

2022 State of Multilingual Collaboration

The Definitive Guide to Interpretation and
Translation Usage for Multilingual
Meetings and Events

June 2022



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I. Overview

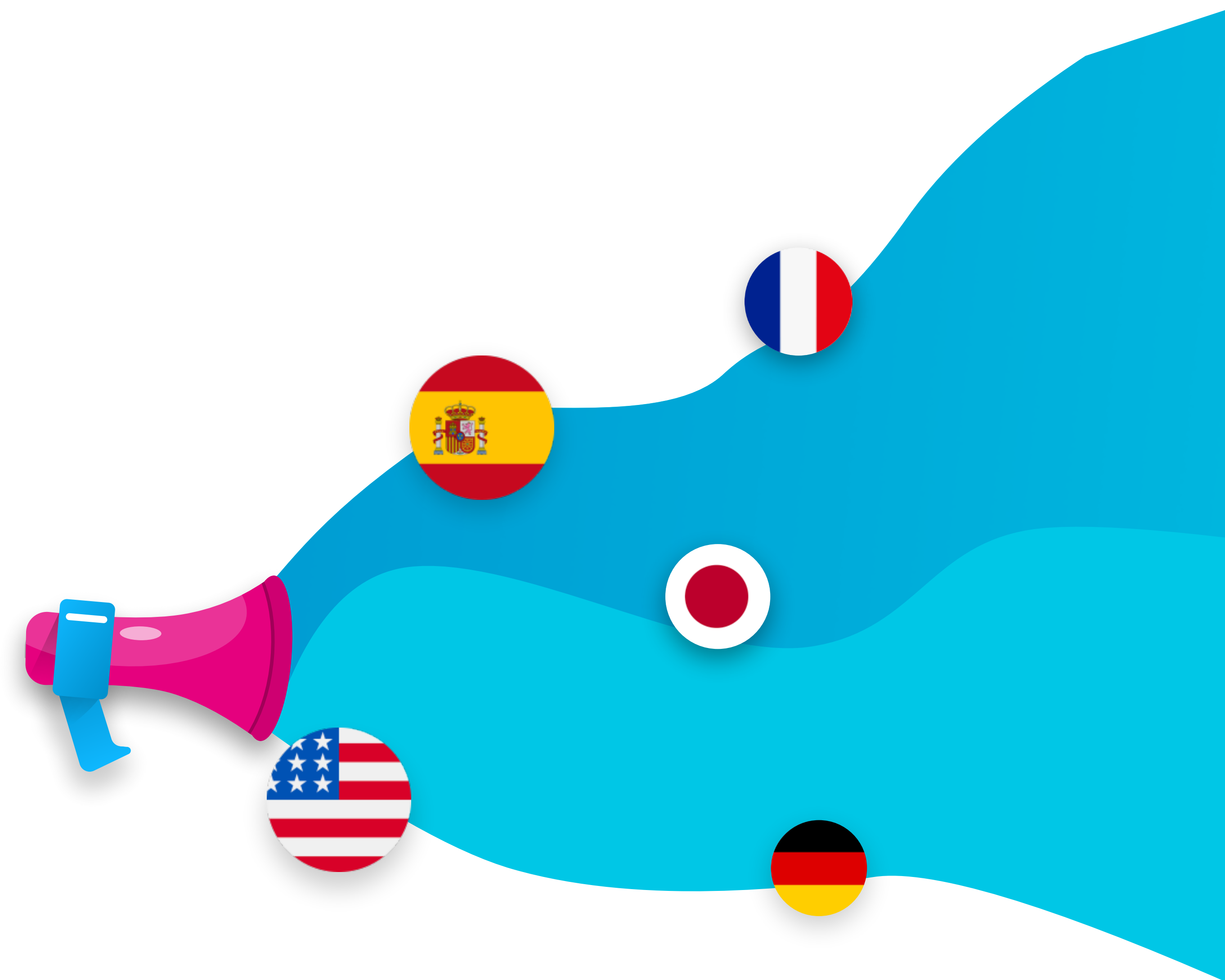
Multilingual Meeting and Event Collaboration Challenges

Most organizations are global with a wide range of multilingual constituents, including employees, customers, partners, vendors, members, and citizens. This creates a big communication challenge since the language spoken at meetings and events is often not the preferred language for the audience. This leads to lower engagement, lack of inclusion, and lower productivity.



Traditional Interpretation Solutions

The multilingual collaboration challenge is sometimes solved by using human interpreters which is a good option for events planned months in advance and supported by large budgets and teams. But the logistical challenges and cost of human interpreters make this option unattractive for most organizations. The problem is compounded when there are multiple languages because each one requires an additional translator.



Interpretation Use, Trends, and Emerging Solutions

In order to better understand how companies are addressing multilingual meeting and event collaboration challenges, Wordly commissioned a comprehensive global study to identify current practices and future industry trends.

Key Findings

Sales and Marketing professionals responsible for planning and managing multilingual meetings and events want to increase inclusivity and engagement in order to reach more global employees, customers, and partners. Language barriers are recognized as an obstacle, even when participants speak some English. Human-powered interpretation solutions are still popular, but there is a growing demand for technology-powered solutions like AI-powered translation. Some key findings from the research are summarized below:

- **77% of Corporate Meeting and Event Planners Report an Increase in Multilingual Attendees (English is not their primary language) Over the Past Year - 72% Expect the Trend to Continue Next Year**
- **60% Typically See 6 or More Languages Spoken - 23% See 11 or More Languages**
- **95% of Corporate Meeting and Event Planners Have Some Experience Using Interpretation and Translation at Their Events - 76% Report Their Usage Is Increasing But 42% Have Limited or No Experience**
- **Interpretation Is Used at Both In-Person Events (79%) and Virtual Events (61%)**
- **Only 33% Report They Regularly Offer Interpretation. Top Barriers Include:**
 - Translator Scheduling Complexity (40%), Equipment Complexity (39%), Too Many Languages to Support (37%)
 - Apathy To Audience Needs — Believing Non-English Speakers Will Find a Way To Adapt or Elect Not to Attend (40%)
- **99% Interested In Technology To Solve Multilingual Collaboration Challenges - Top Capabilities Include:**
 - Easy for Attendees to Use (63%)
 - Supports All Languages Spoken (56%)
 - Enables Attendees to Listen to Audio or Read Captions (48%)
- **Top Attendee Benefits Include:**
 - Increased Inclusivity (65%)
 - Ability to Fully Focus on Content (60%)
 - Increased Understanding of Information (57%)
 - Increased Engagement (52%)
- **Top Company Benefits Include:**
 - Increased Attendee Satisfaction (49%)
 - Increased Event Attendance (49%)
 - Increased Attendee Comprehension (40%)
 - Reduced Complexity of Human Interpreter Solutions (38%)

We invite you to read the full report to learn more about interpretation usage for multilingual meetings and events as well as insights into future solution requirements.

II. Methodology

Dimensional Research was commissioned to conduct the research. Independent sources of meeting and event managers were invited to participate in an online survey. Responses were captured between April 15 and 29, 2022.

A total of 203 qualified participants completed the survey. All worked in sales or marketing roles at a company with more than 500 employees. All had direct responsibility for events with more than 100 attendees where more than 10% of participants did not speak English as a first language. The survey was conducted in both the US and UK with respondents from a wide range of industries and company sizes.

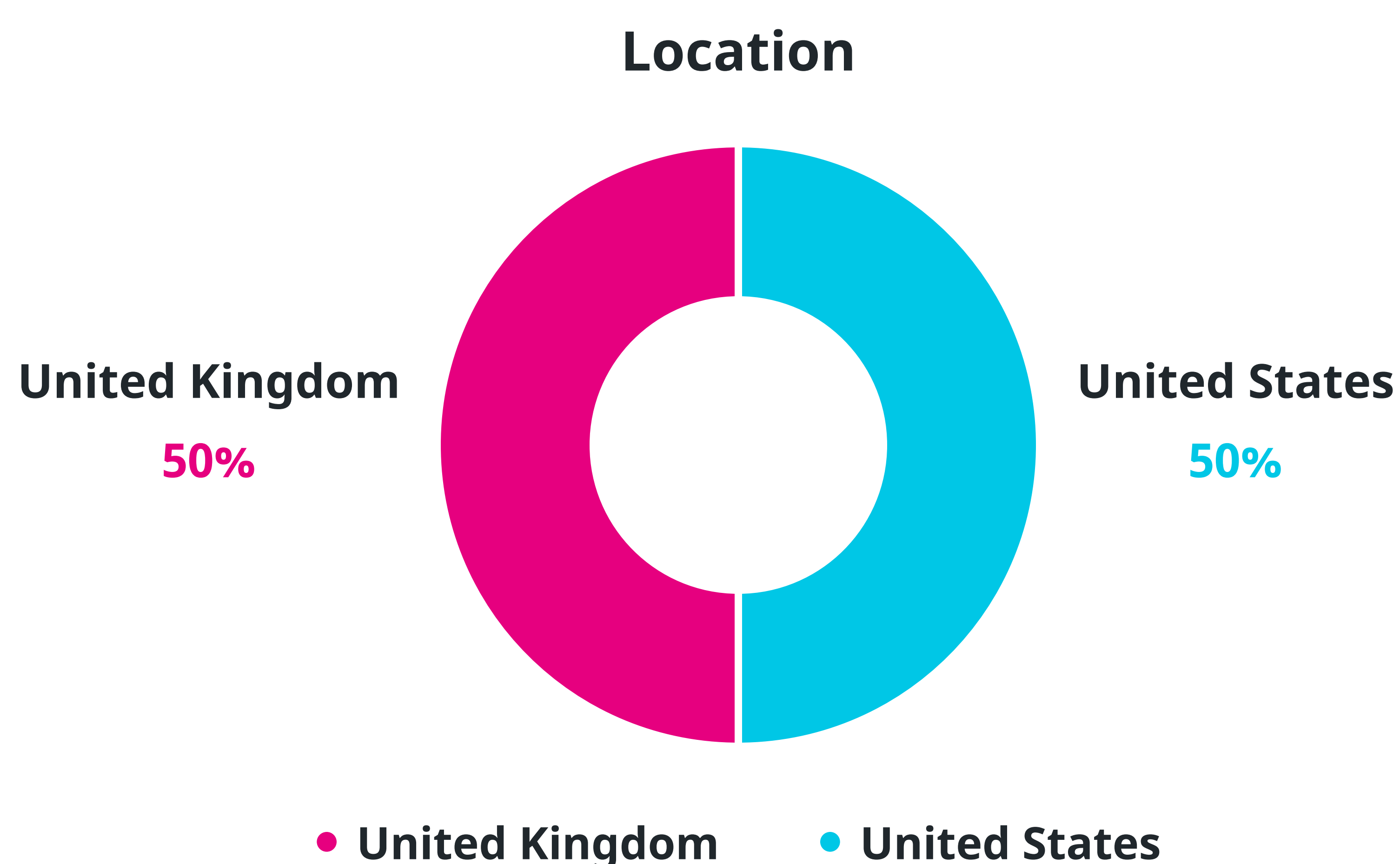


Note that due to rounding, some numbers presented may not add up to 100%.

III. Demographics

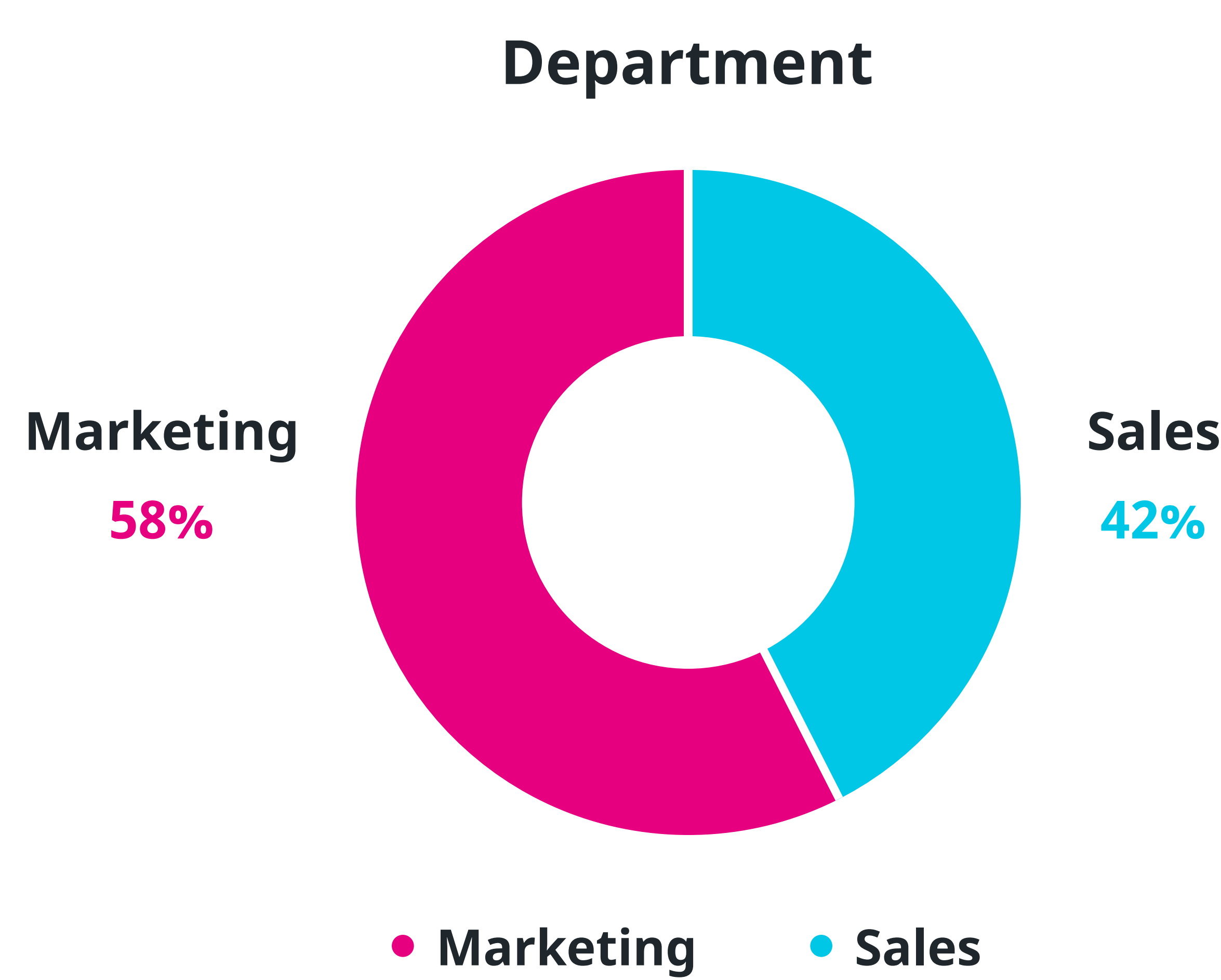
Company Location

The respondents were equally split between the US and UK. Future research projects encompassing additional countries and languages are being planned.



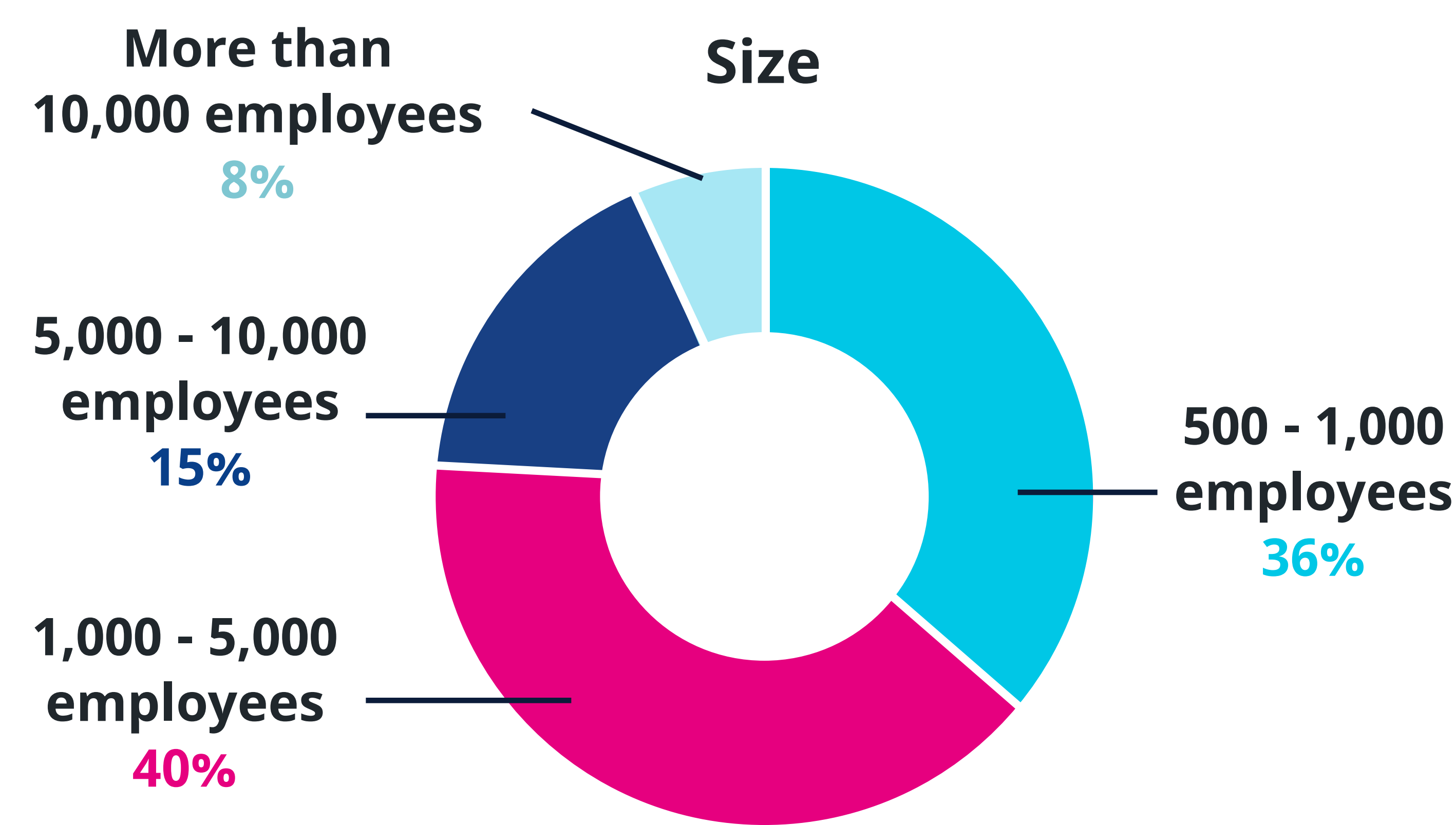
Company Department

Respondents were split between Marketing and Sales functions. Marketing teams regularly organize customer webinars, user group conferences, workshops, and a wide range of other in-person and virtual events. Sales teams regularly organize Sales Kickoffs (SKO) and Quarterly Business Reviews (QBR), customer onboarding, partner training, and a wide range of other in-person and virtual events.



