

# 2023 STATE OF COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE

The Industry's Largest &  
Longest-Running  
Benchmark Report



6th  
Edition!

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# INTRODUCTION

*From Paul Santilli, CEO and Chairman Emeritus of SCIP*

One thing Covid-19 taught the world is just how unprepared we are to cope with global disruption—how impactful it is to not only business behaviors and outcomes, but to everyday life. Organizations are now instilling safeguards to manage this disruption through technological improvements as well as changes to organizational structure, cultural norms, and priorities.

But the real winners will be those organizations that can not only manage their business functions through what I call “perpetual disruption,” but actually use it as a catalyst for growth.

I believe SCIP is best suited to provide the insight, knowledge, and experience our members need to use competitive and business intelligence to help their organizations grow. And by working with partners in the intelligence ecosystem, SCIP is positioned as the cornerstone of the global intelligence thought leadership community.

To that end, I am honored to introduce the State of Competitive Intelligence. This report showcases key learnings around CI disciplines and practitioners, and reinforces the fact that organizations with intelligence disciplines are better equipped in times of “perpetual disruption”.

There are 3 major points around CI and related intelligence-driven economies that will drive a successful strategy:

- A data-driven mentality is critical in the development of CI initiatives and plans
- Strategic decision-making needs to happen as close as possible to the time that new intelligence is revealed
- Organizations need to pivot their line of value to alternative/related outcomes in order to efficiently use intelligence to meet changing customer demand.

With the proper alignment of intelligence strategists and this knowledge around data-driven insights combined with executive-level decision-makers, you can create a truly world-class strategy.

I believe we are in the midst of a profound role transition, in that people at all levels of the intelligence profession are becoming critical to organizational growth and wellness.

It’s an exciting time to be in this field. I look forward to working with each of you in the SCIP community.

My sincere best,

Paul Santilli



## Our favorite findings from this year's survey include...



**66%**

For the average software company, 66% of sales opportunities are competitive. Fortunately, most CI leaders understand how crucial it is to enable sellers with competitive intel: 64% say sales is a very important CI stakeholder group, and 56% are using win/loss analysis to determine where their enablement efforts are most needed.

88% of CI stakeholders want regular updates on their competitive landscapes—ideally on either a weekly or monthly basis (only 9% want quarterly updates, and even fewer want daily updates). At this point, only 70% of CI leaders are fulfilling this desire for regularity.



**88%**



**55%**

Since 2021, we've seen a 55% increase in the share of stakeholders who say competitive intelligence is "absolutely critical" to their success. 99% of the stakeholders who completed our survey this year said CI is at least "somewhat important" to their success.

Since 2018, we've seen a 125% increase in the share of CI leaders who say they're measuring the success of their programs with key performance indicators (KPIs). Competitive win rate is the most popular KPI.



**125%**

## THE NEED FOR COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE

For the average software company, **66% of sales opportunities are competitive.**

We asked each respondent to estimate the share of their sales opportunities that are competitive. Given that sellers are not always aware of (or willing to report) the presence of a competitor, it's likely that some respondents underestimated—which means the true average is likely higher than 66%.

