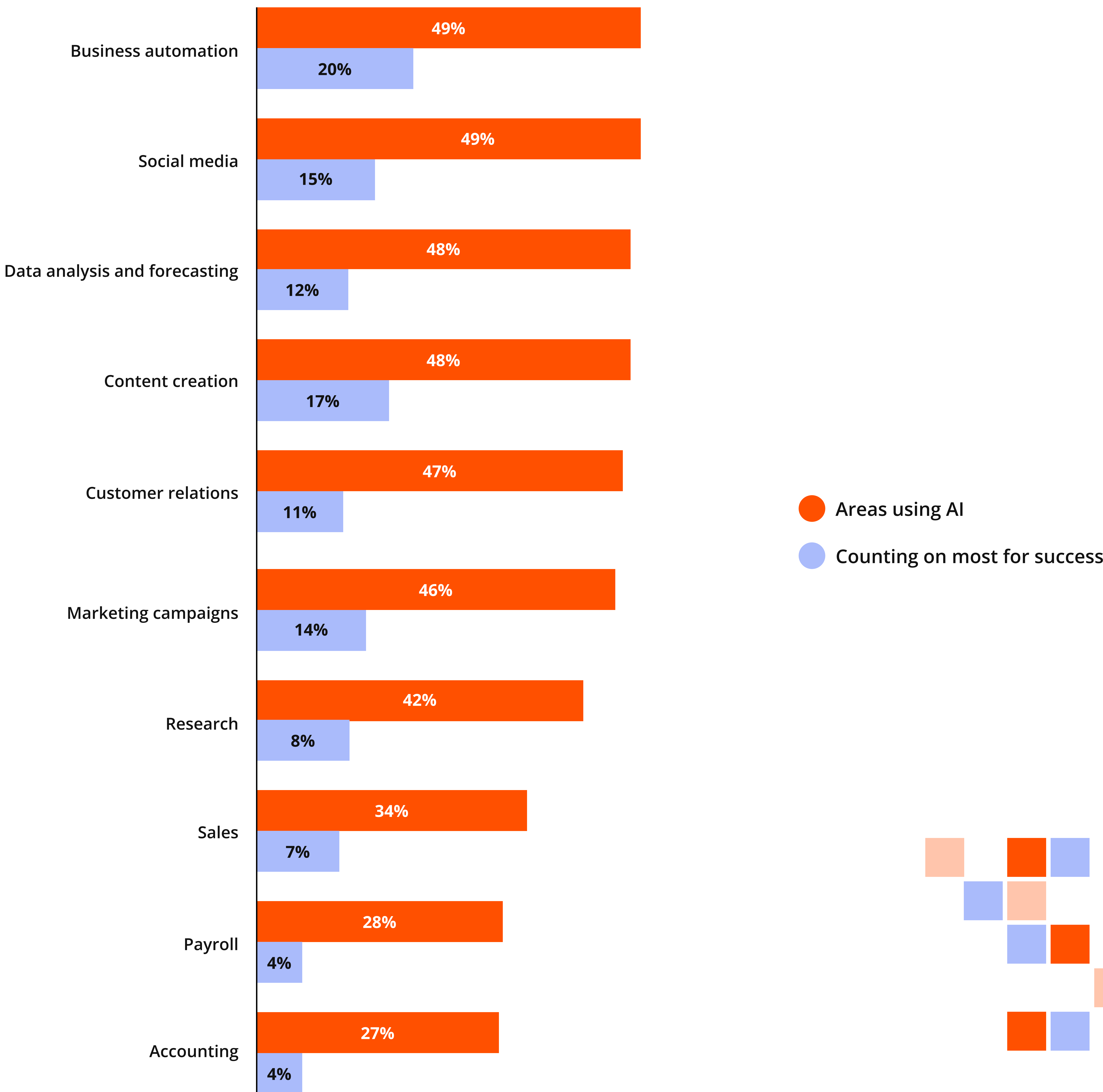
More than half
used that money
on additional
marketing and
advertising.

Business Areas Where SMBs are Using AI and Perceived Importance to Their Success

On average, SMBs incorporated AI into 2.3 areas of their business. Business automation and content creation were seen as most helpful to their business success.

Question Asked: What areas of your business have incorporated AI?