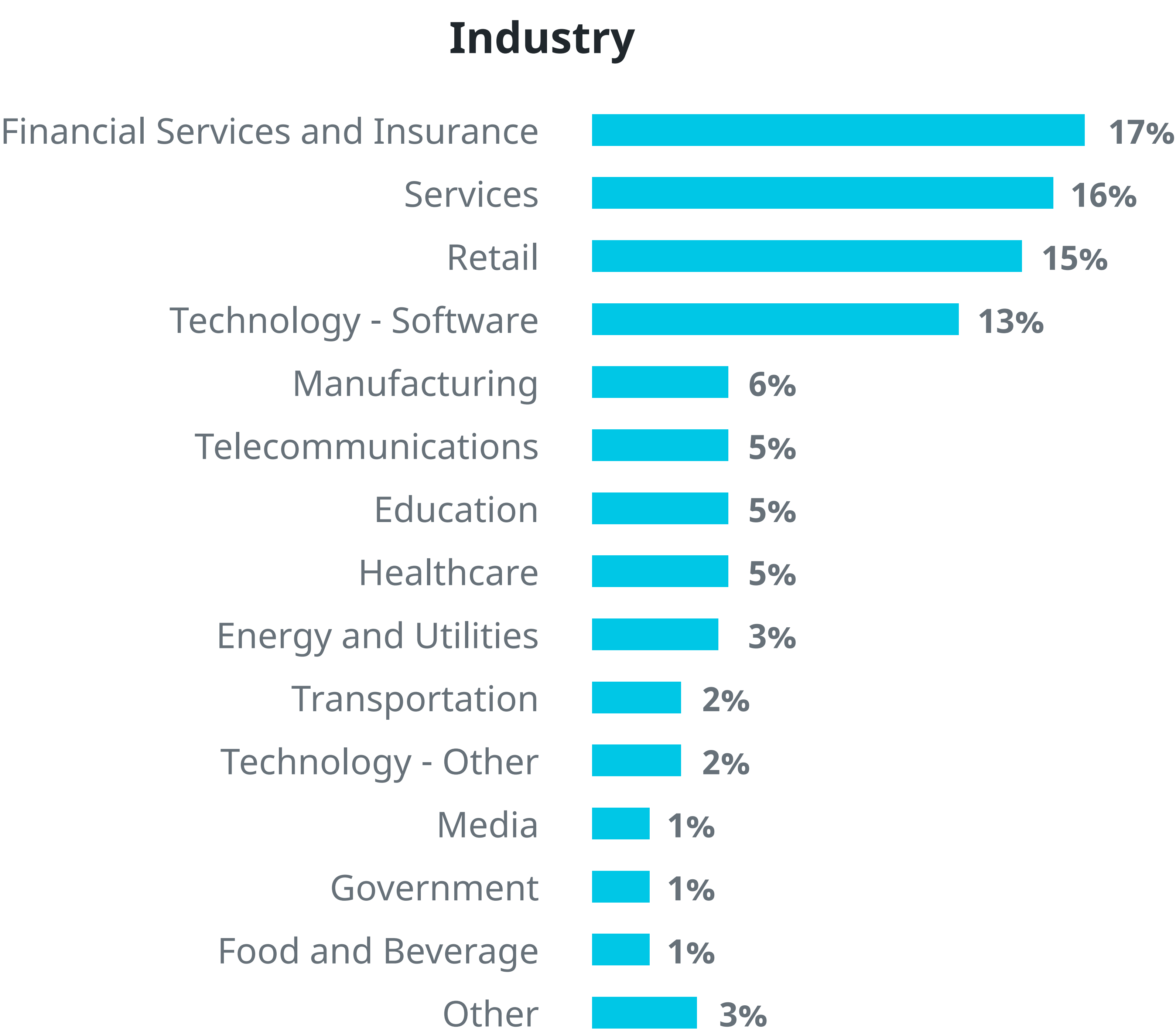
Company Size

Respondents were invited from companies ranging from 500 to 10,000+ employees.



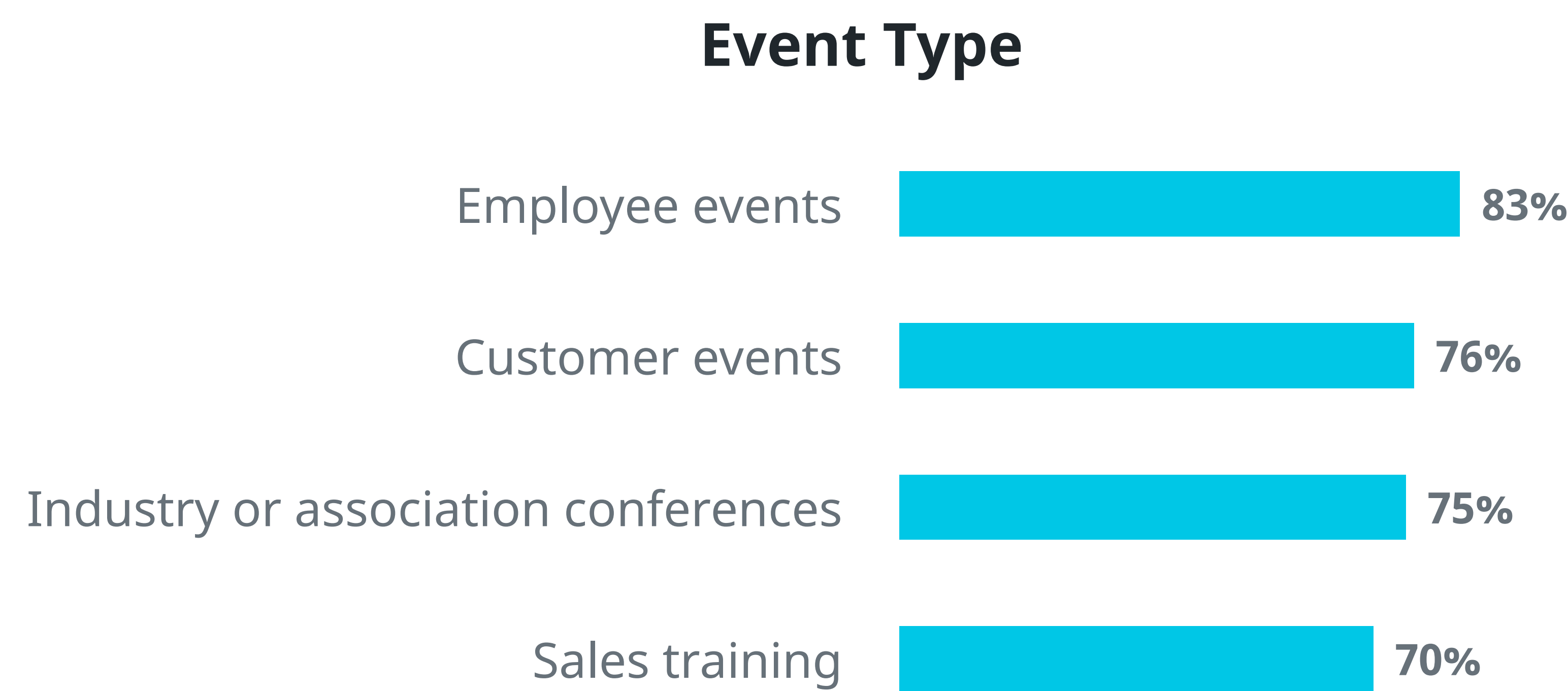
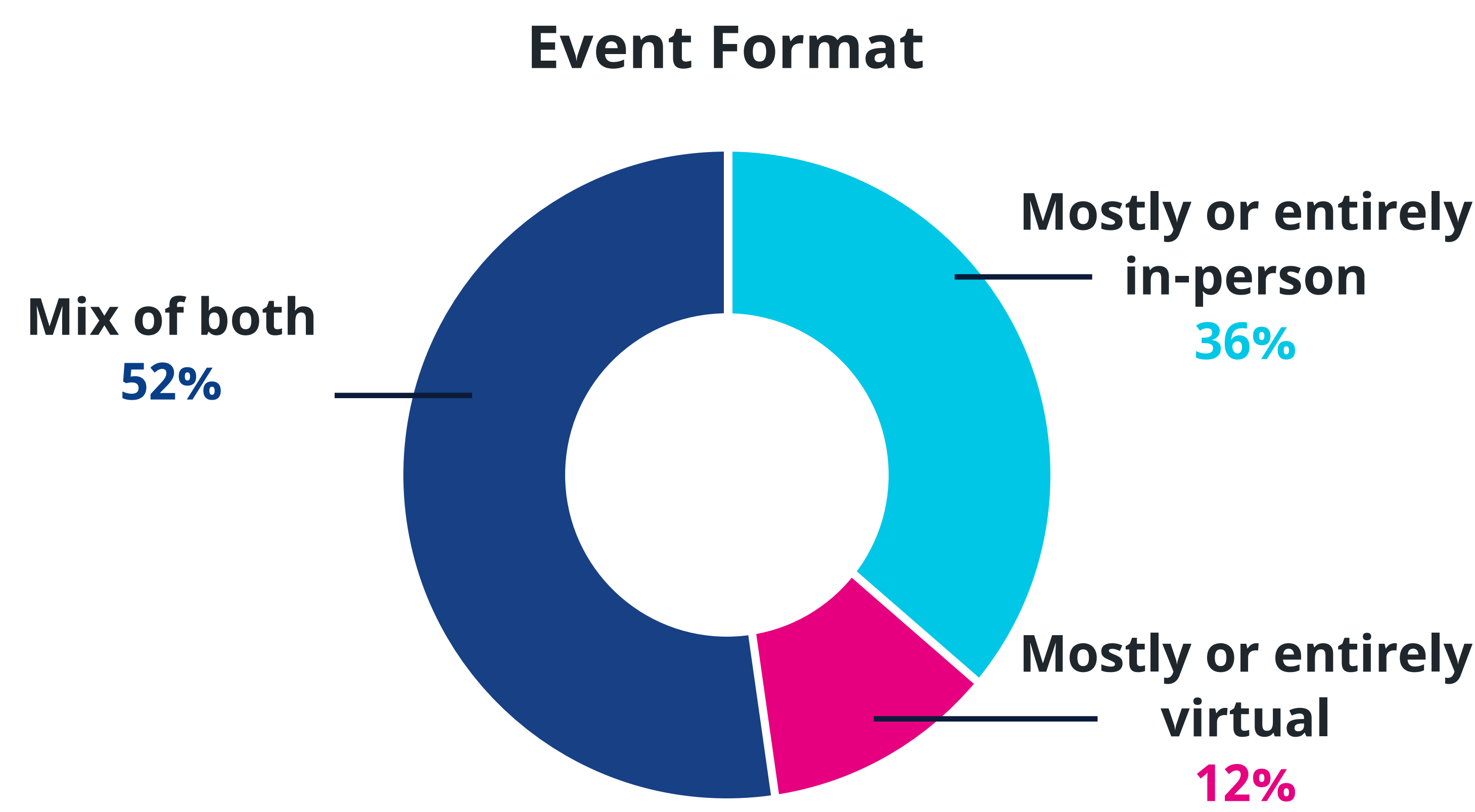
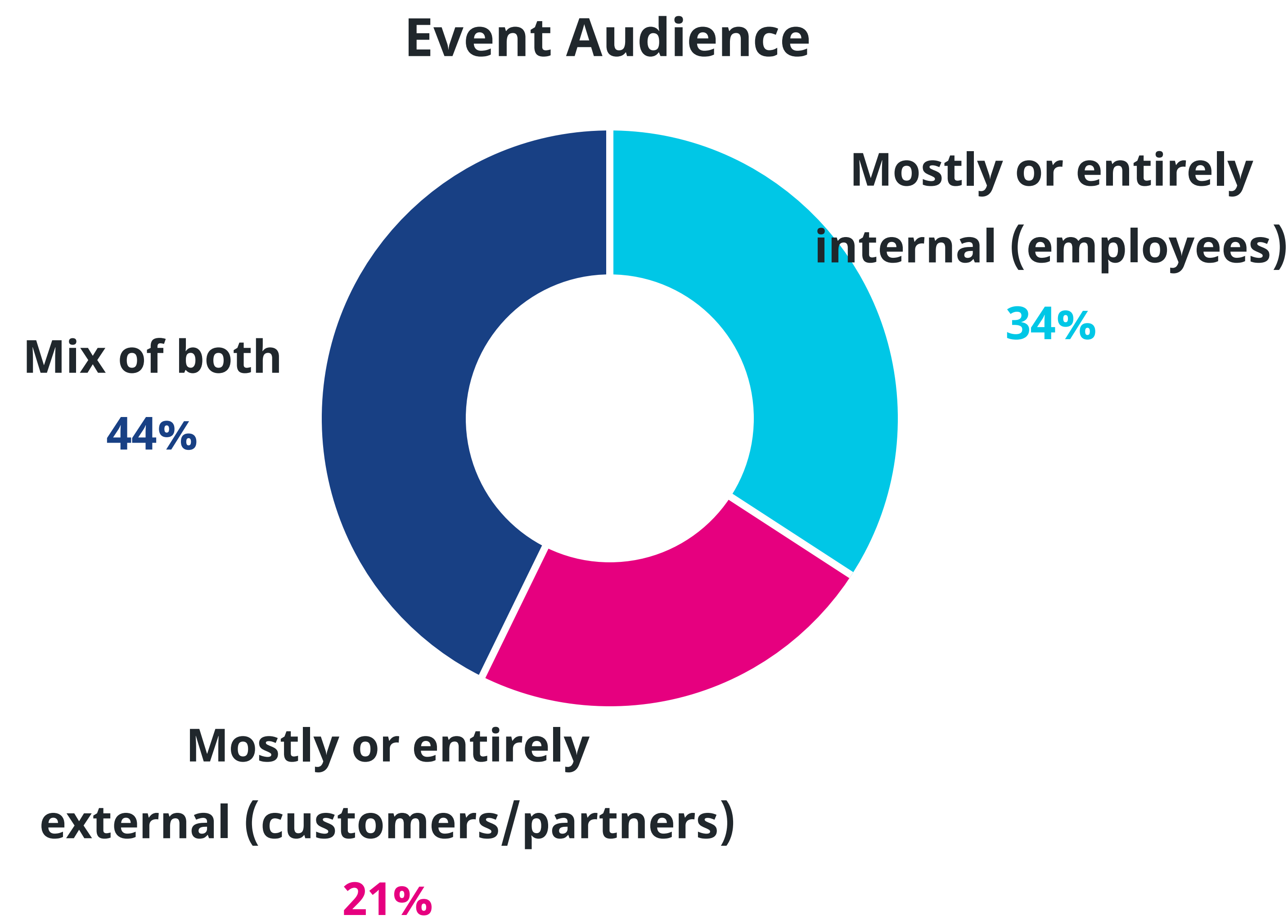
Company Industry

Respondents came from a wide range of industries, including financial services, business services, technology, manufacturing, and healthcare.