### Related Content

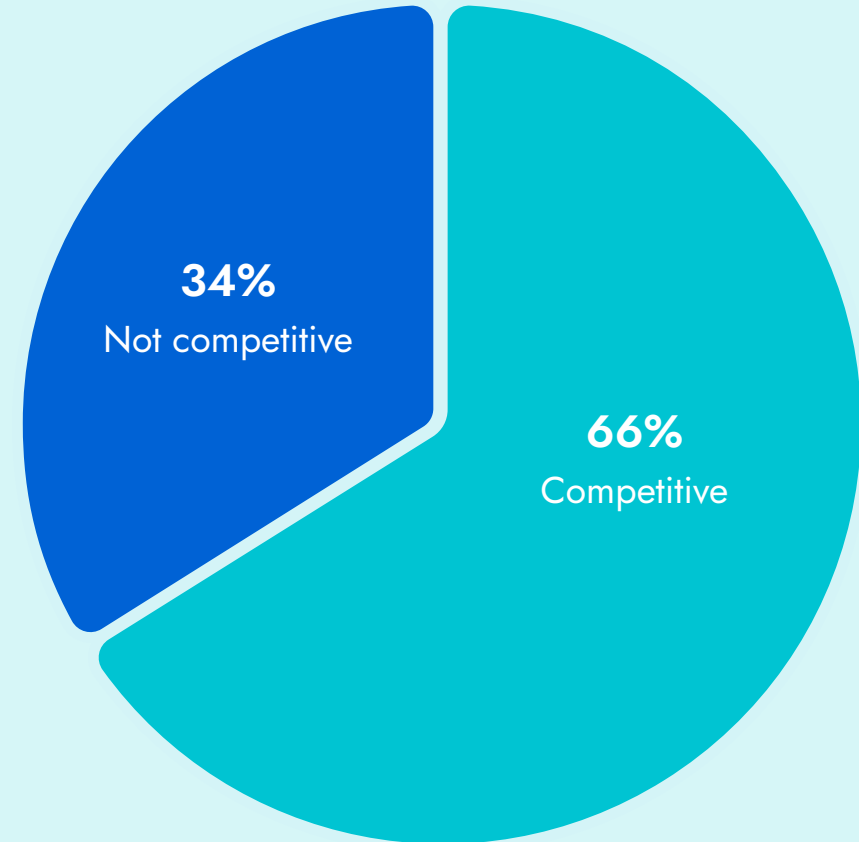


#### TEMPLATE

Sales Battlecard Templates

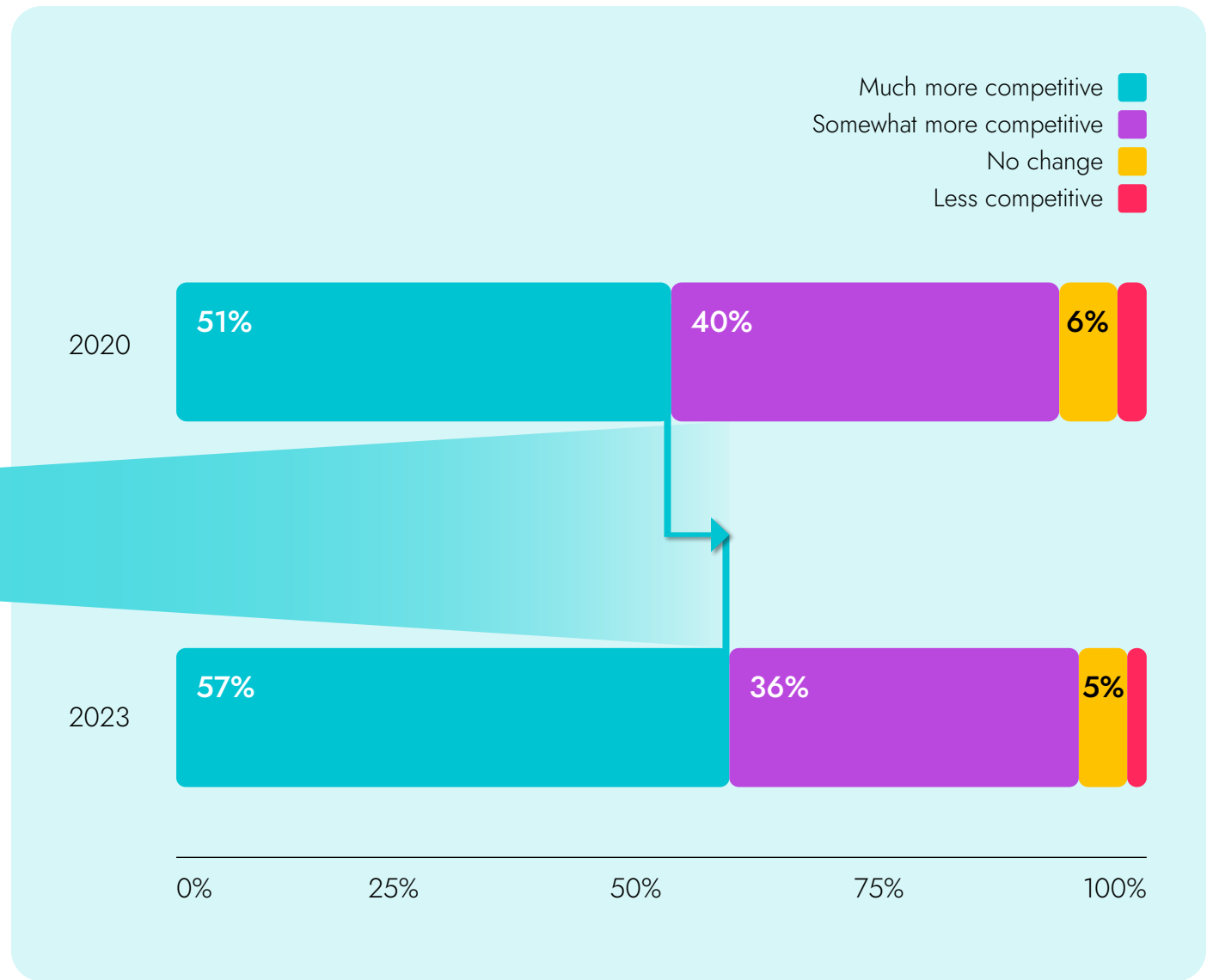
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### Opportunities in the average software company's sales pipeline