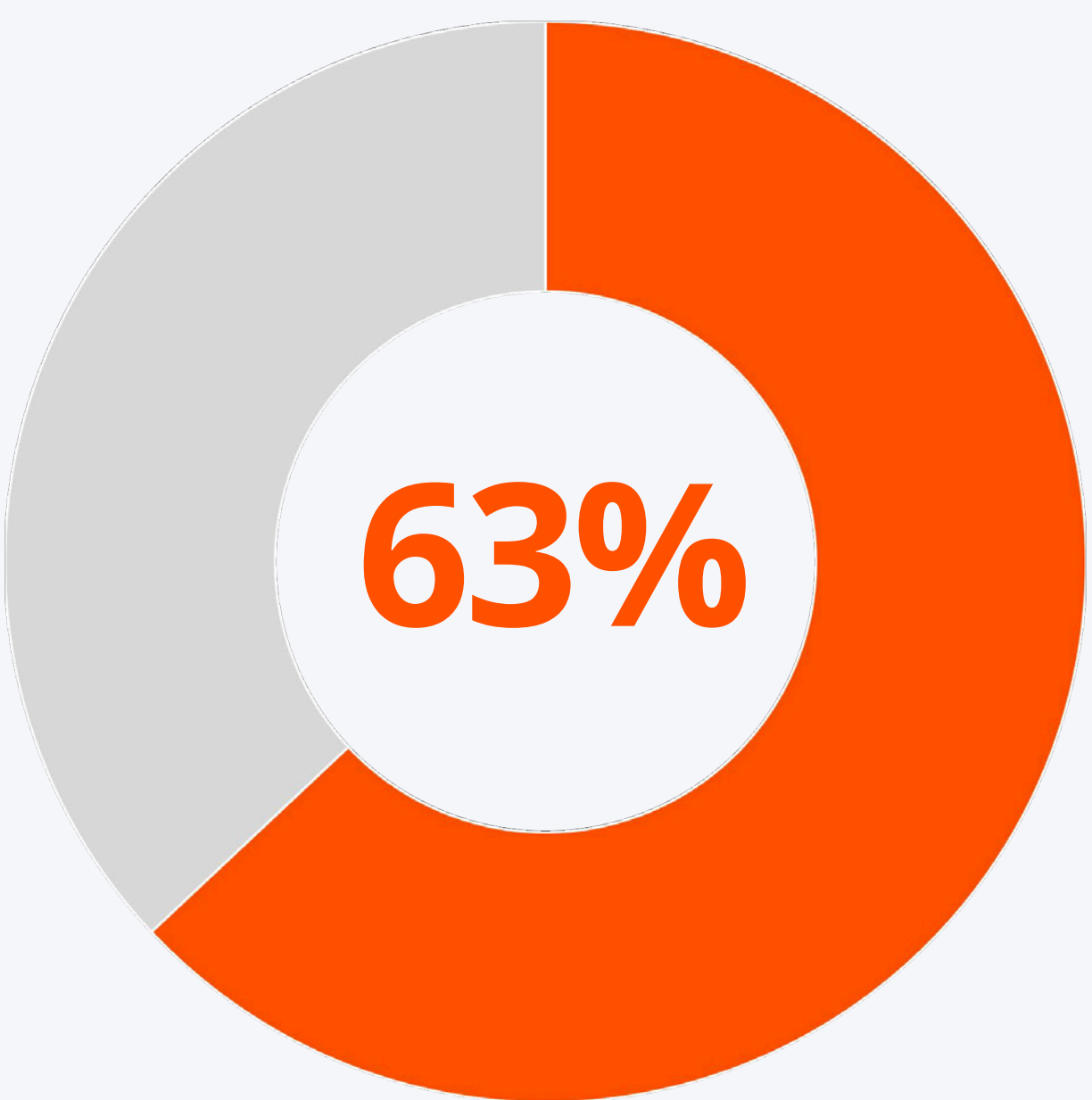
Question Asked: Which area are you counting on AI the most to help your business succeed?