Respondent Event Management Responsibilities

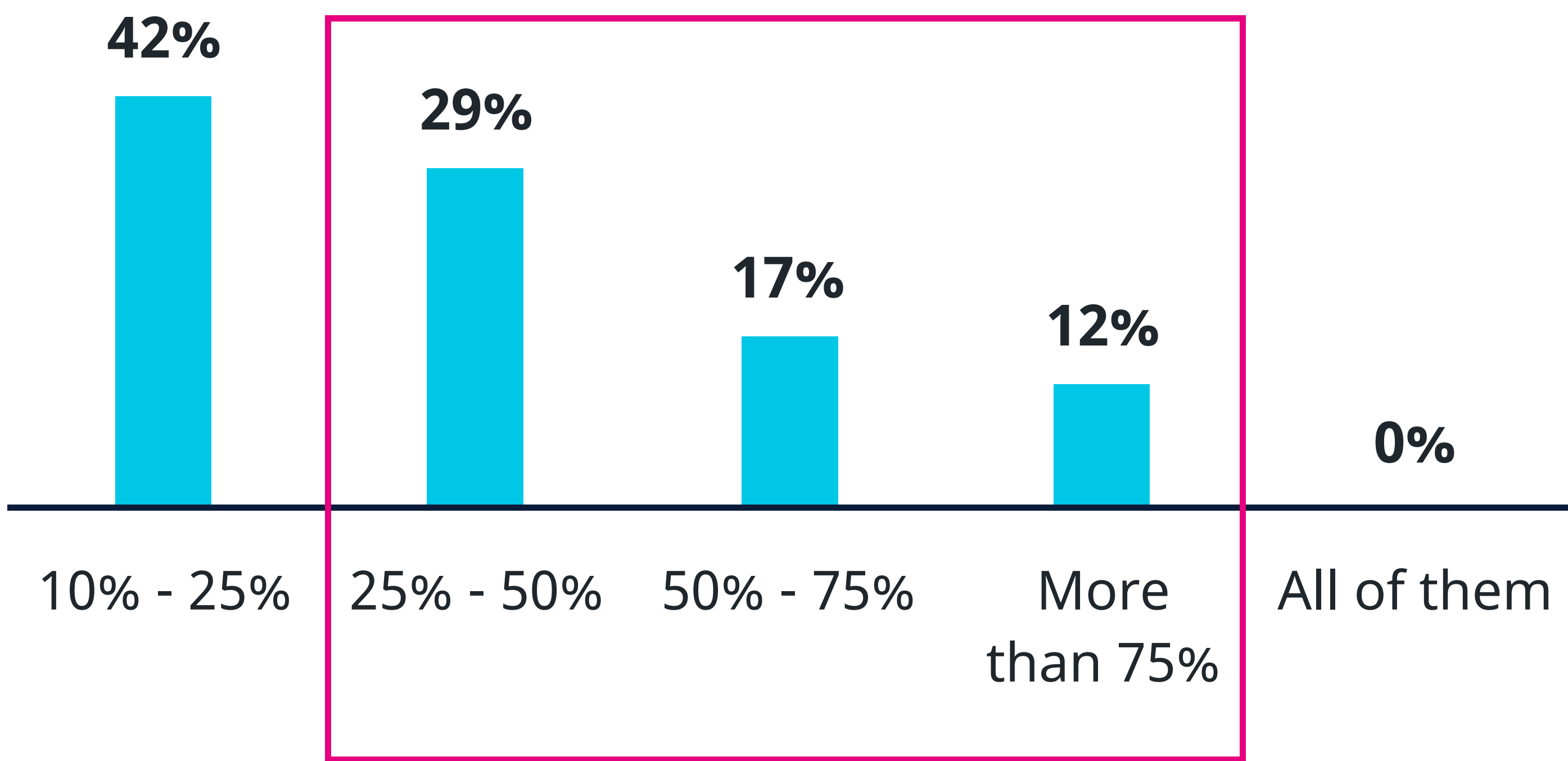
Respondents are responsible for managing a wide range of meetings and events - with internal and external audiences - and in-person, virtual, and hybrid formats.



IV. Detailed Findings

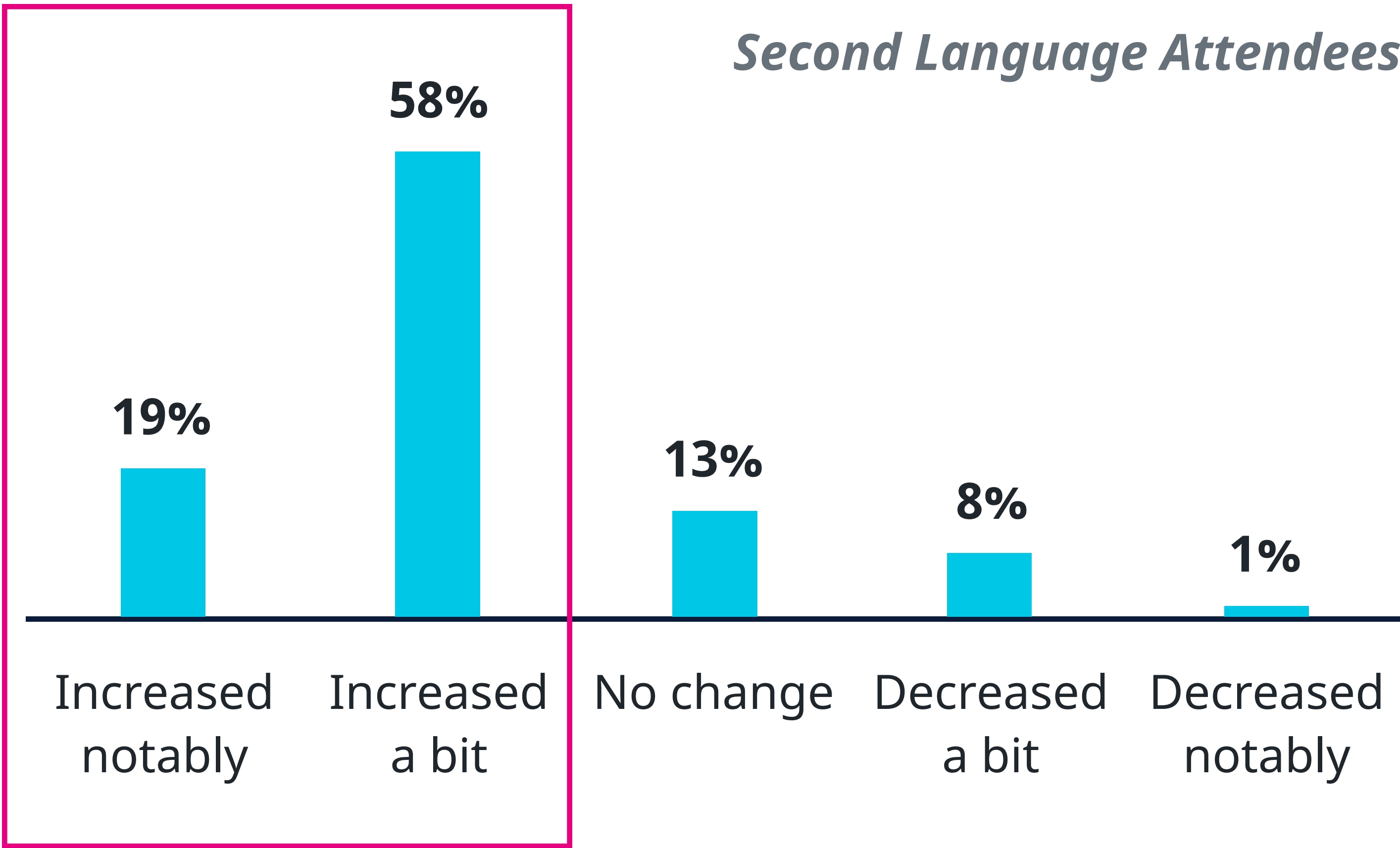
Meeting and Event Planners Have Extensive Experience With Multilingual Events

58% report they typically have over a quarter of their event audience who speak a different language than the presenter.



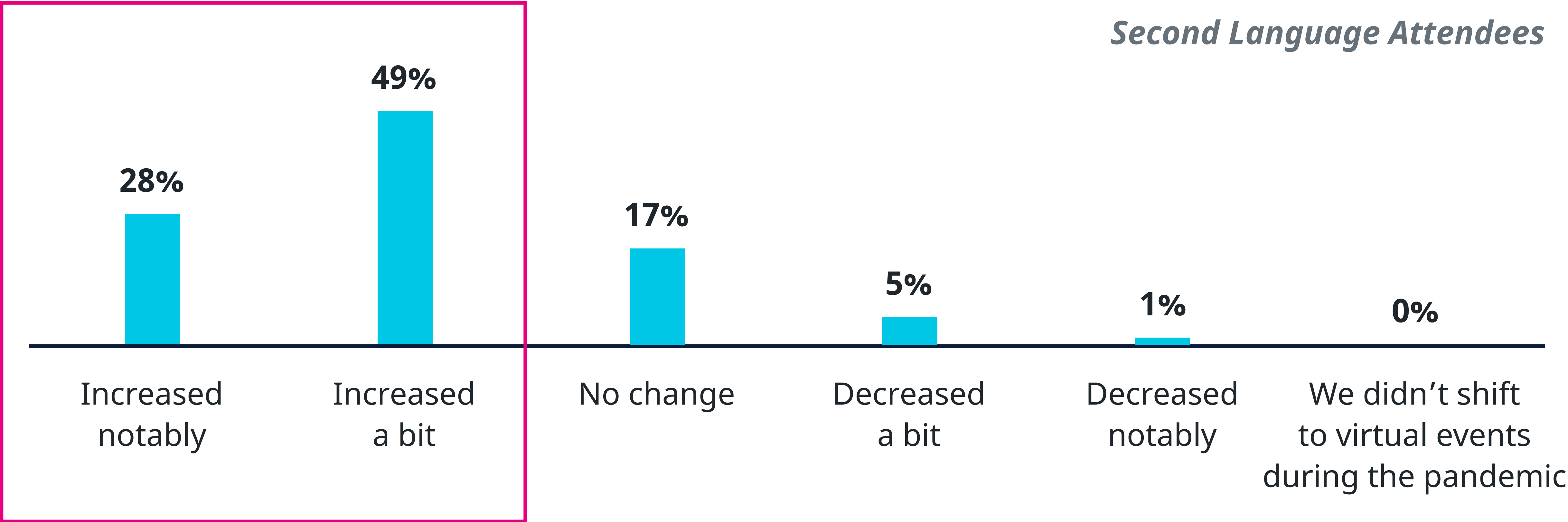
Q - What percentage of your meeting and event attendees typically do not speak English as their first language?

77% report an increase in the number of attendees who speak a different language.



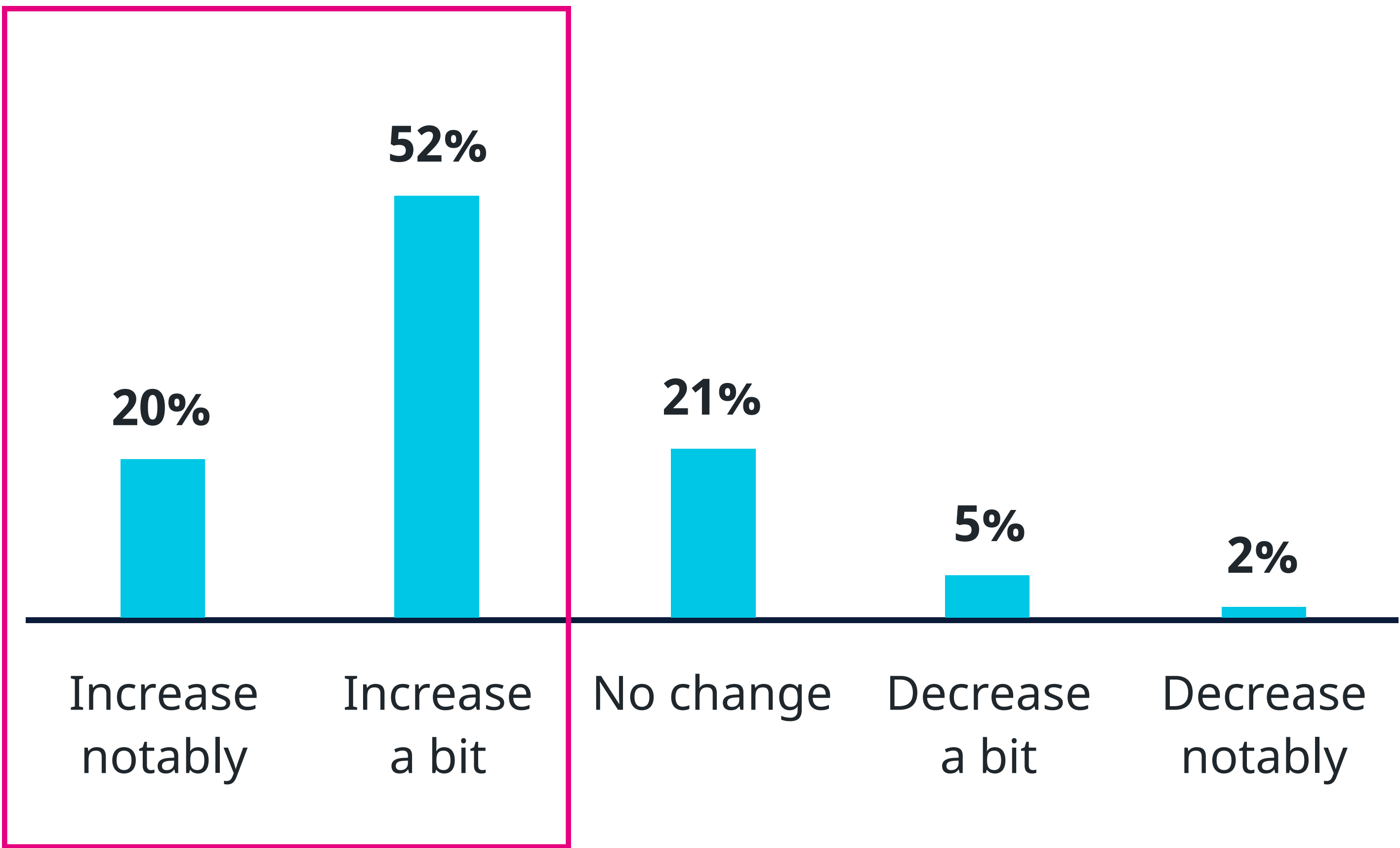
Q - To the best of your knowledge, how has the number of attendees that do not speak English as their first language at your events and conferences changed over the PAST year?

A primary driver for the increase was the shift to virtual events during the pandemic.



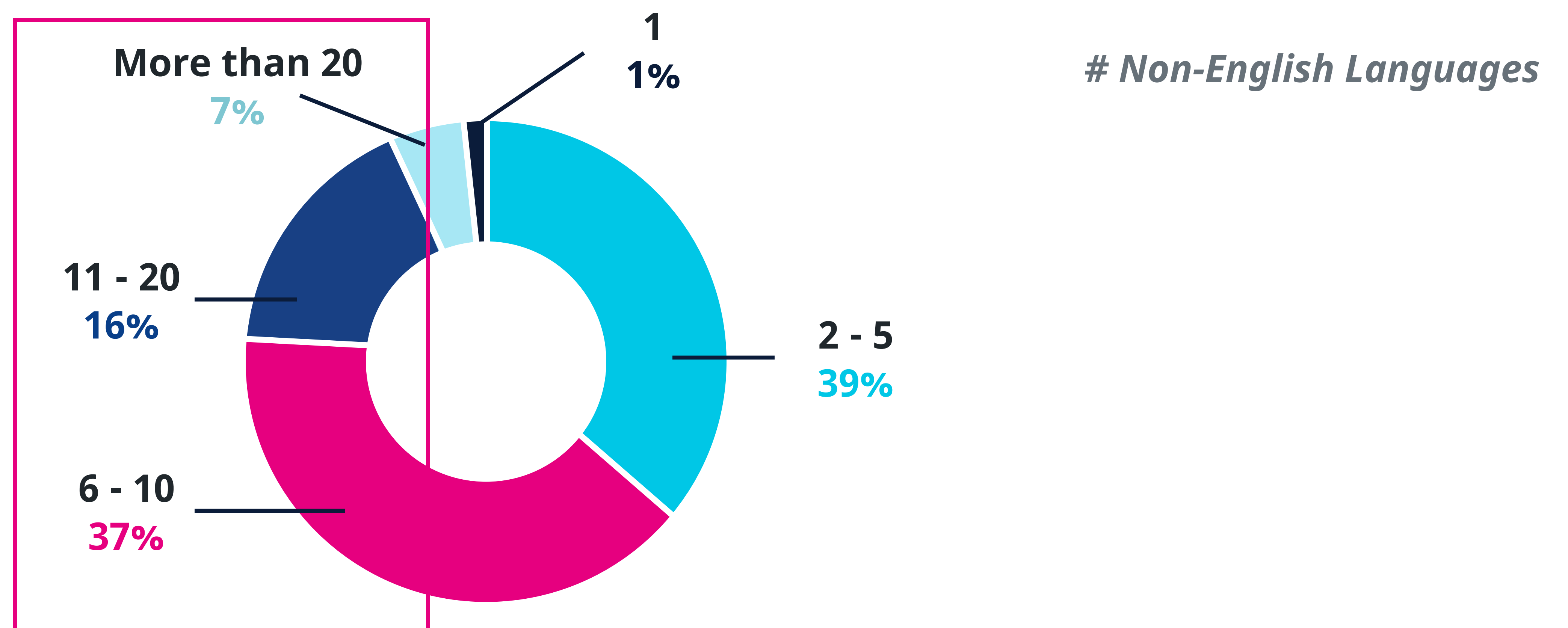
Q - To the best of your knowledge, how did the shift to virtual events during the pandemic change the number of attendees at your events and conferences that do not speak English as their first language?