**Q:** Would you say your market has gotten more or less competitive in recent years?

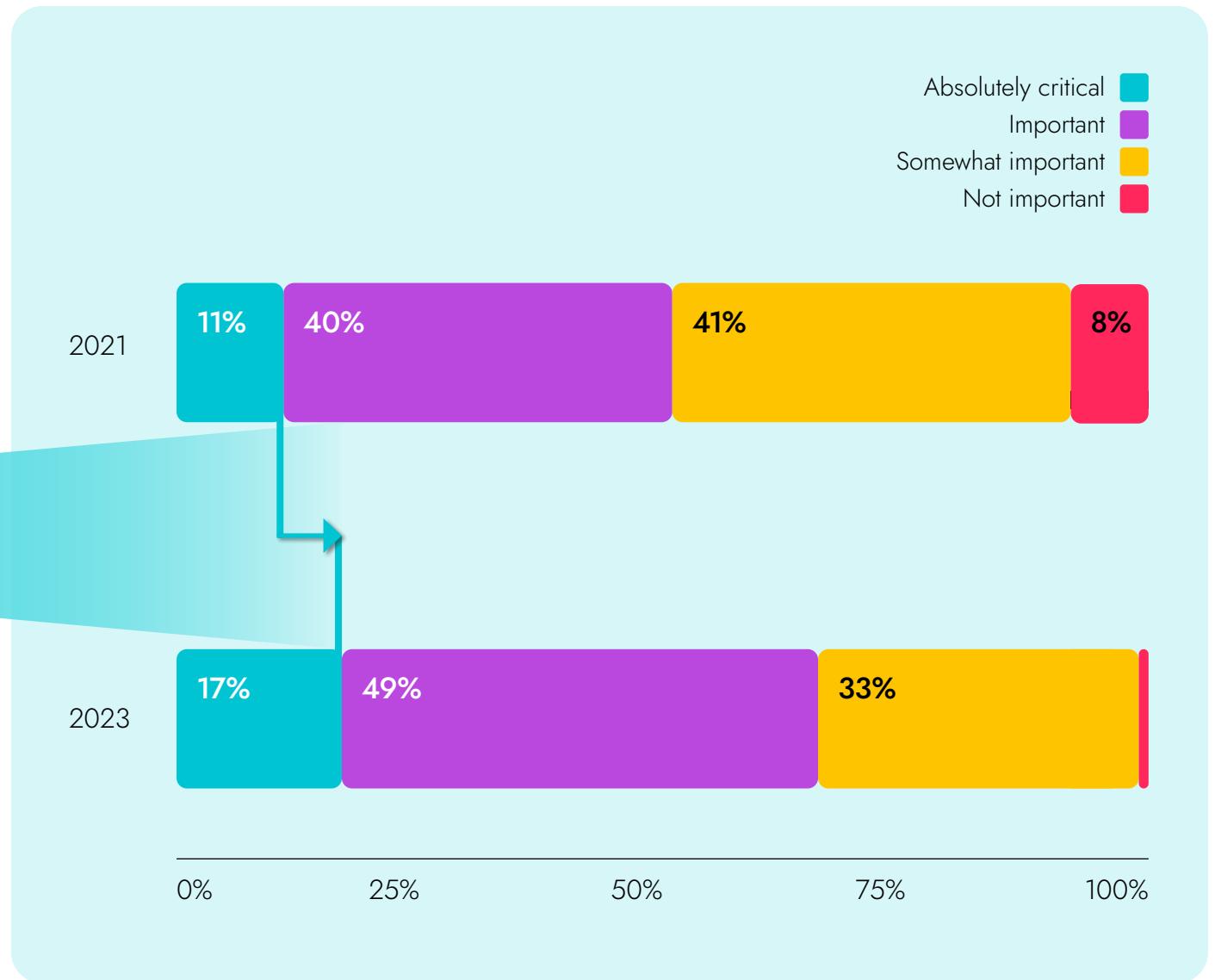
**12%** increase in the share of CI leaders who say their market has gotten *much more competitive*.