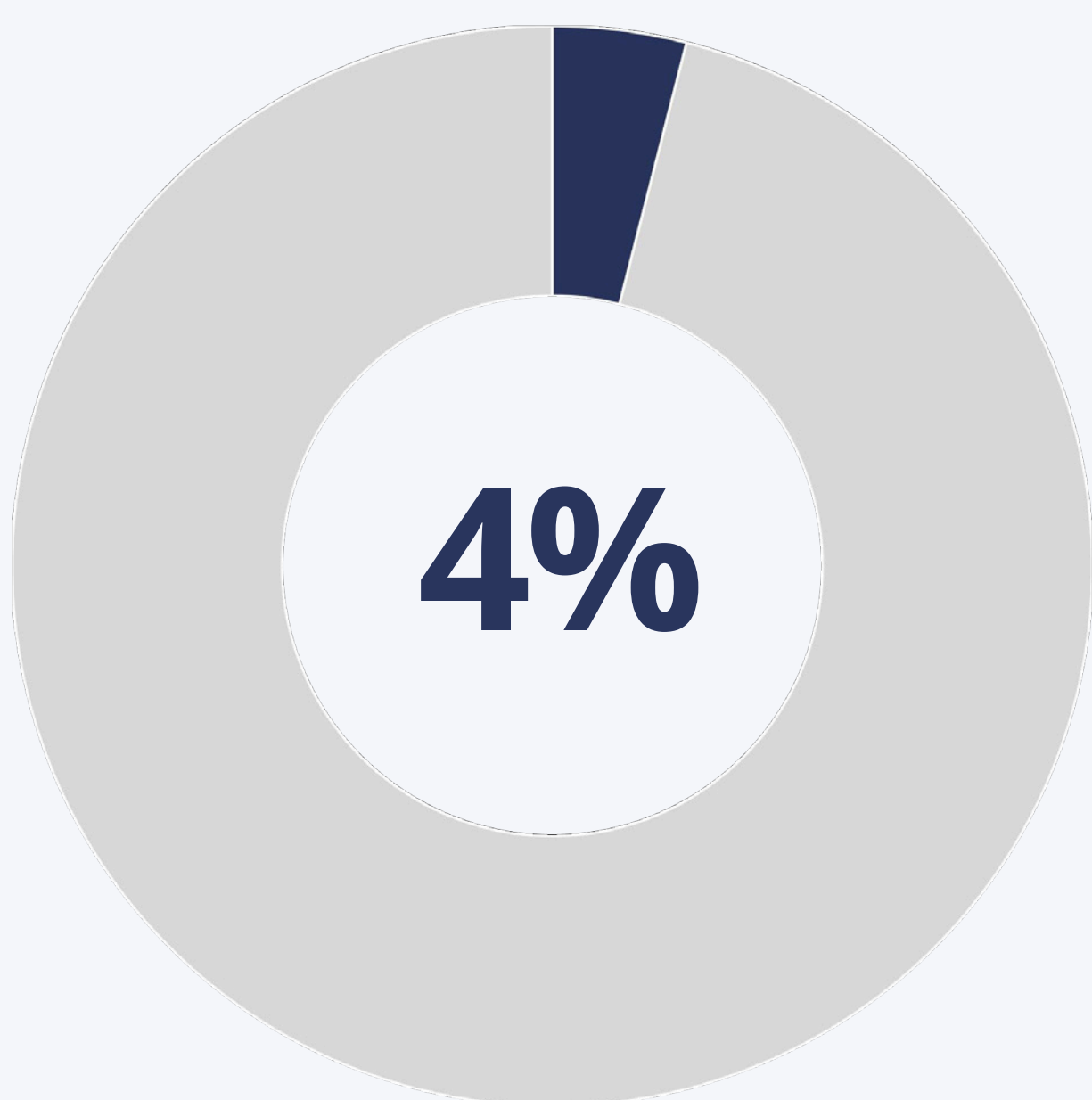
How Often SMBs Use AI

**More than half
use AI daily**