Even as Covid declines, the trend toward more multilingual meetings is expected to continue growing. 72% report they expect the number to increase in the next year.

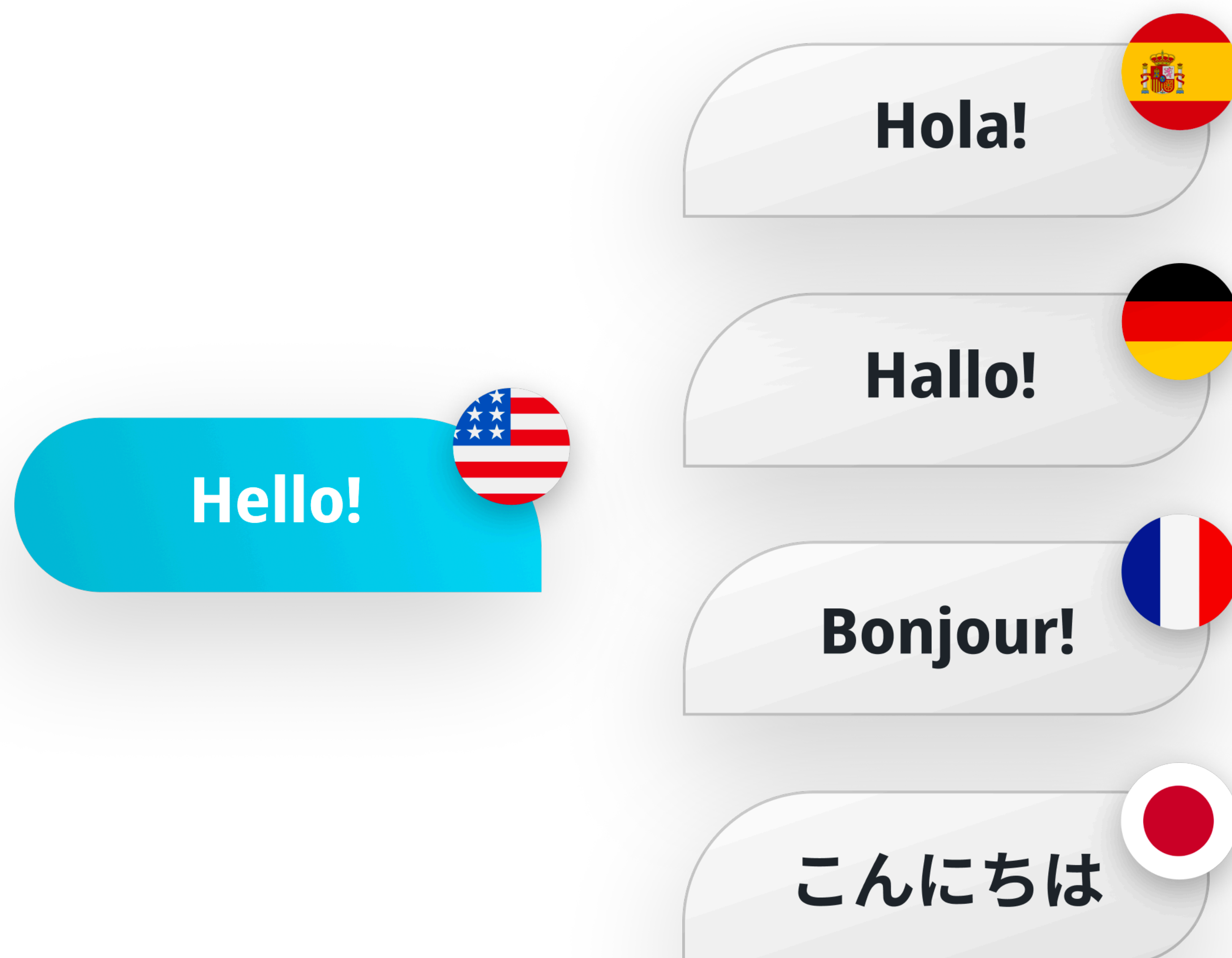


Q - What is your best guess for how the number of attendees that do not speak English as their first language will change at your events and conferences in the COMING year?

60% of their meetings have participants who speak more than 5 languages - and 23% report they typically see 11 or more languages at their events.

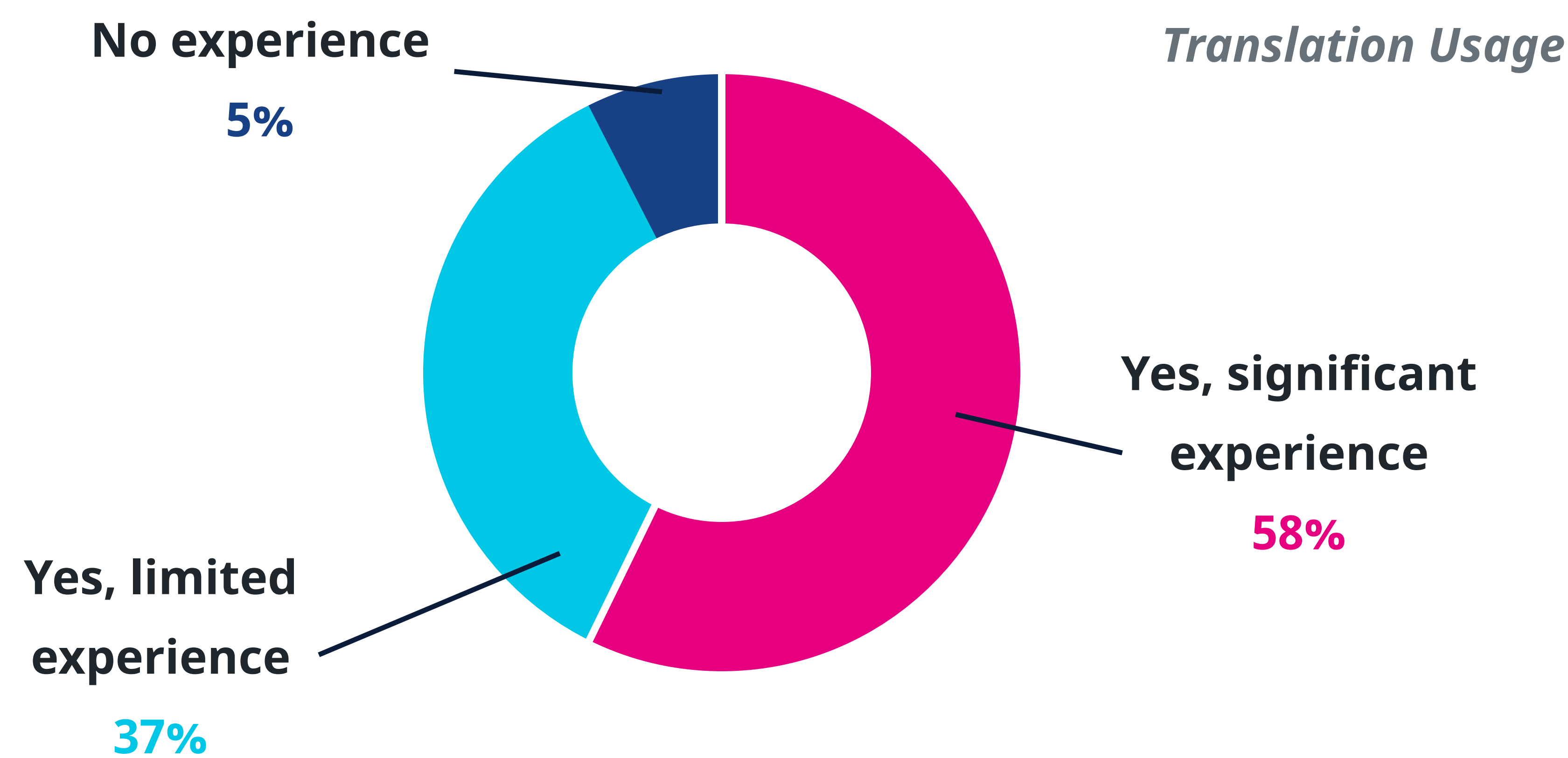


Q - To the best of your knowledge, how many non-English languages are spoken across attendees at a typical event or conference that you manage? When answering this question, please count all possible different languages spoken by all attendees, excluding English.



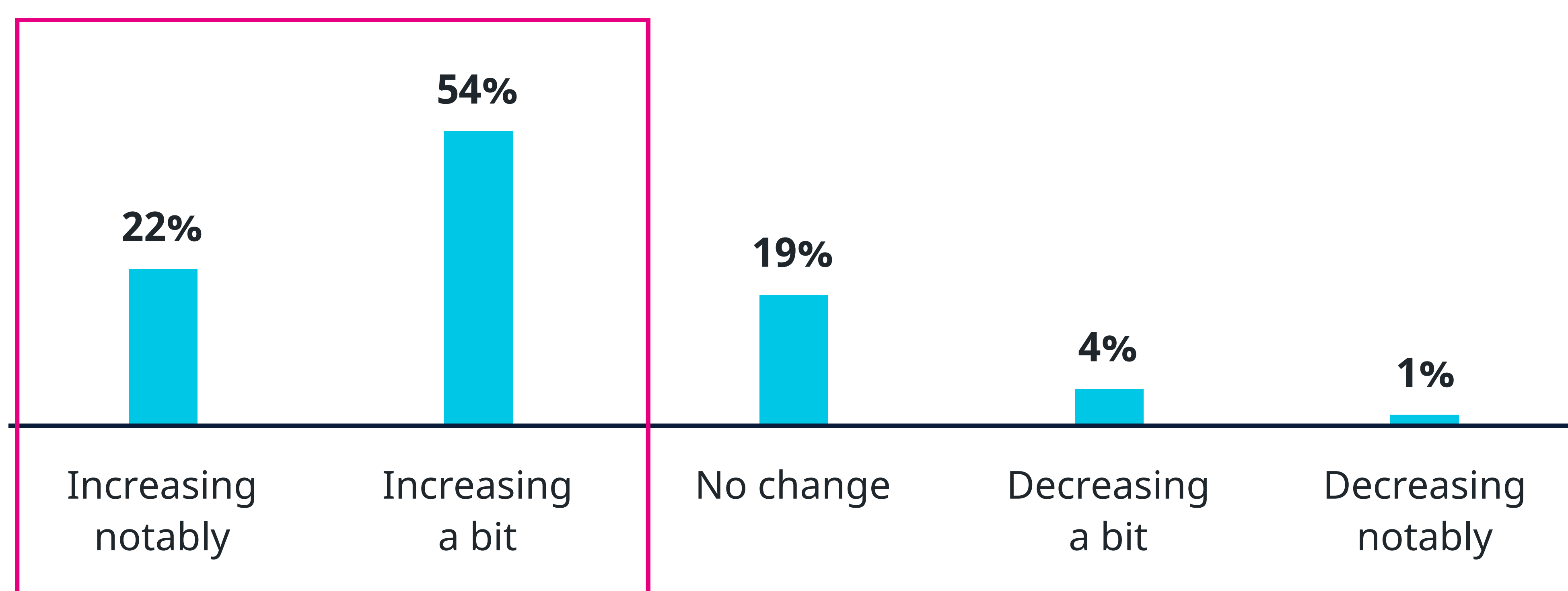
There is Wide Use of Interpretation For Multilingual Meetings and Events

95% of respondents have used translation and interpretation services at some of their events - with over half (58%) saying they have significant experience.



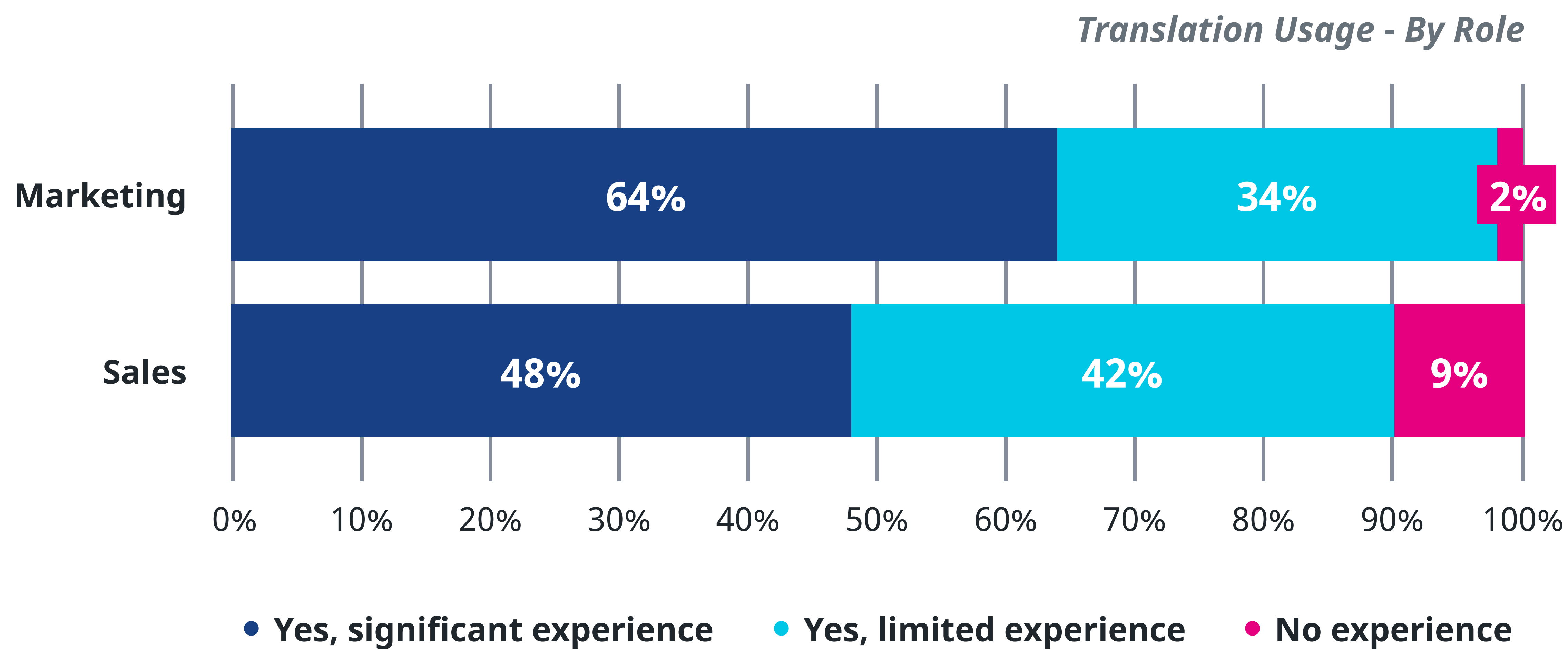
Q - Do you personally have experience offering spoken translation or interpretation services at events you have organized or managed?

76% are increasing their use of interpretation, reflecting the increased number of event attendees who speak a different primary language.