## Q: How important is competitive intelligence to your success?



**55%** increase in the share of CI stakeholders who say CI is **absolutely critical** to their success.

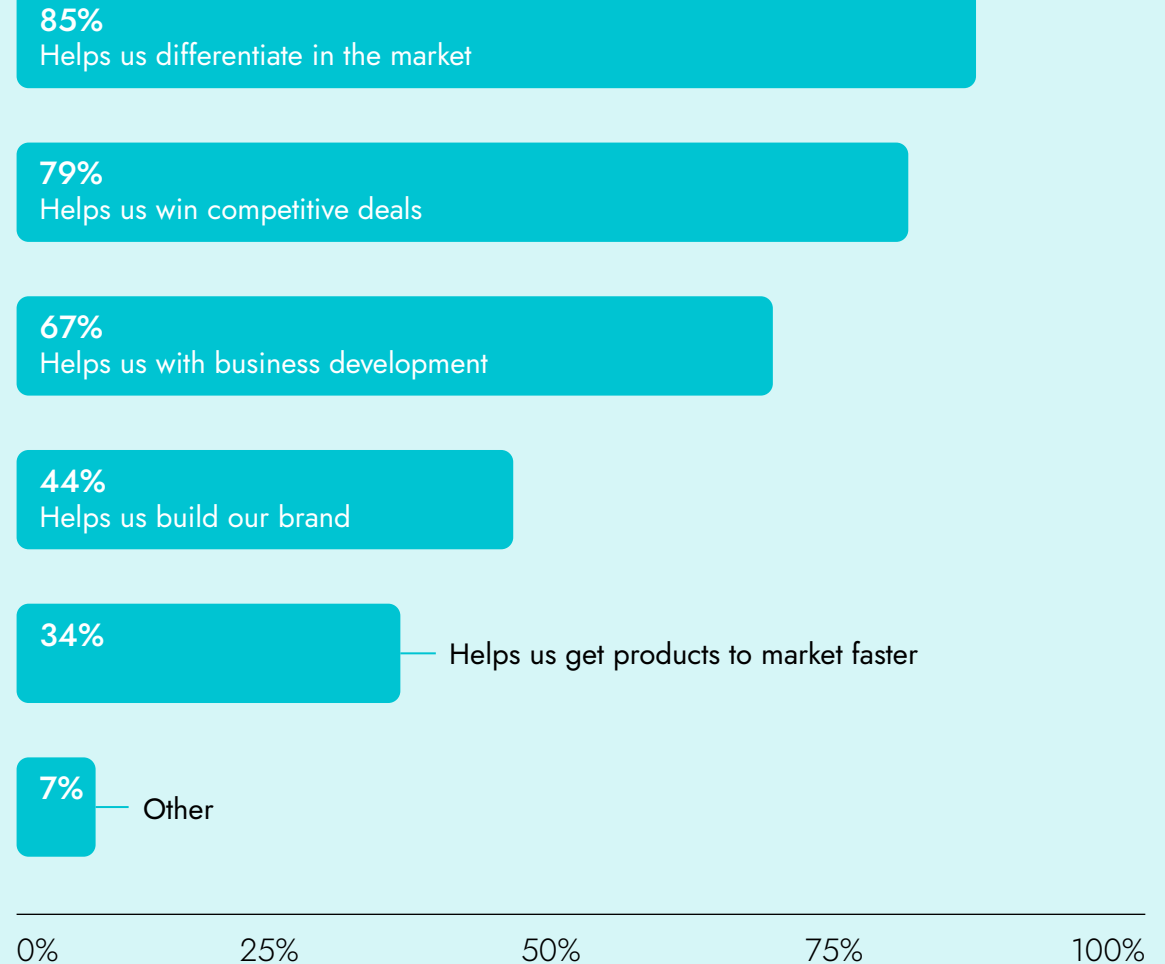


**Q:** Why is CI important to your company's success? Select all that apply.



**TAKEAWAY**

Applications of CI that directly impact revenue are considered most important.