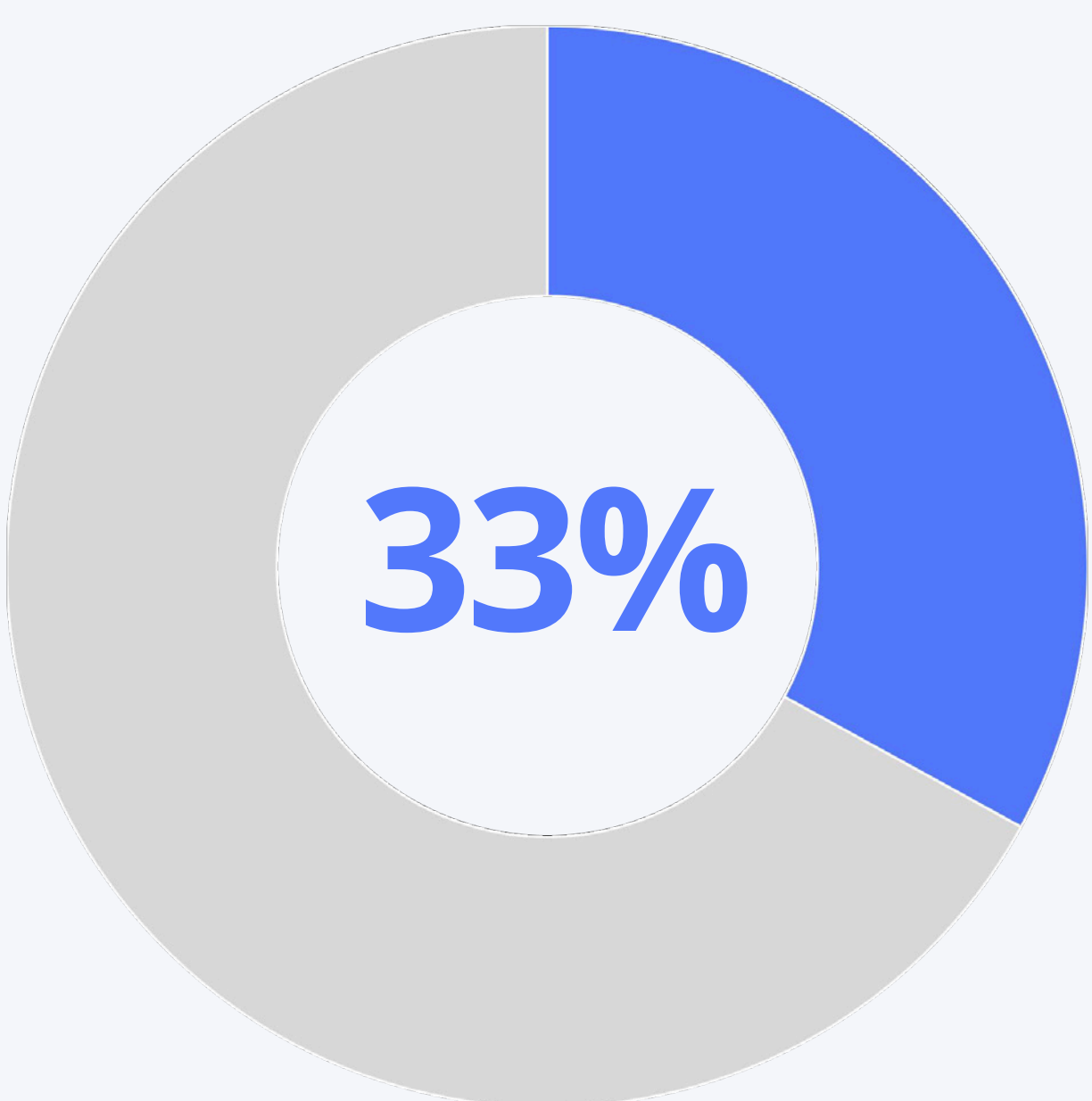
Question Asked: How often are you using AI?