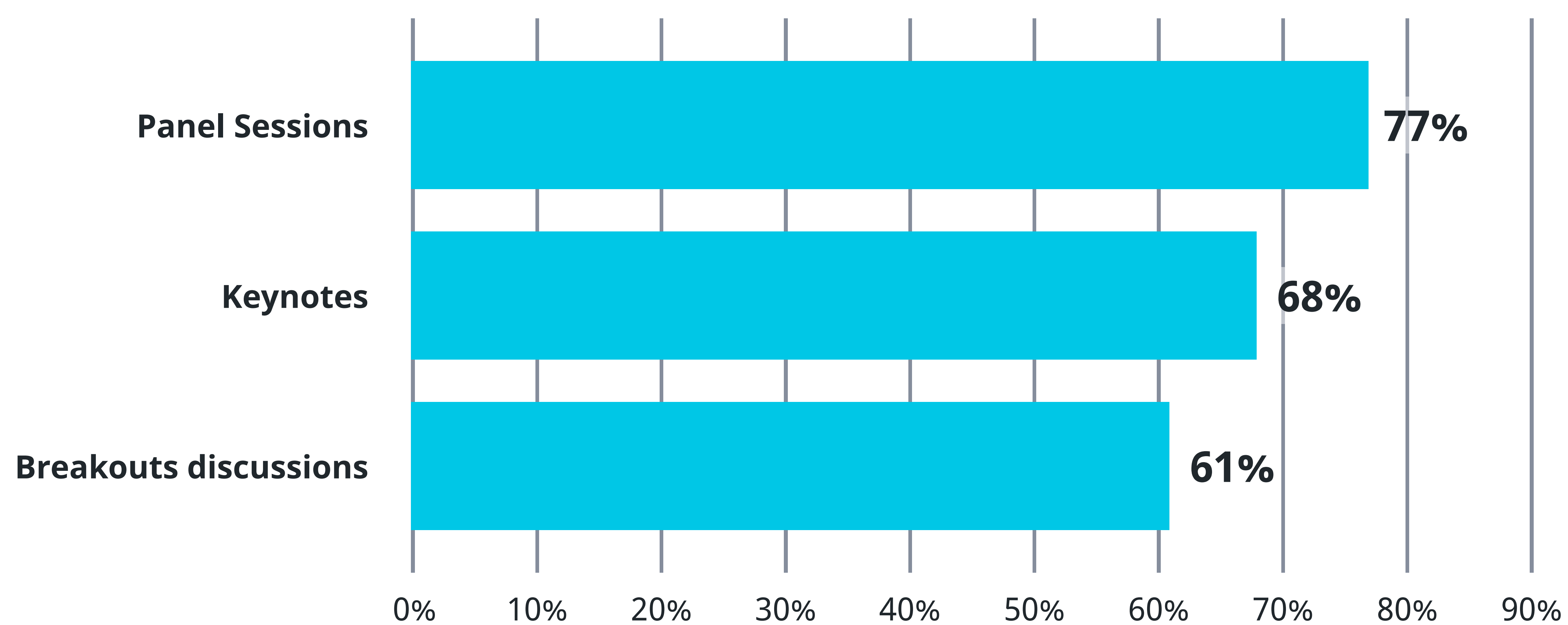
Q - How has the amount of interpretation or translation services offered at your events changed in the past year?

Marketing (64%) teams have used interpretation more often than their Sales counterparts (48%).



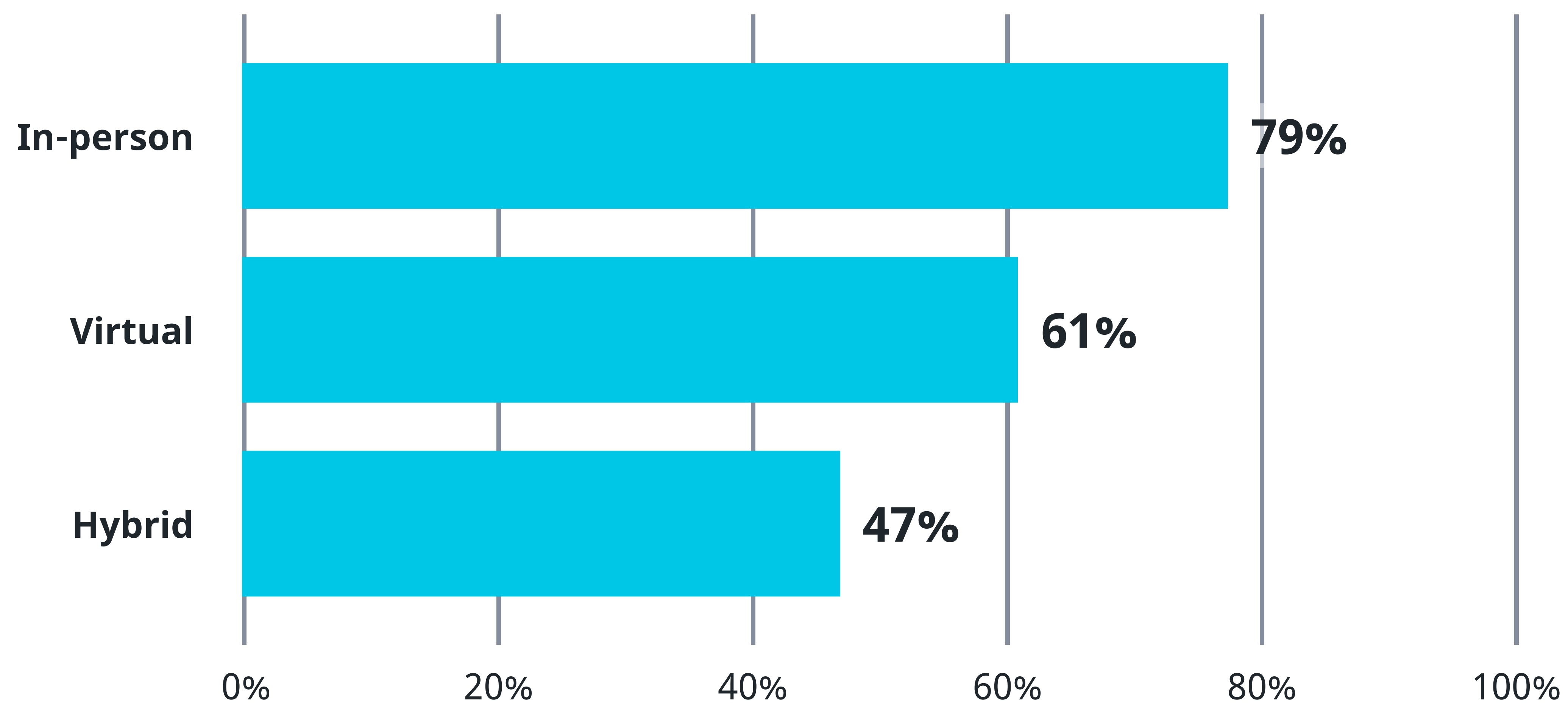
Q - Do you personally have experience offering spoken translation or interpretation services at events you have organized or managed?

Over 60% use interpretation services for all event session types - including panel sessions, keynotes, and breakout discussions.



Q - What types of event sessions have you had experience offering using translation or interpretation services? Choose all that apply.

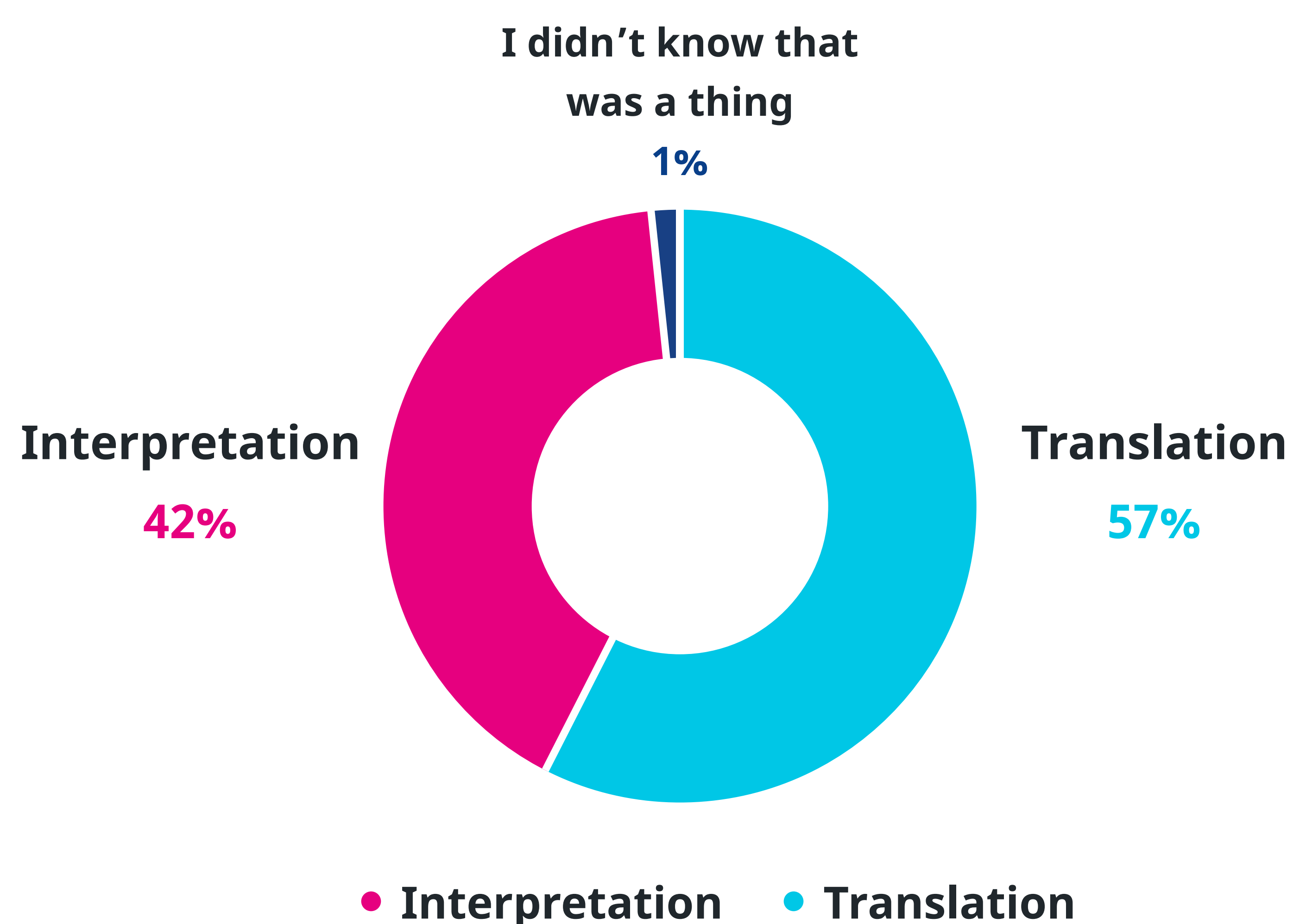
Interpretation is most common for in-person events (79%), followed by virtual at 61% and hybrid at 47%.



*Q - What types of events have you had experience using translation or interpretation services?
Choose all that apply.*

Translation vs Interpretation

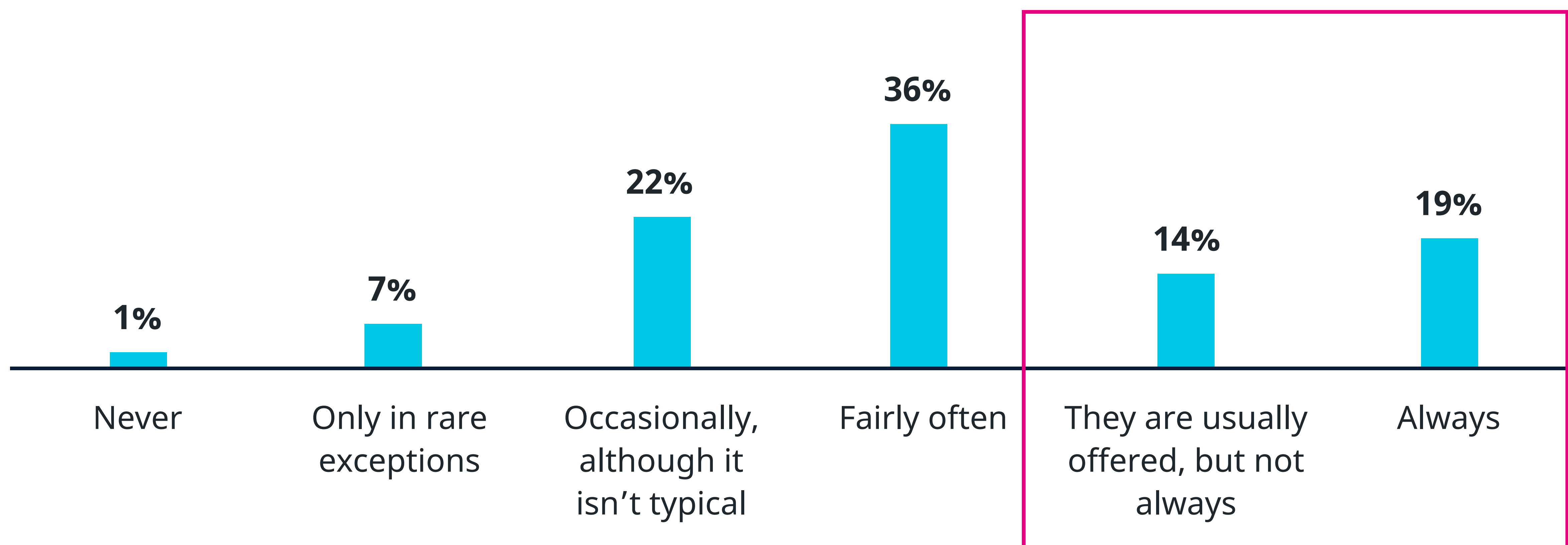
There is no uniform agreement on the use of the term interpretation vs translation. While interpretation refers to converting audio from one language into another - and translation refers to converting text from one language into another - the terms are often used interchangeably.



Q - Conferences and events often provide language support for attendees that do not speak the main event language, by providing real-time audio or captions of the speaker into the language of the attendee. What word would you personally use to describe these types of services?

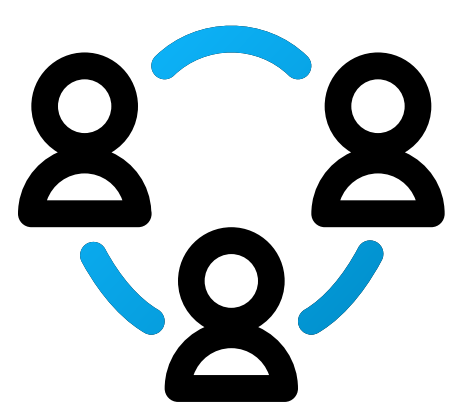
There Are Multiple Barriers To Wider Use Of Interpretation at Meetings and Events

Only 33% regularly offer interpretation despite increased number of multi-language attendees and high level of familiarity using interpretation.



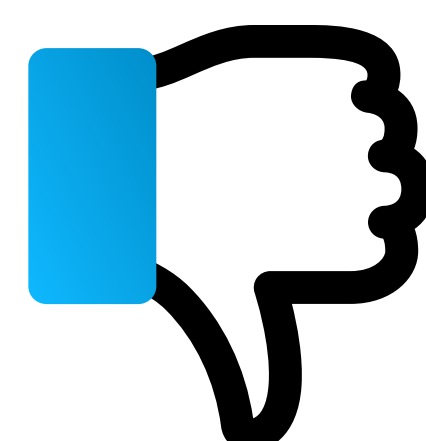
Q - How frequently are interpretation or translation services offered at the events or conferences you have responsibility for? Choose the one answer that most closely applies.

The major reasons for not offering interpretation fall into three categories:



Complexity

Finding translators and managing translation equipment both were at the top of the list with 40% and 39% of respondents respectively listing these inhibitors. This was followed closely by the extra challenge created when companies have to deal with multiple languages at the same event (37%).



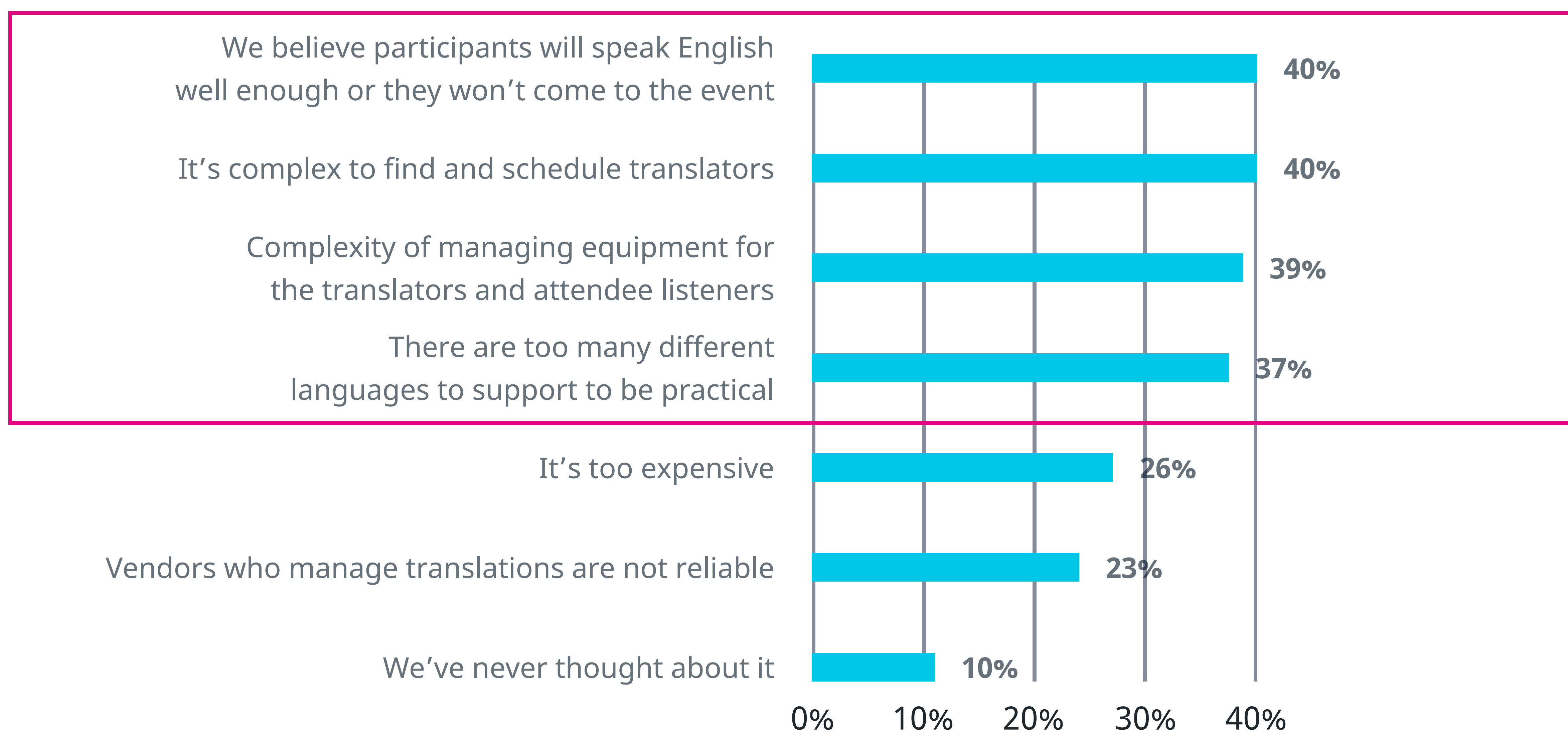
Apathy

Another top reason cited was the belief that participants can speak English “good enough” or elect “not to attend the event” (40%). Most employees and partners usually don’t have the choice to opt out of a meeting or event. For customer events, the companies and associations sponsoring the event risk missing a great opportunity to expand their audience by being language inclusive.