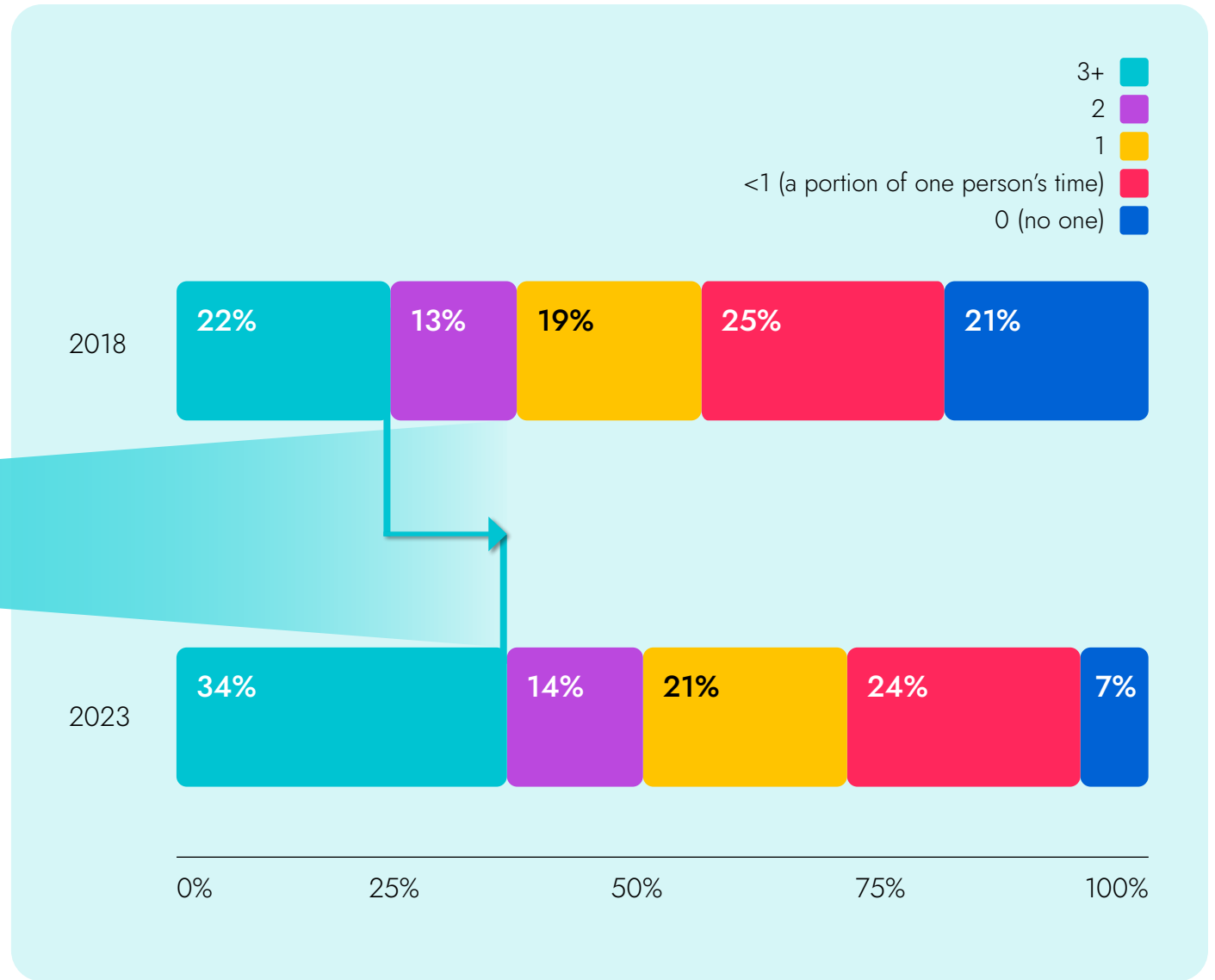




# INVESTMENTS IN COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE

**Q:** How many employees at your company are dedicated to CI?

**55%** increase in the share of CI teams with **3 or more dedicated employees**. More companies are building dedicated competitive intelligence departments.