Daily



Monthly

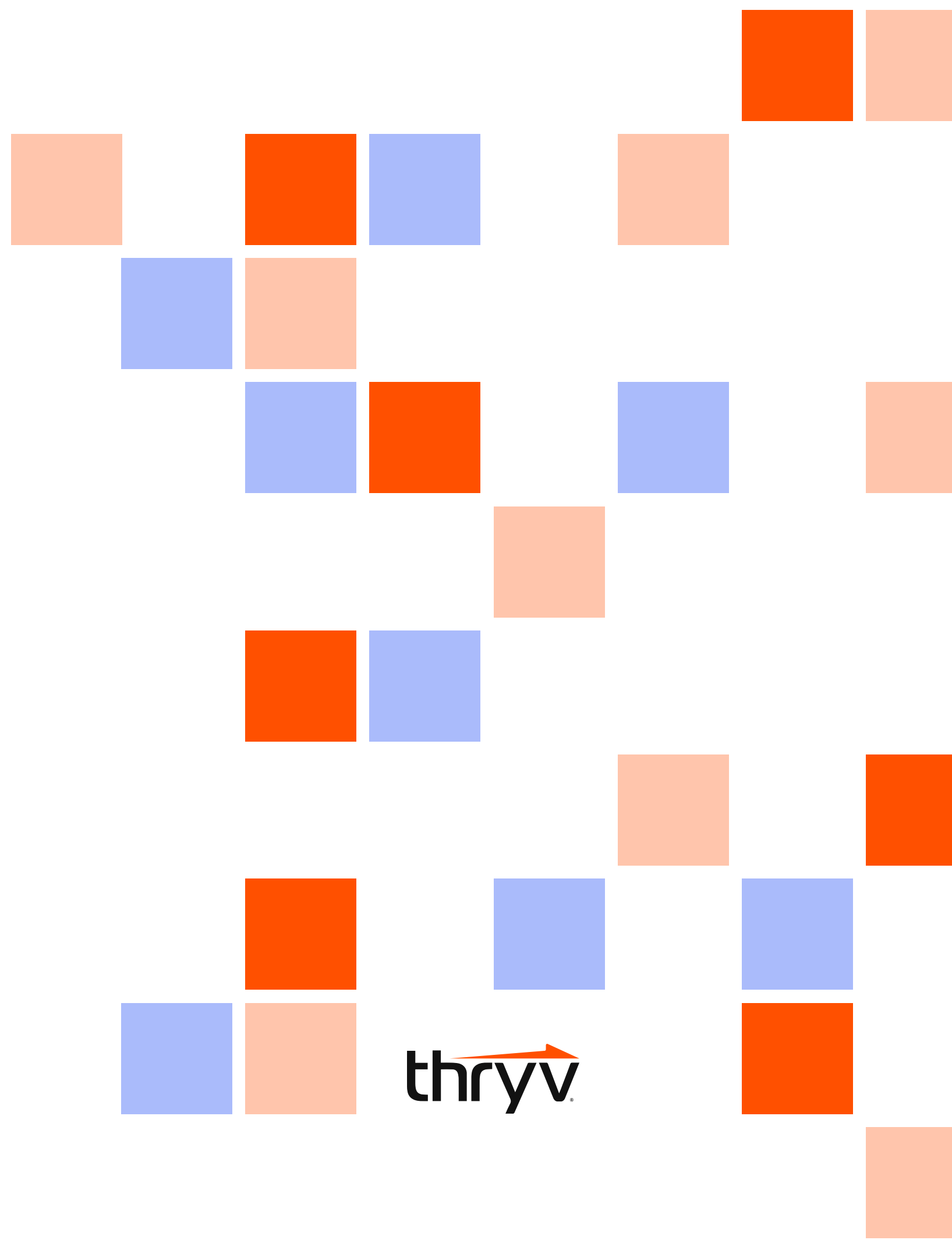
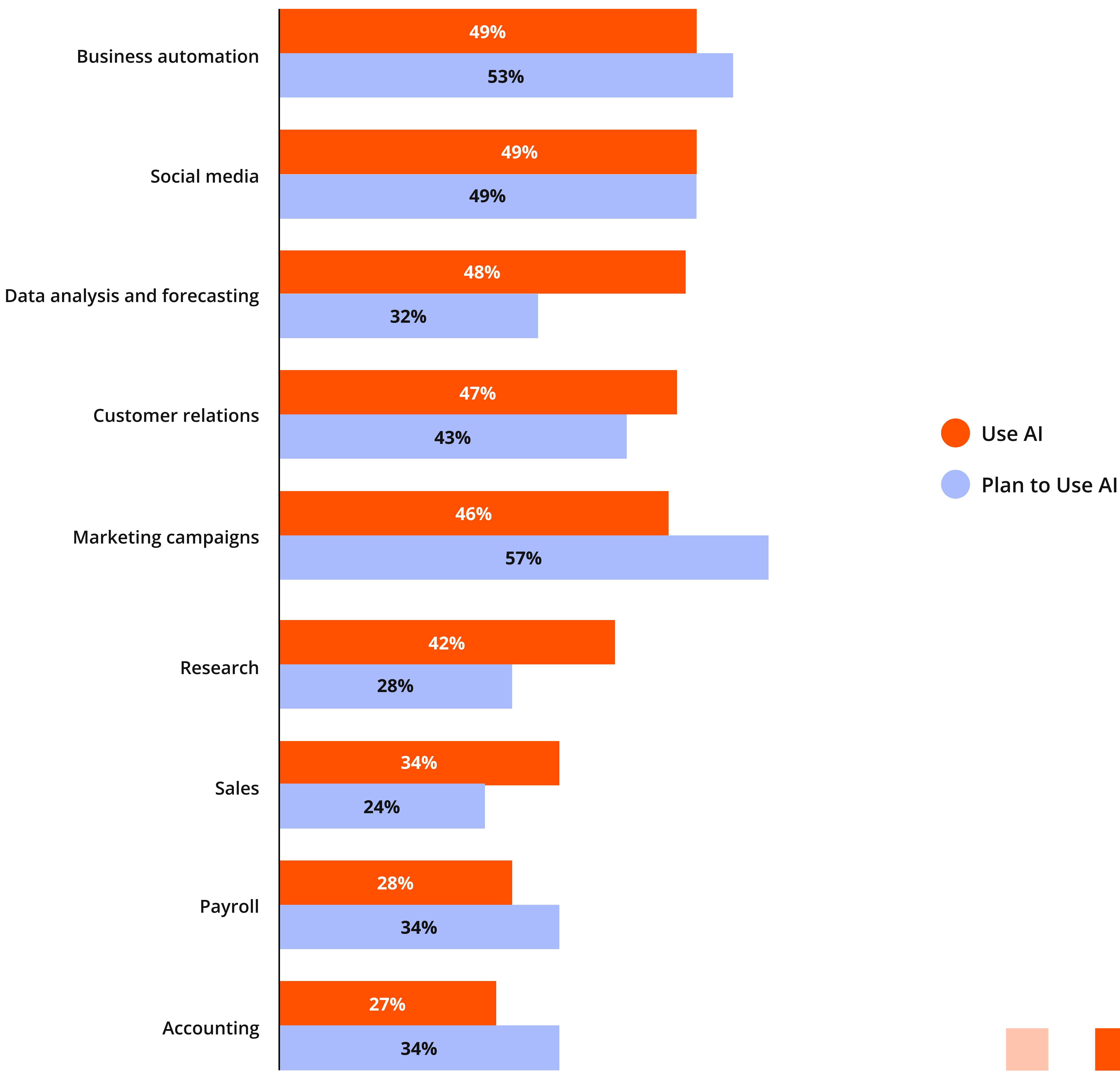