Cost and Quality

While cost and translation quality were also cited, they were significantly lower at 26% and 23% respectively.

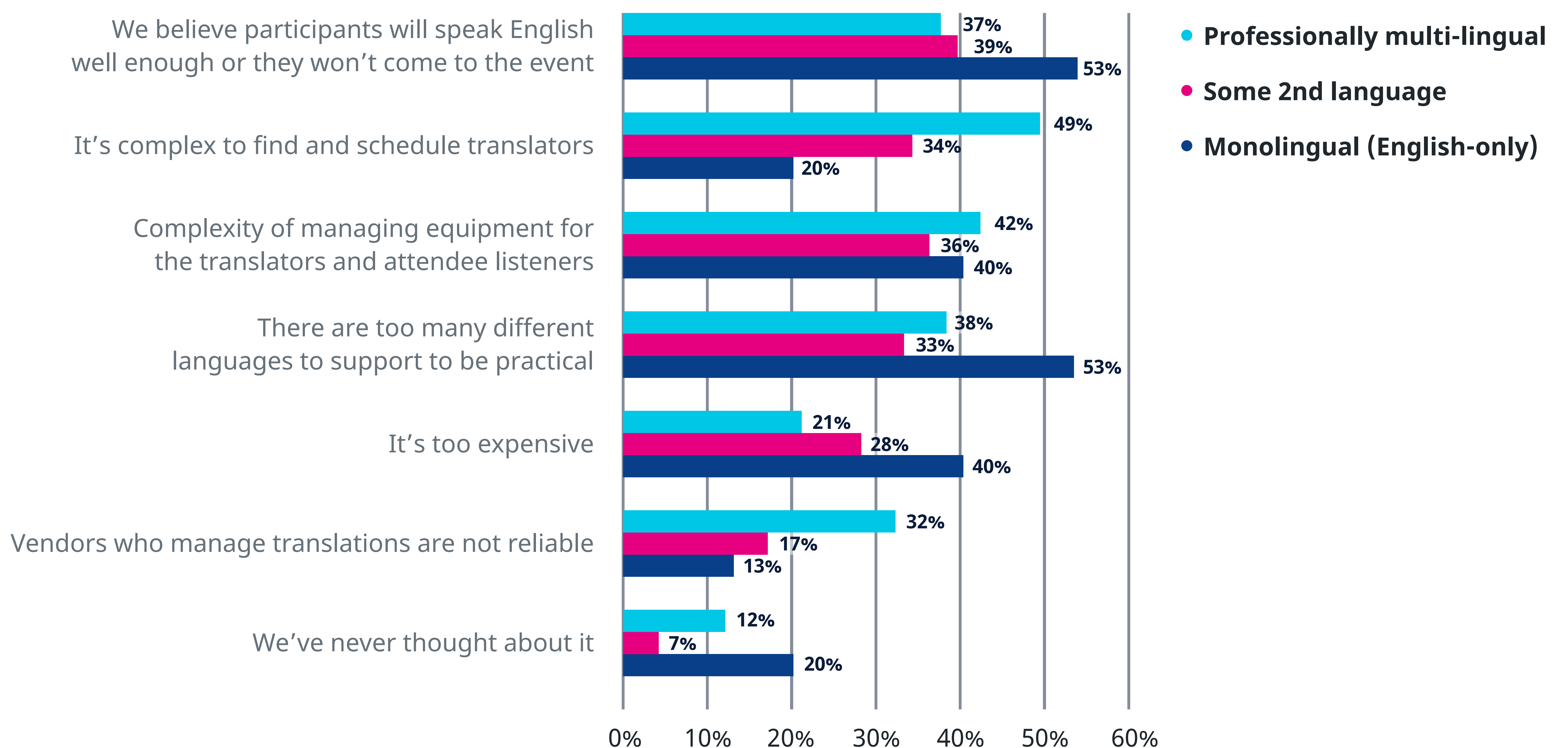


Q - What prevents your organization from offering translation or interpretation services at more events and conferences with participants that don't speak English fluently? Choose all that apply.

Multilingual professionals have different opinions than their non multilingual counterparts.

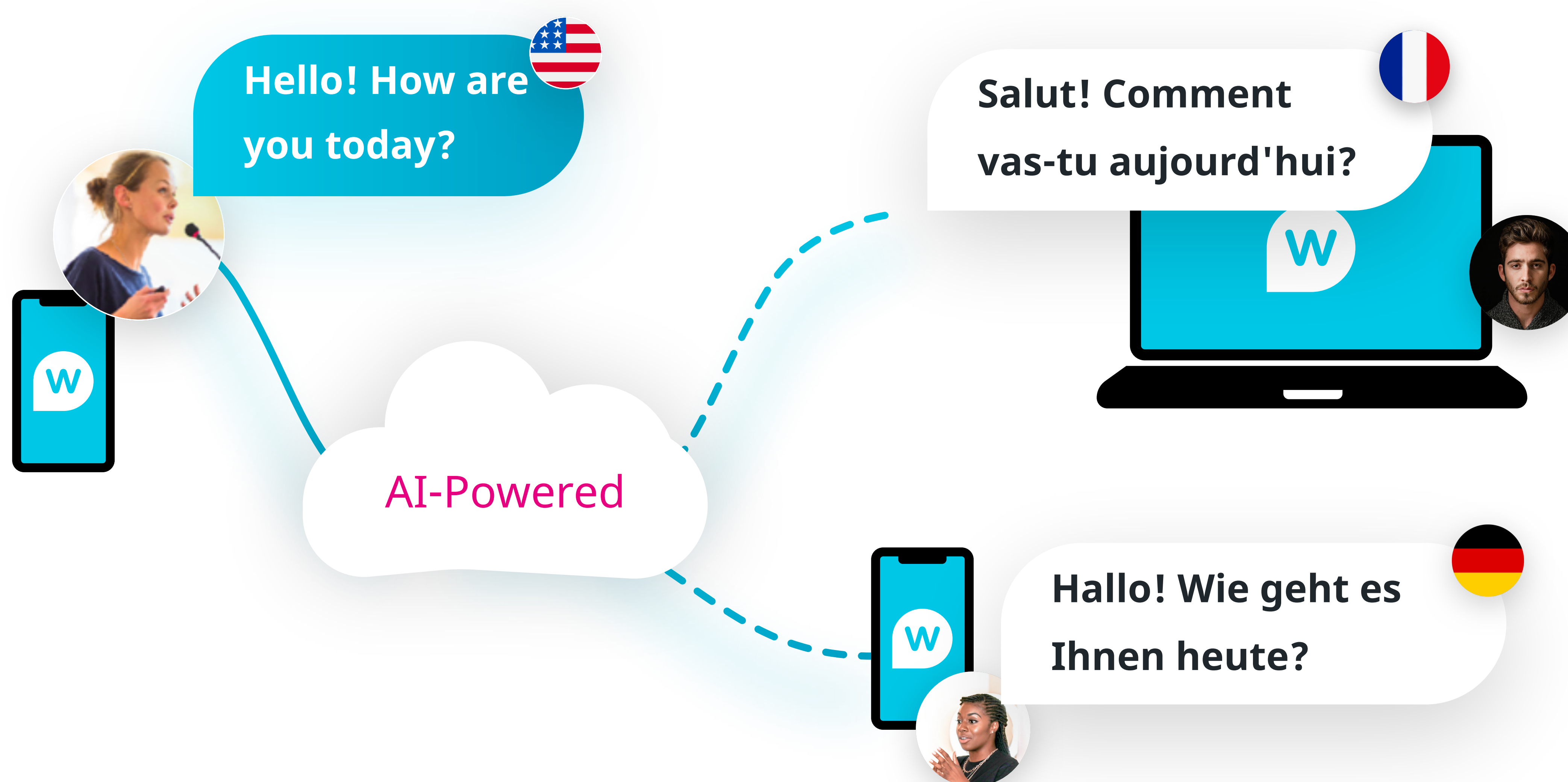
Event professionals who are multilingual (37%) were much less likely to assume non-native English speaking attendees would either know enough to follow along or not come to the event versus their counterparts who only spoke English (53%). Multilingual meeting and event professionals were also much less likely to cite cost (21% vs 40%) or the challenge of managing multiple languages (38% vs 53%) as inhibitors - but much more likely to cite the complexity of scheduling translators (49% vs 20%) and translation quality (32% vs 13%).

Usage Barriers by Second Language Skills



Technology Can Help Solve The Major Multilingual Meeting Communication Challenges

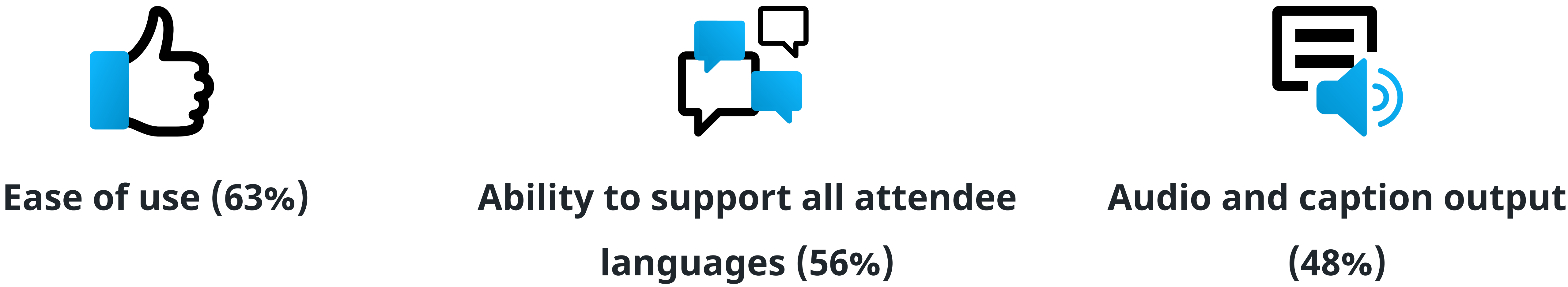
Technology solutions are often developed to help streamline and automate processes to reduce complexity and cost. Respondents were asked to provide feedback on the advantages / disadvantages of using technology to enhance the interpretation and translation solutions available to them.



Technology Solution Description

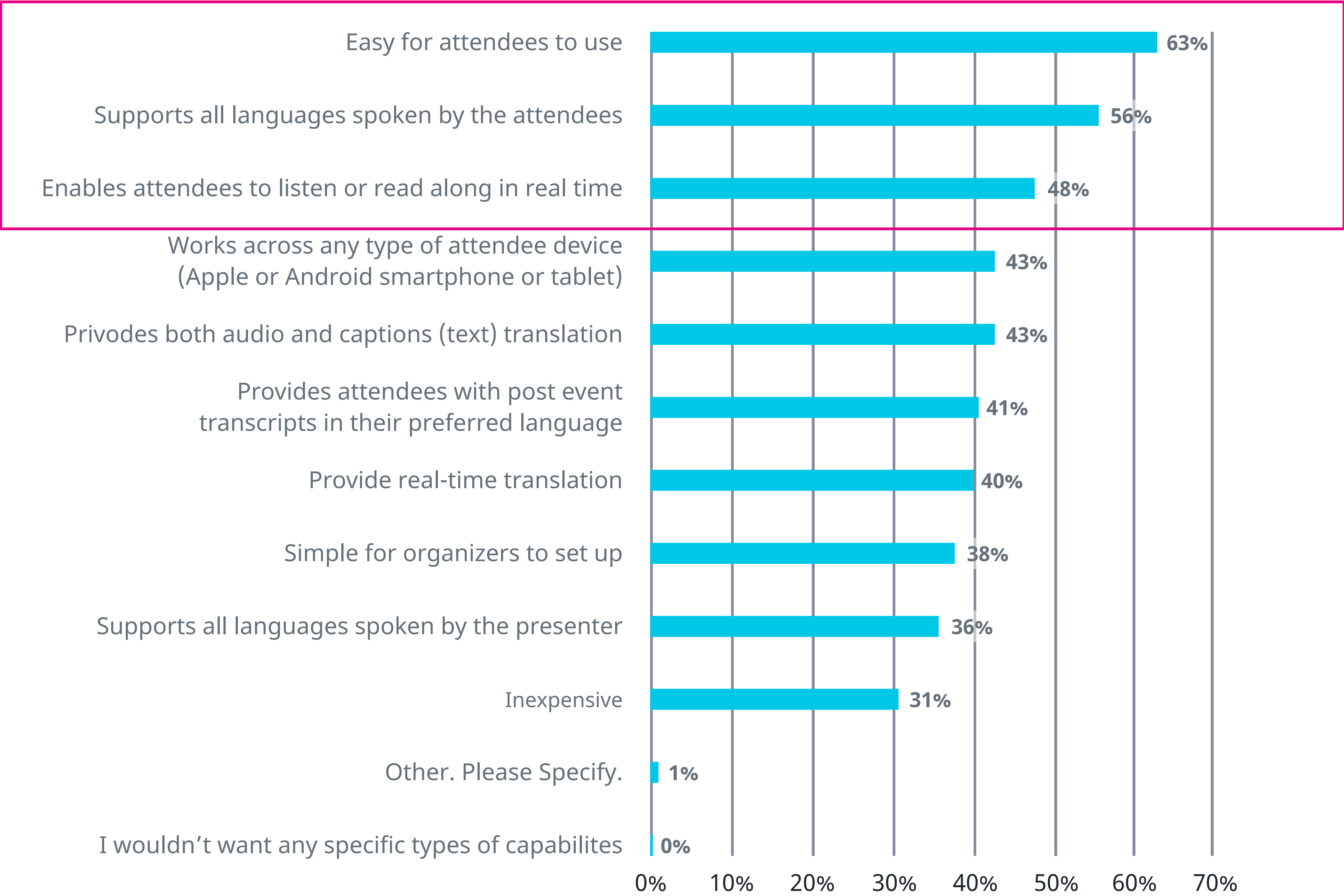
Imagine a scenario where your company could purchase an AI-powered Application which enabled you to provide translation of the speaker for all event attendees on their phone or laptop in any language they wanted - without the need for human interpreters.

Top 3 capabilities meeting planners want in a technology solution are:



Event managers prioritize features for Attendees higher than those for Presenters and Meeting Organizers.

While cost was a factor, it was rated significantly below features for attendees, presenters, and organizers.