## 33% of respondents expect their CI headcount to **increase** in 2023.

42% expected headcount increases in 2022—so macroeconomic forces are slowing the growth of CI teams. Nevertheless, it's encouraging to see that a third of CI teams will add new members in 2023.

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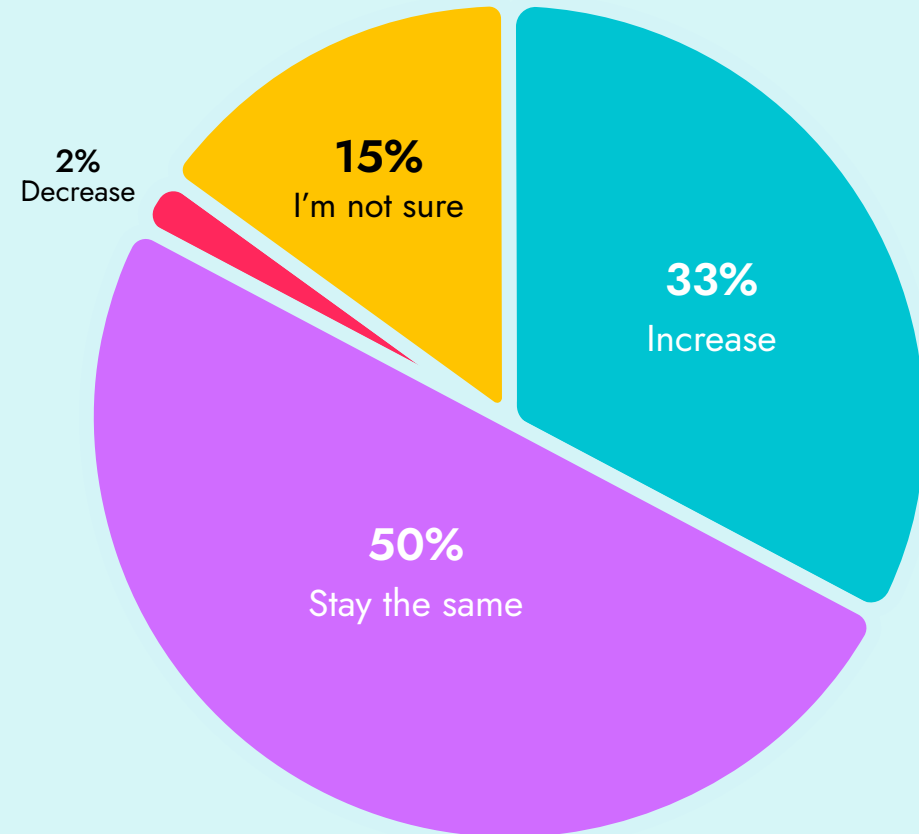