Weekly

Business Areas Where SMBs Use or Plan to Use AI

The biggest planned increase in AI usage is in marketing campaigns (57%).

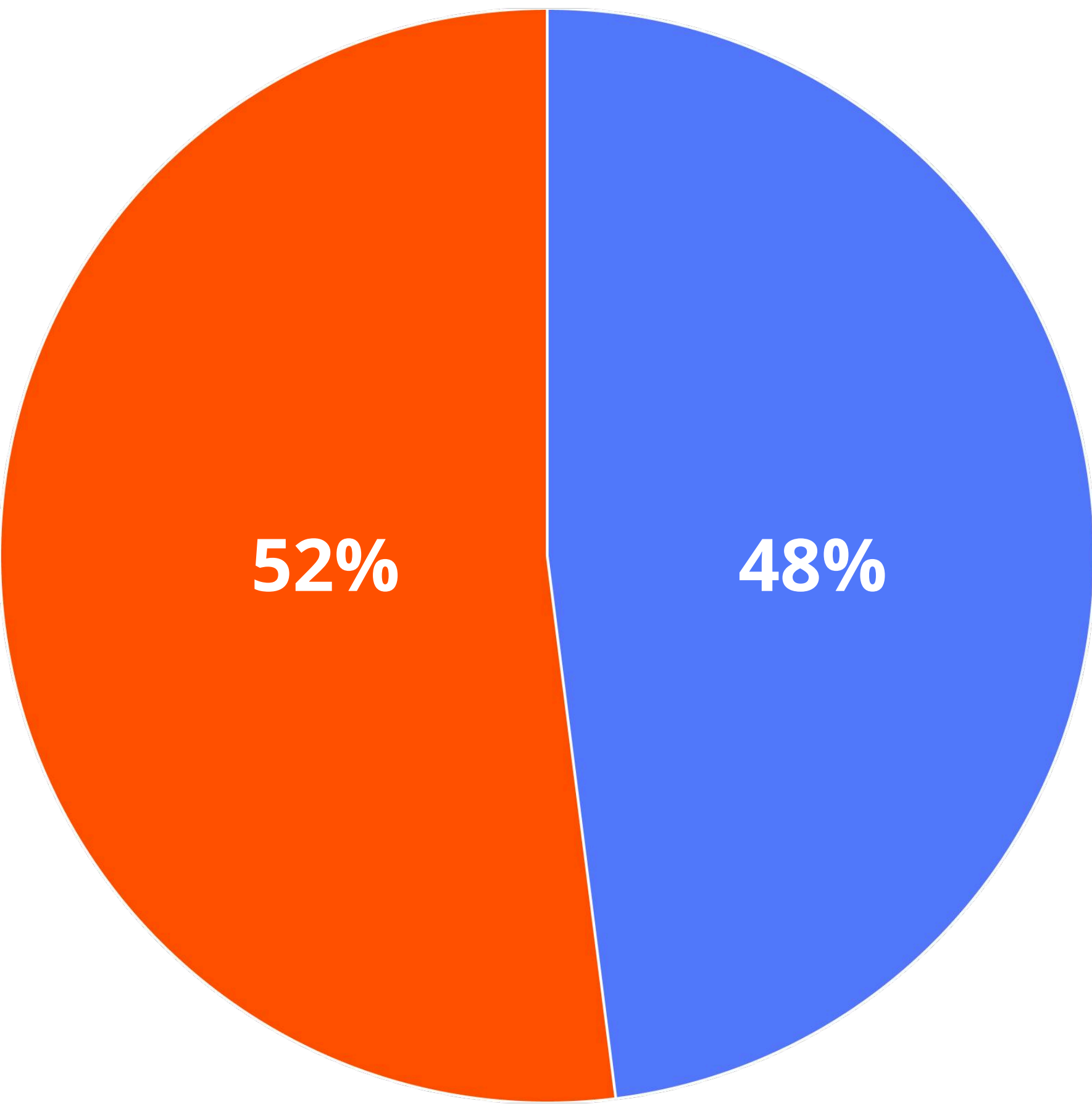
Question Asked: What areas of your business have incorporated AI?