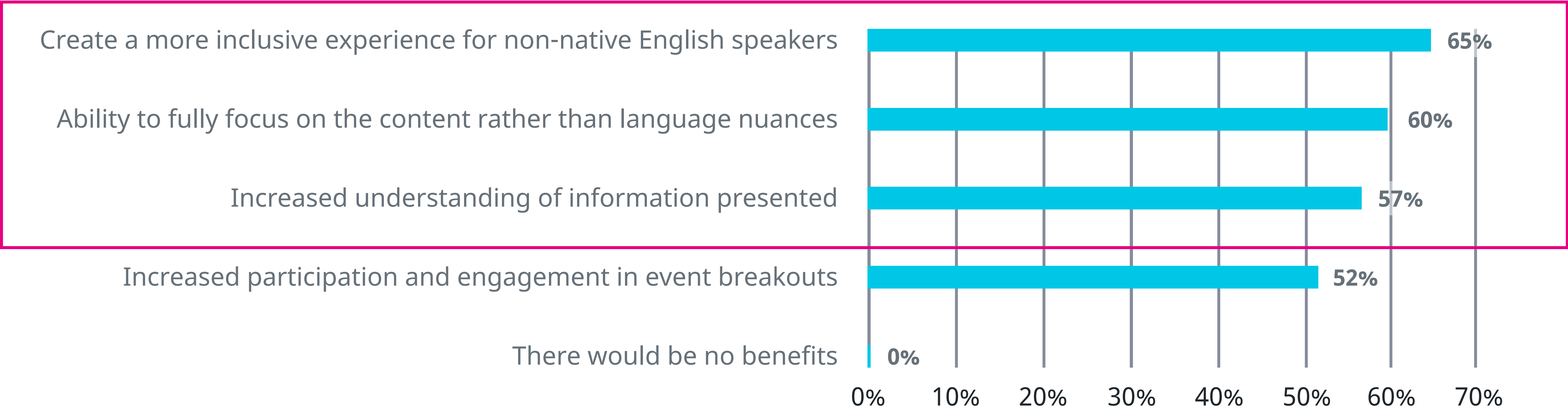
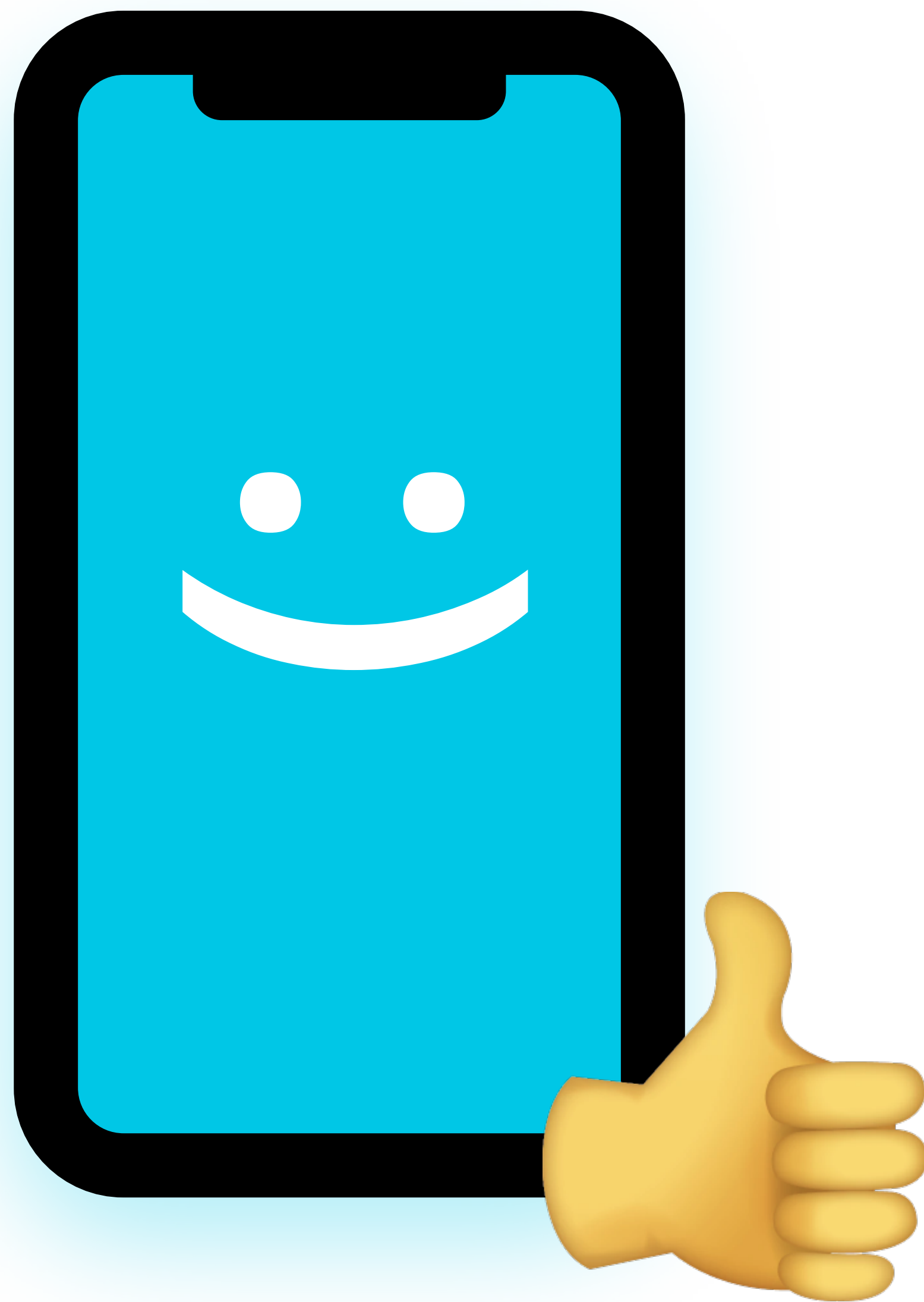


Q - What capabilities would you want in a solution like this? Choose all that apply

Attendee Benefits of Technology Powered Interpretation

The Top Attendee Benefits:

- Creates a more inclusive experience (65%)
- Makes it easier for attendees to focus on the content (60%)
- Easier to understand the information presented (57%)

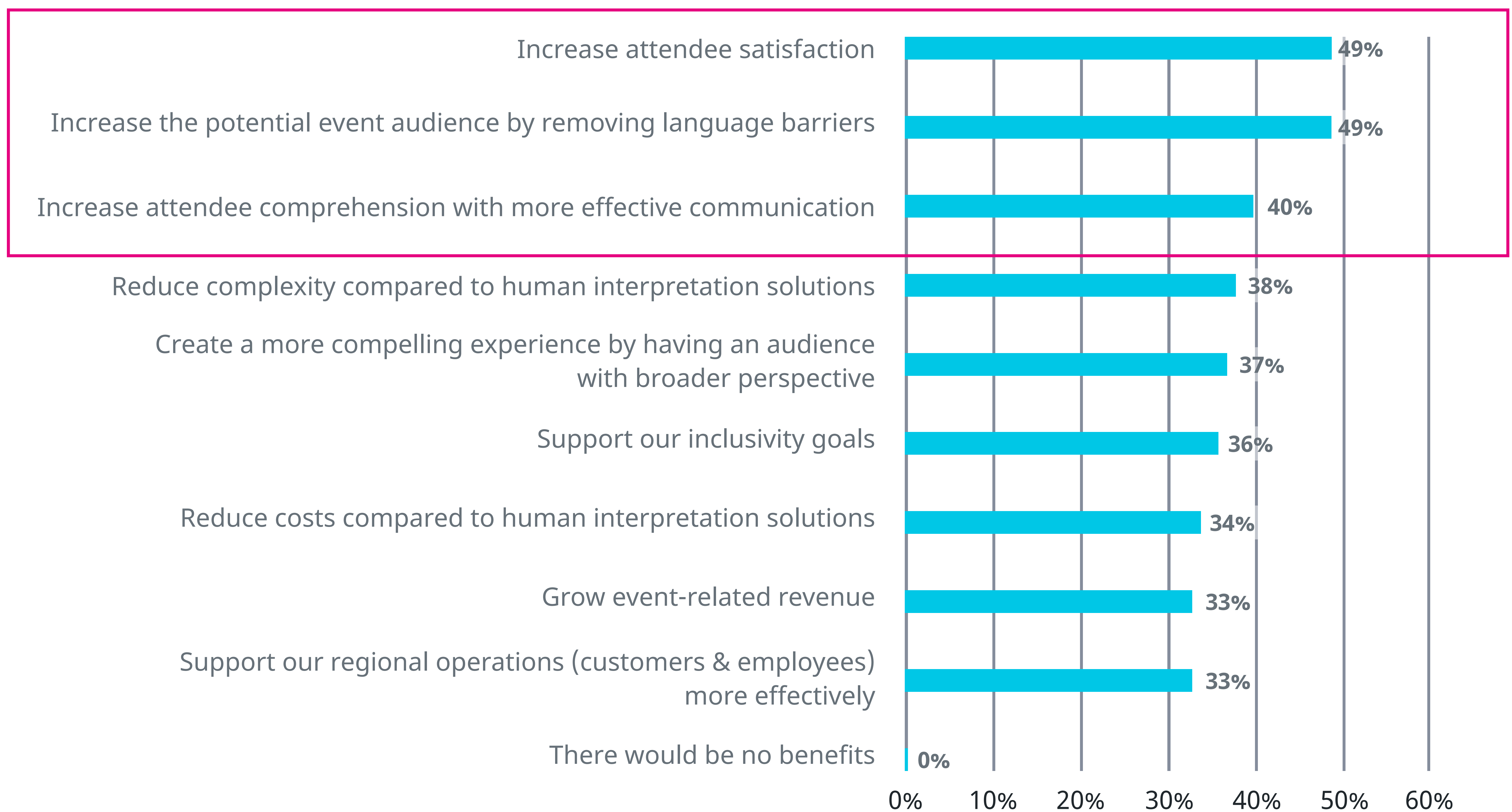


Q - What benefits would it offer event attendees who don't speak English as a first language if they could use this kind of interpretation or translation solution at your events or conferences? Choose all that apply.

Business Benefits of Technology Powered Interpretation

The Top Business Benefits:

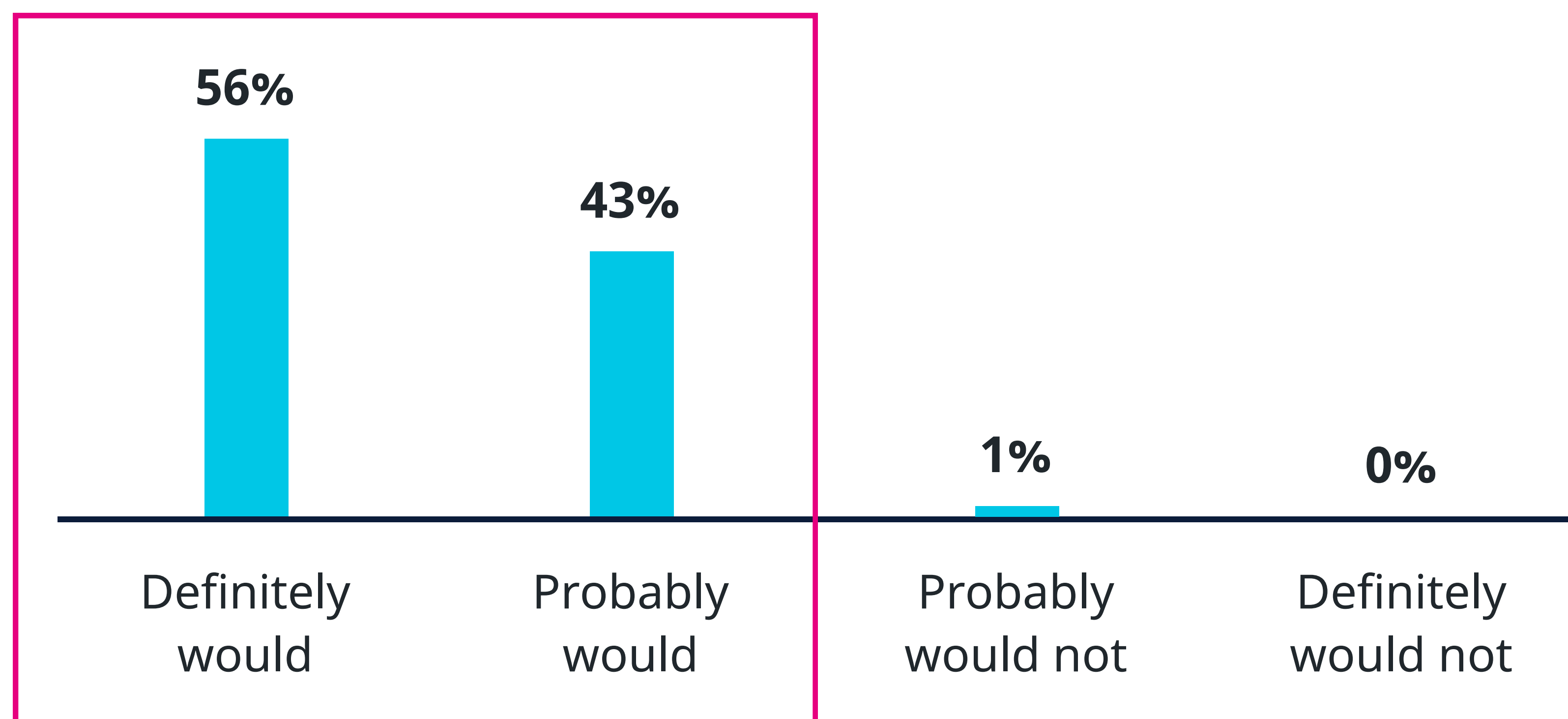
- Increasing attendee satisfaction (49%)
- Increasing event attendance (49%)
- Increased comprehension (40%)



Q - How could using this kind of interpretation or translation solution benefit the business outcomes of your conference or event? Choose all that apply.

Respondent Event Management Responsibilities

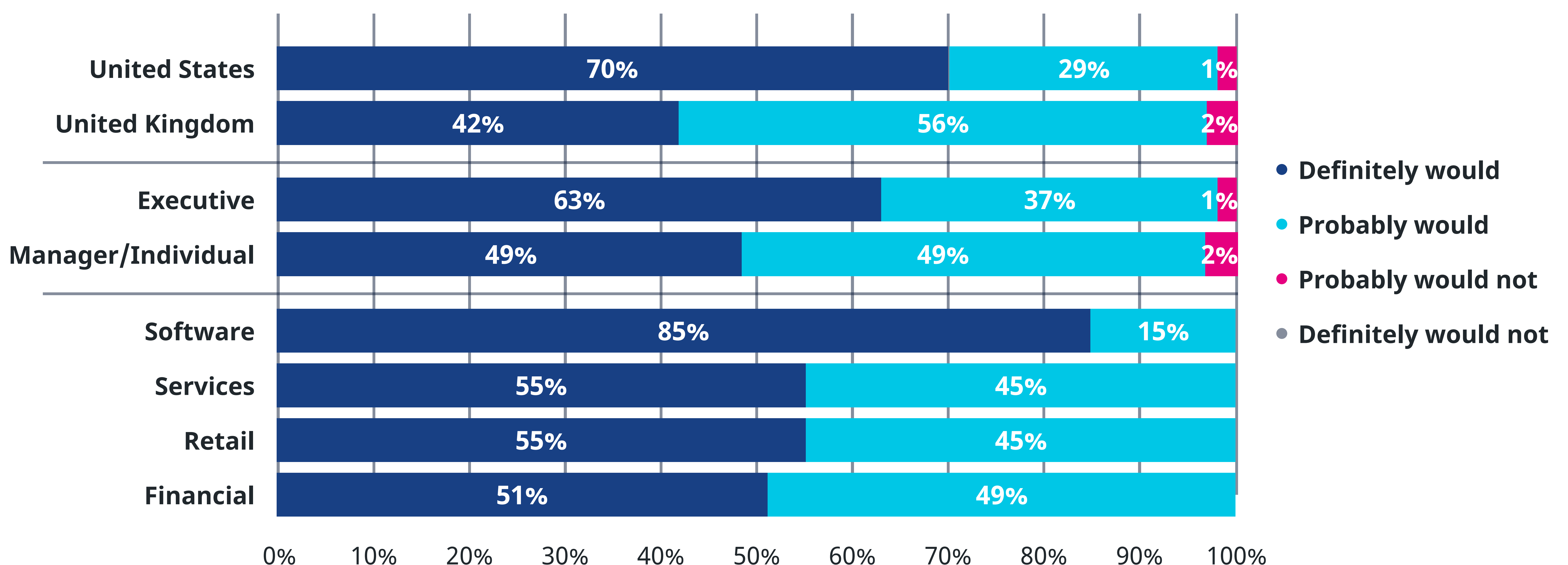
An overwhelming majority (99%) believe the benefits for attendees and businesses would make them very interested in deploying a technology solution that solved the major interpretation challenges.



Q - If an interpretation and translation solution like this were available, including all the capabilities that were important to you, how likely would your organization be to use it at your future events?

The interest in deploying a technology solution varied by company segment:

- Higher in the US vs UK (70% definitely would vs 42%)
- Higher for executives vs managers / individual contributors (63% vs 49%)
- Highest for software companies at 85%



Q - If an interpretation and translation solution like this were available, including all the capabilities that were important to you, how likely would your organization be to use it at your future events?