#### **WEBINAR**

Hiring Your CI Dream Team

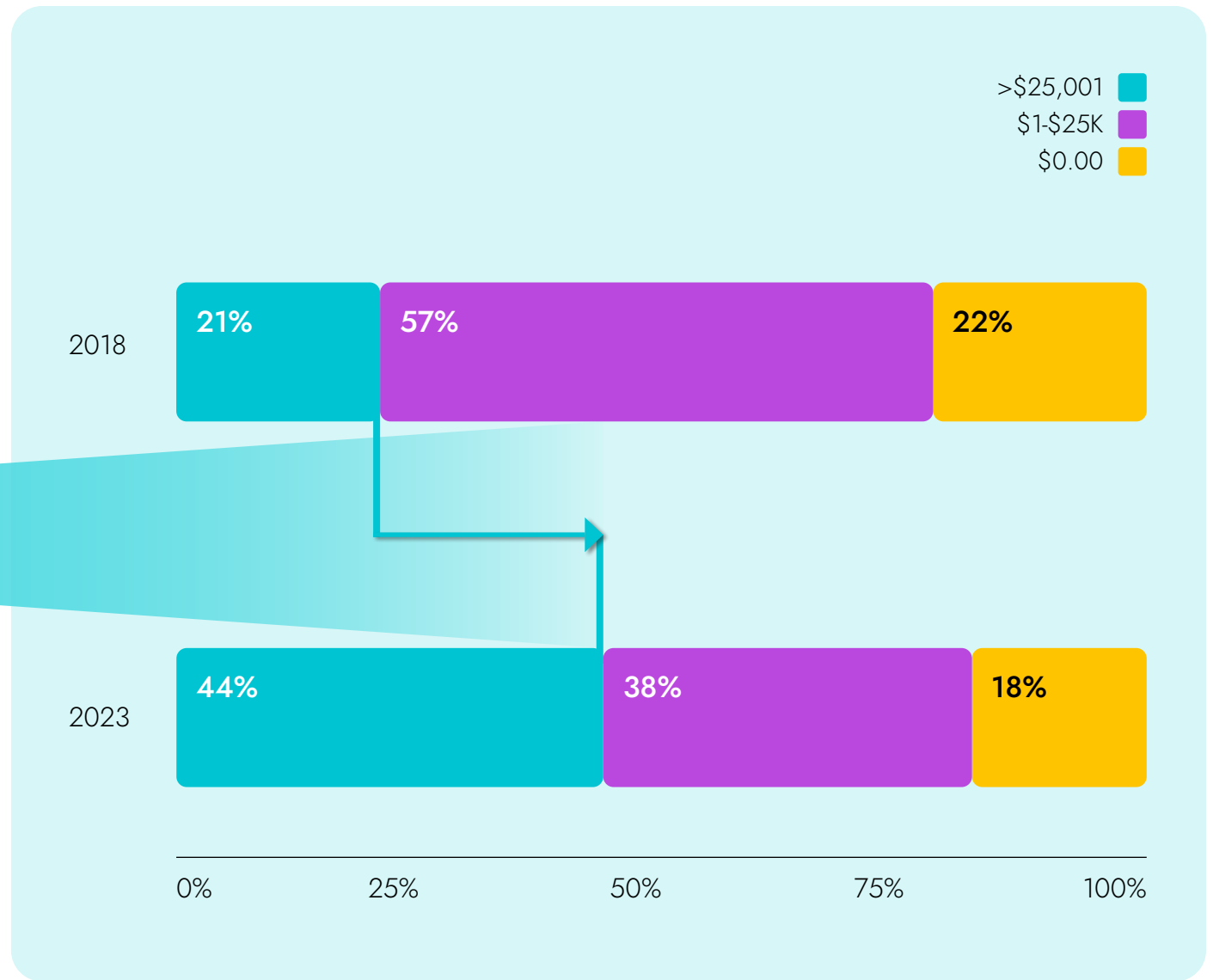
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### **Q:** How do you expect your CI headcount to change in 2023?