Timing of Adoption for Non-Users

Question Asked: When do you think you will begin to incorporate AI into your business?

Of those not currently using but planning to use AI, almost half say they'll do it by the end of the year.

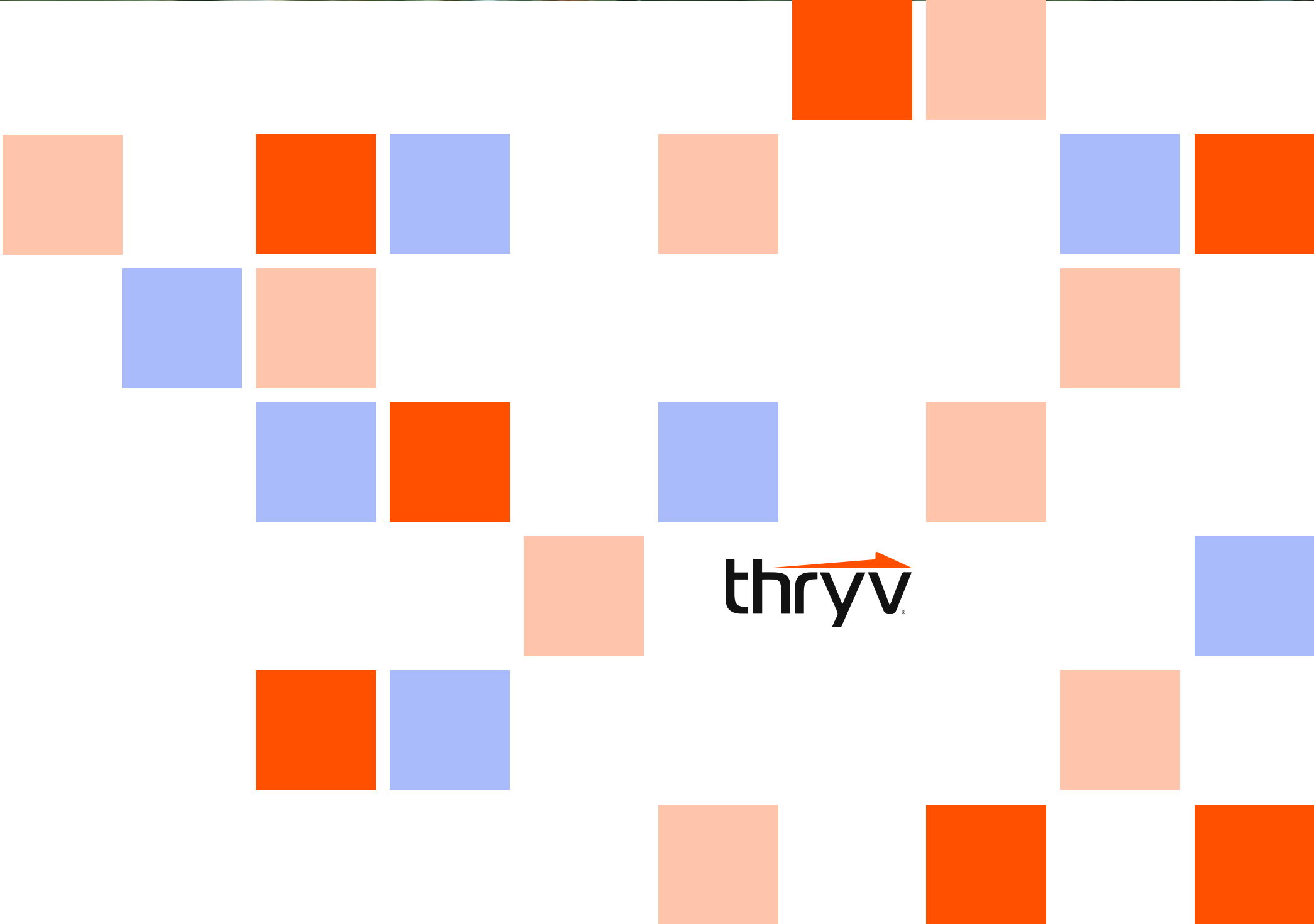
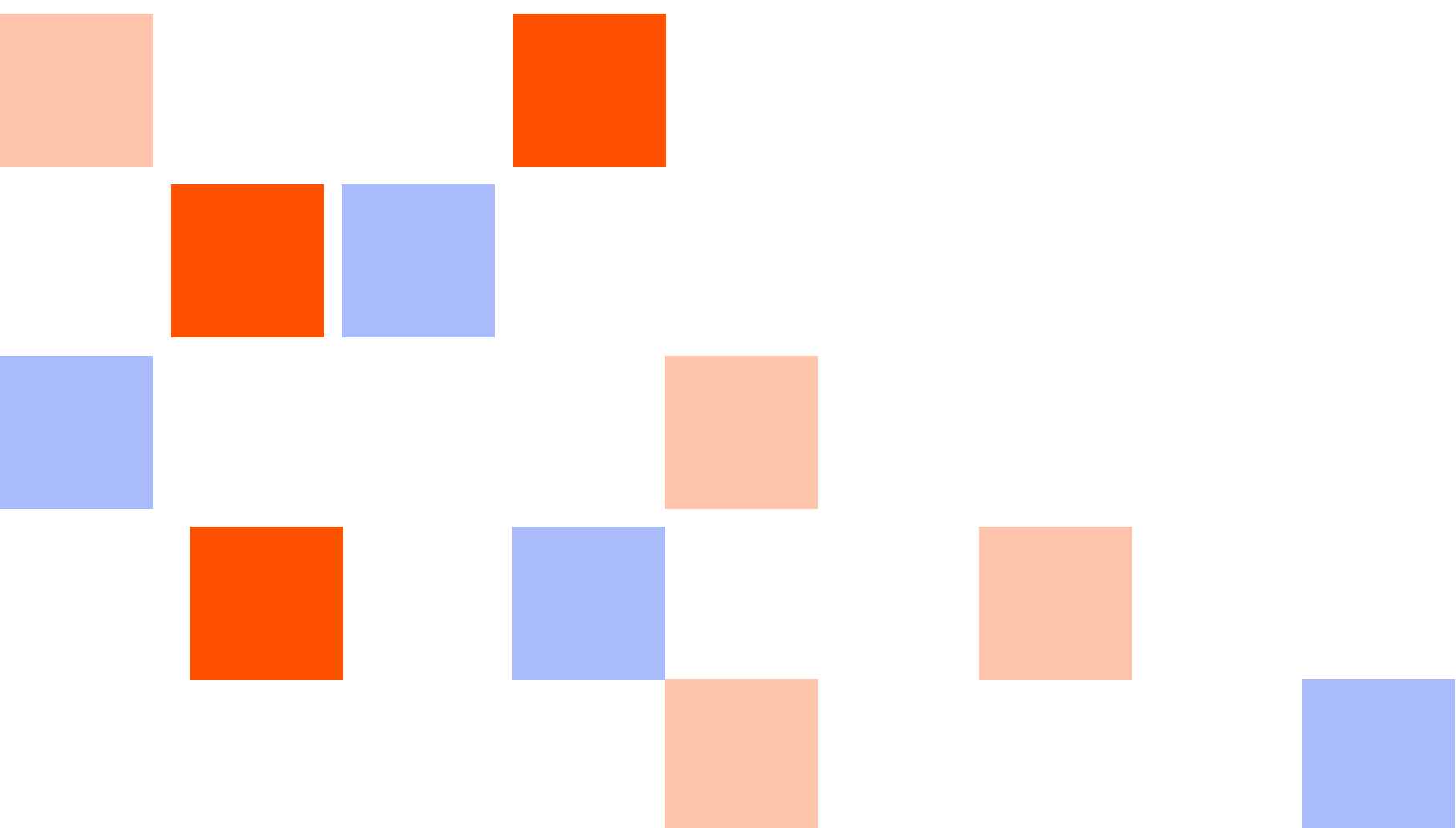


- Before the end of 2025
- 2026 or later



Survey Methodology

Data was collected from 540 small business respondents between May 4 and May 14, 2025. Respondents are decision-makers for their business and are aged 21 or older. Respondents have been in business for one year or more, have 1 to 100 employees, and report revenue ranging from \$100k to \$9.9 million.





About Thryv

Thryv is a leading marketing and sales platform for small businesses that helps them get discovered online, land more sales, and grow efficiently.

More than 100K businesses globally use Thryv's AI-supported marketing and business automations to connect with customers and run and grow their business.

For more information on Thryv's AI-related offerings, visit thryv.com/features/ai-for-small-businesses/.

FIND OUT MORE