V. Interpretation Solutions

Human Interpretation

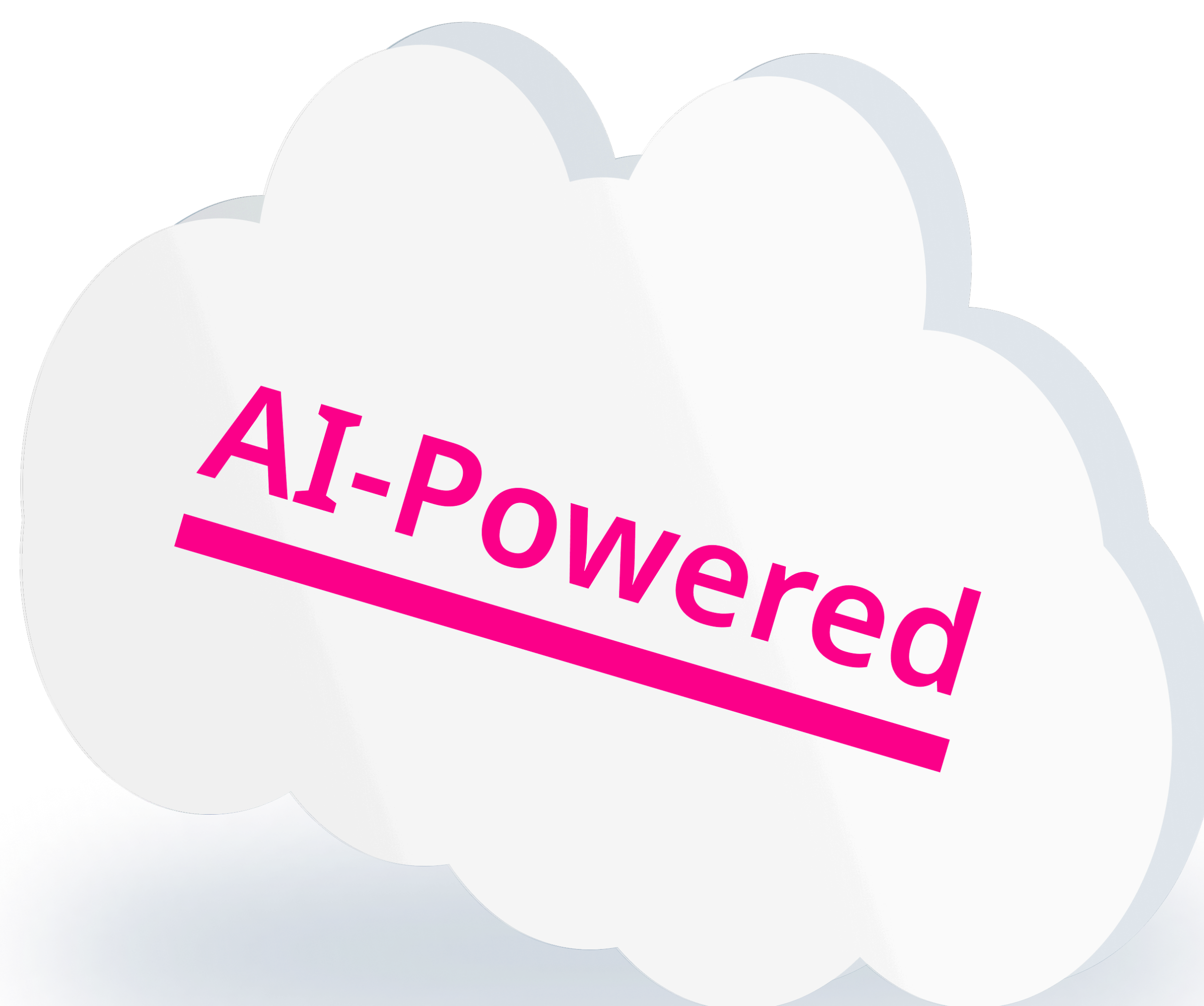
Human interpreters have been used for centuries and are the most common translation solution used today. Everyone has watched prominent events like global sessions at the UN Headquarters where attendees from 100+ countries around the world listen in real-time to a presenter speaking in a language they are not familiar with. Human interpretation is a good option for large, complex events which are planned months in advance and supported by large budgets and teams to coordinate all of the logistics. But, the time and cost of offering human interpretation often makes this option not viable for private companies, industry associations, and local governments. The problem is compounded for multiple languages because you need one interpreter for each language.

RSI

Another option is Remote Simultaneous Interpretation, also known as RSI. This is a hybrid solution which uses a technology platform to help manage translator scheduling and other session logistics, but still relies on human interpreters which have cost challenges, particularly for multi-language events.

AI-Powered Interpretation

An emerging option is Machine Interpretation, also known as AI-powered Interpretation. These technology solutions are powered by an Artificial Intelligence (AI) platform and integrated with a secure cloud infrastructure, removing the need for human interpreters and special equipment. It is fast becoming the top choice for corporate, industry, and local government organizations who need a fast, easy, affordable solution to multilingual collaboration challenges.



VI. Conclusion

The globalization of businesses means that every meeting and event needs to accommodate the needs of people with a wide range of language preferences.

Meeting planners have extensive experience managing multilingual events.

77% report an increase in attendees who need second language support and 72% expect the number to increase again this year. 60% report they need to support 6 or more languages per event.

There is wide use of interpretation for multilingual meetings and events.

95% report having some experience using translation services. The most common use case is in-person events (79%). The use of interpretation is up significantly over the past year with 76% reporting increased usage.

There are multiple barriers to wider use of interpretation at meetings and events.

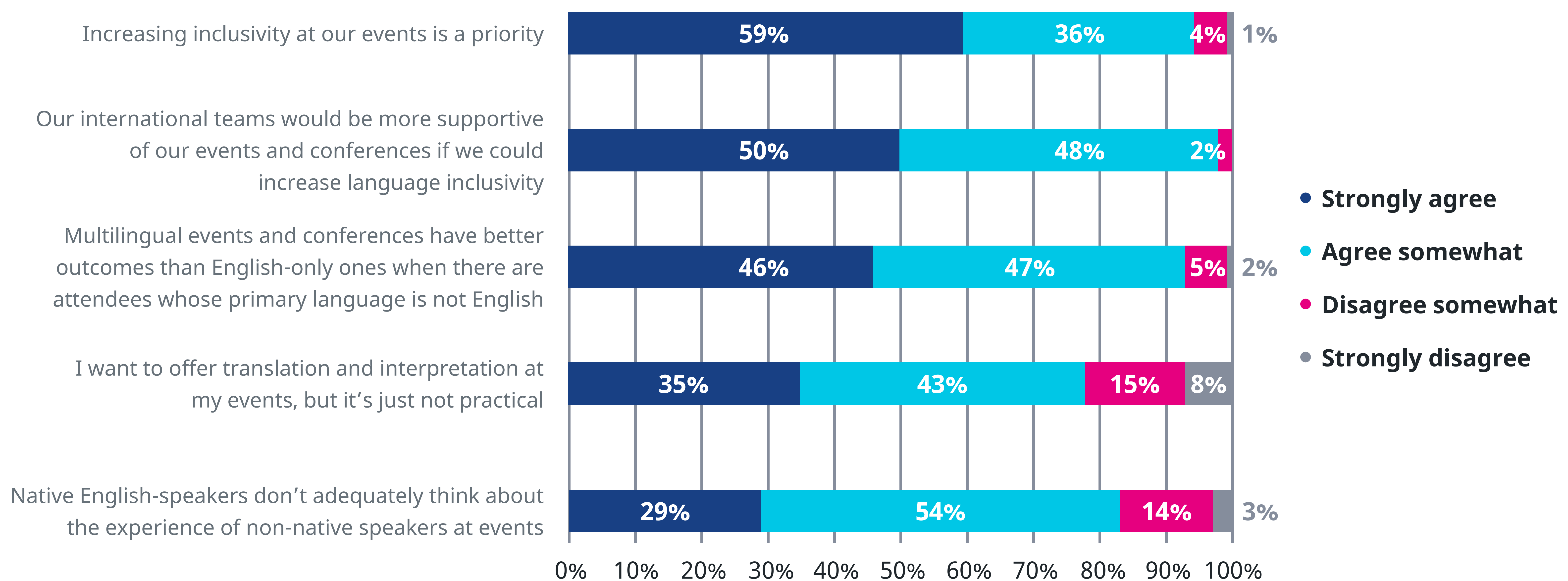
Only 33% report offering interpretation on a regular basis. The top barriers include complexity - both scheduling translators (40%) and managing equipment (39%) - along with apathy toward the importance of interpretation assistance for attendees who speak a different language (40%).

Technology can help solve the major meeting and event interpretation challenges.

The top features on the wish list include ease of use for attendees (63%) and the ability to support all languages spoken by the attendees (56%).

Offering interpretation can lead to several notable benefits.

Over 90% of meeting and event managers want to increase inclusivity and think multilingual conferences which offer interpretation have better outcomes.



Q - Please indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.

VII. About Dimensional Research

Dimensional Research® provides practical market research for technology companies. We partner with our clients to deliver actionable information that reduces risks, increases customer satisfaction, and grows the business. Our researchers are experts in the applications, devices, and infrastructure used by modern businesses and their customers. For more information, visit www.dimensionalresearch.com



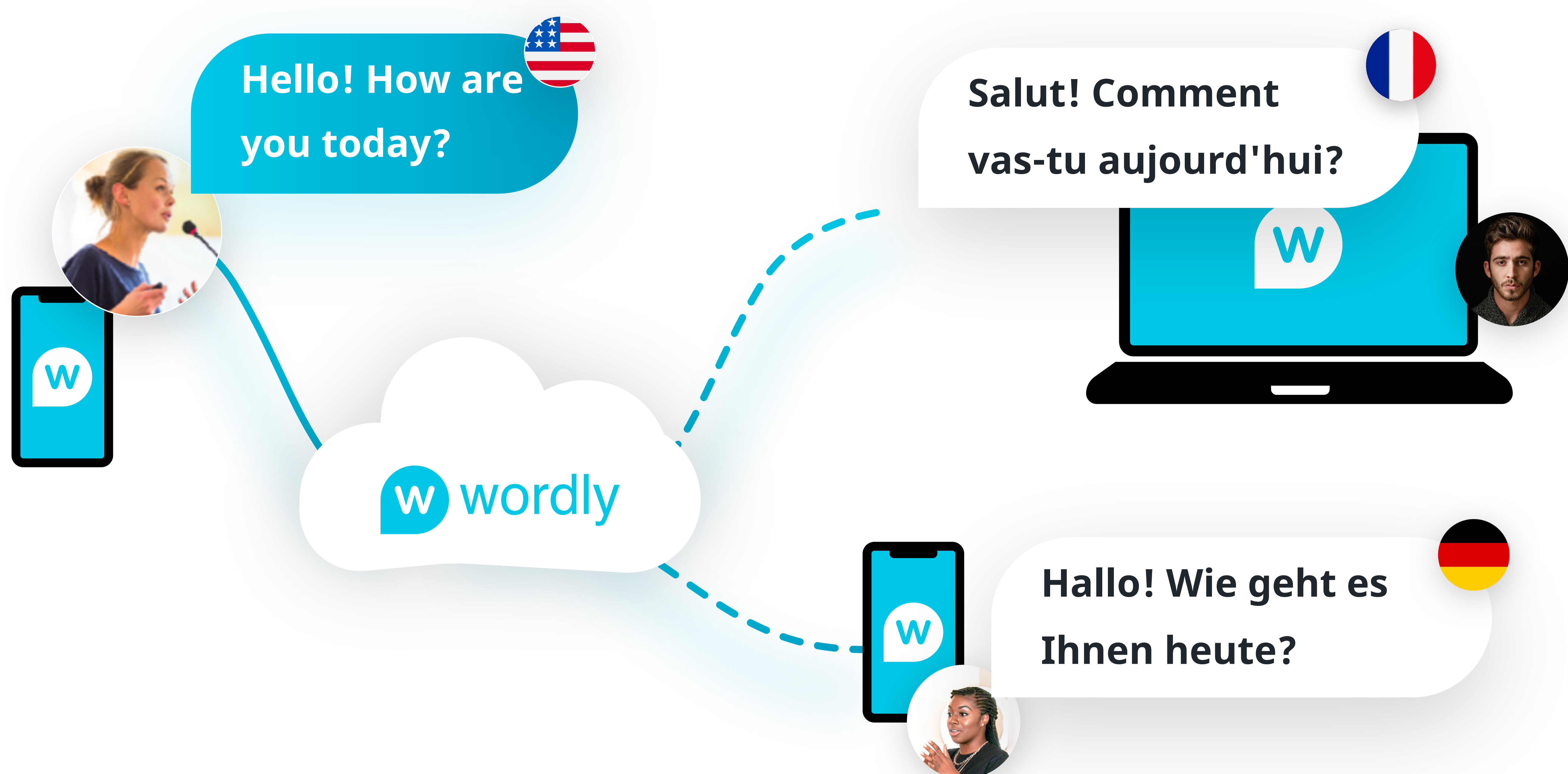
dimensional research

VIII. About Wordly

Wordly developed the industry's first AI-powered remote simultaneous interpretation platform for meetings and events - providing a fast, easy, and affordable solution for today's global, multilingual, virtual world. Wordly enables organizations to unlock the full potential of their global teams and markets by removing language barriers and making meetings and events more inclusive. Wordly is used by over 1 million users at 500+ organizations around the world, across a wide range of industries, associations, and government entities.

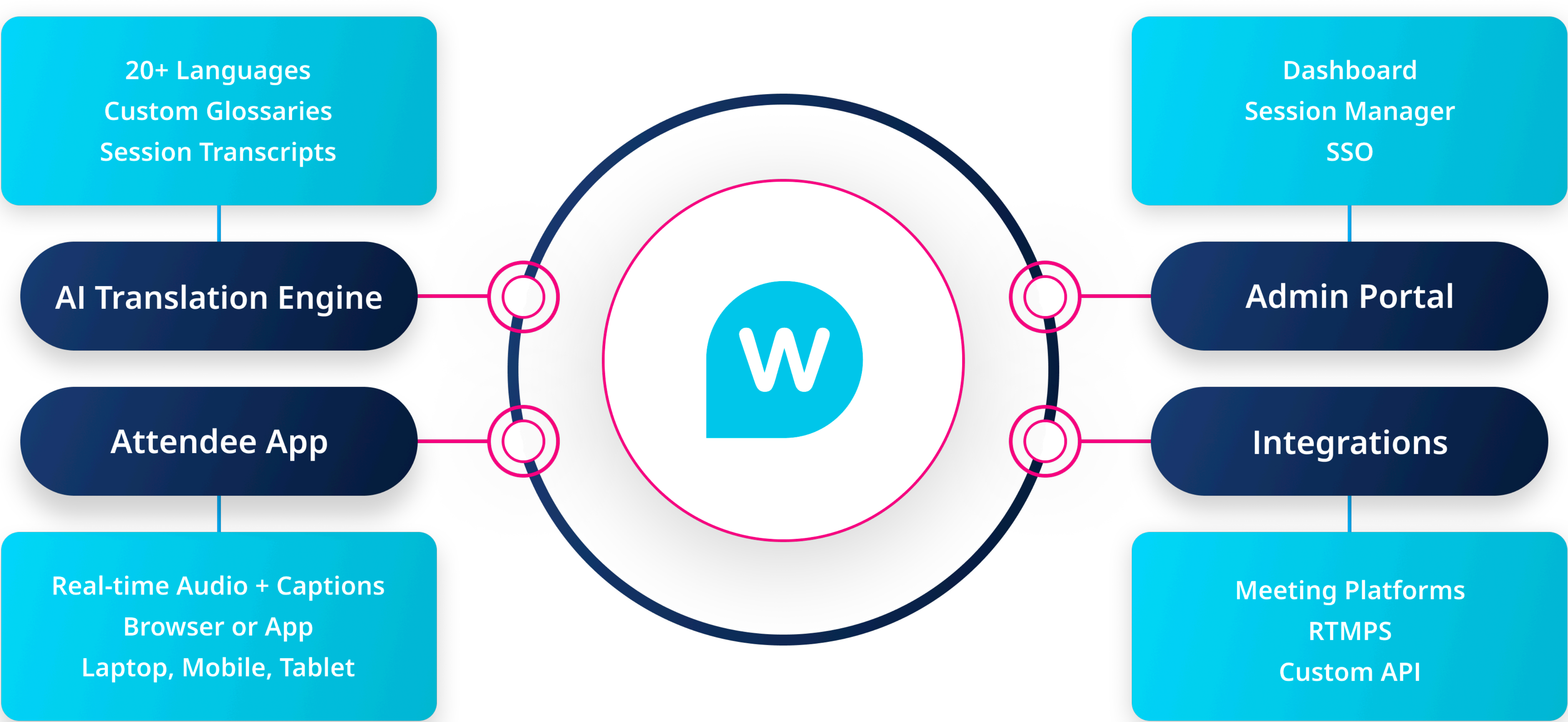
How Wordly Works

The Wordly platform captures the speakers' audio, processes it via a secure cloud infrastructure, and translates it into 20+ languages in real-time - without the need for human interpreters. Presenters speak in their preferred language and participants read or listen in their preferred languages; using their computer, tablet, or smartphone; at in-person or remote meetings and events.



The Wordly Platform

The Wordly Platform provides a comprehensive solution which supports the needs of event organizers, speakers, and participants - for all in-person, virtual, and hybrid events.



Wordly can be used for a wide range of meeting types and use cases. Some examples include:

External Examples	Internal Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Customer Webinars• Partner Training• User Groups• Industry Conferences• Non-Profit / Association Meetings• Government Town Halls	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sales Kickoff Meetings• Engineering Stand-ups• Company All Hands• HR Training• New Employee Onboarding• Operational Reviews

Contact Wordly

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