**Q: What is your annual CI budget (excluding headcount)?**

**110%** increase in the share of CI teams with **more than \$25,000 in budget**. CI teams have traditionally worked with little to no budget, but this is rapidly changing.



## 26% of respondents expect their CI budgets to **increase** in 2023.

36% expected budget increases in 2022—so, again, we're seeing the impact of macroeconomic forces. But, as with headcount, the unwillingness across companies to reduce CI budgets is encouraging.

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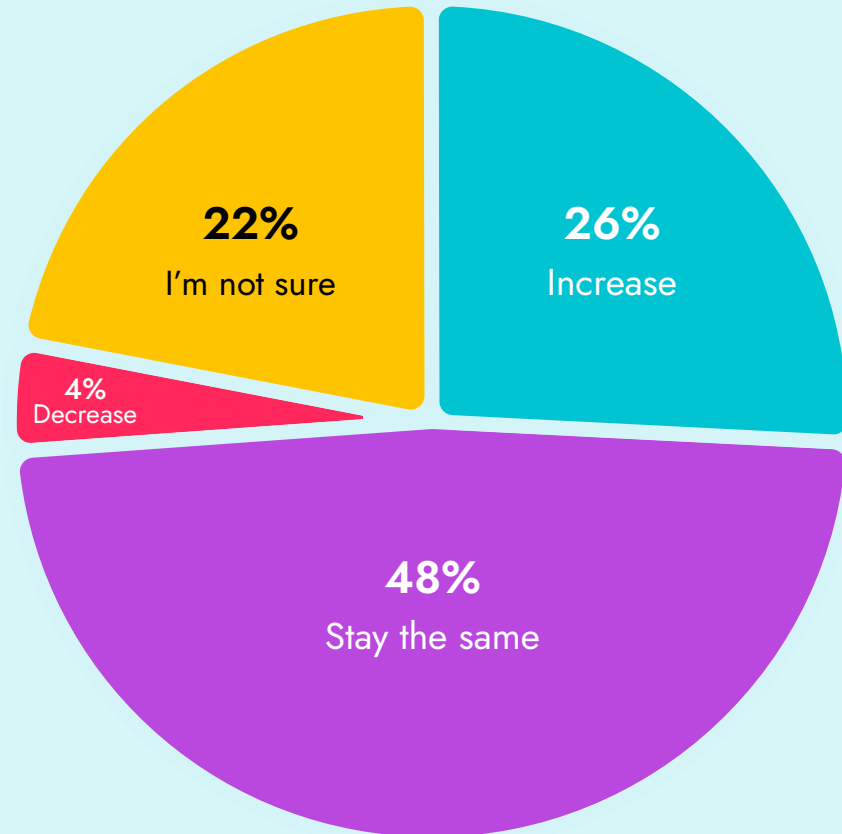


#### **BLOG POST**

How to Create a Business Case for Your CI Program

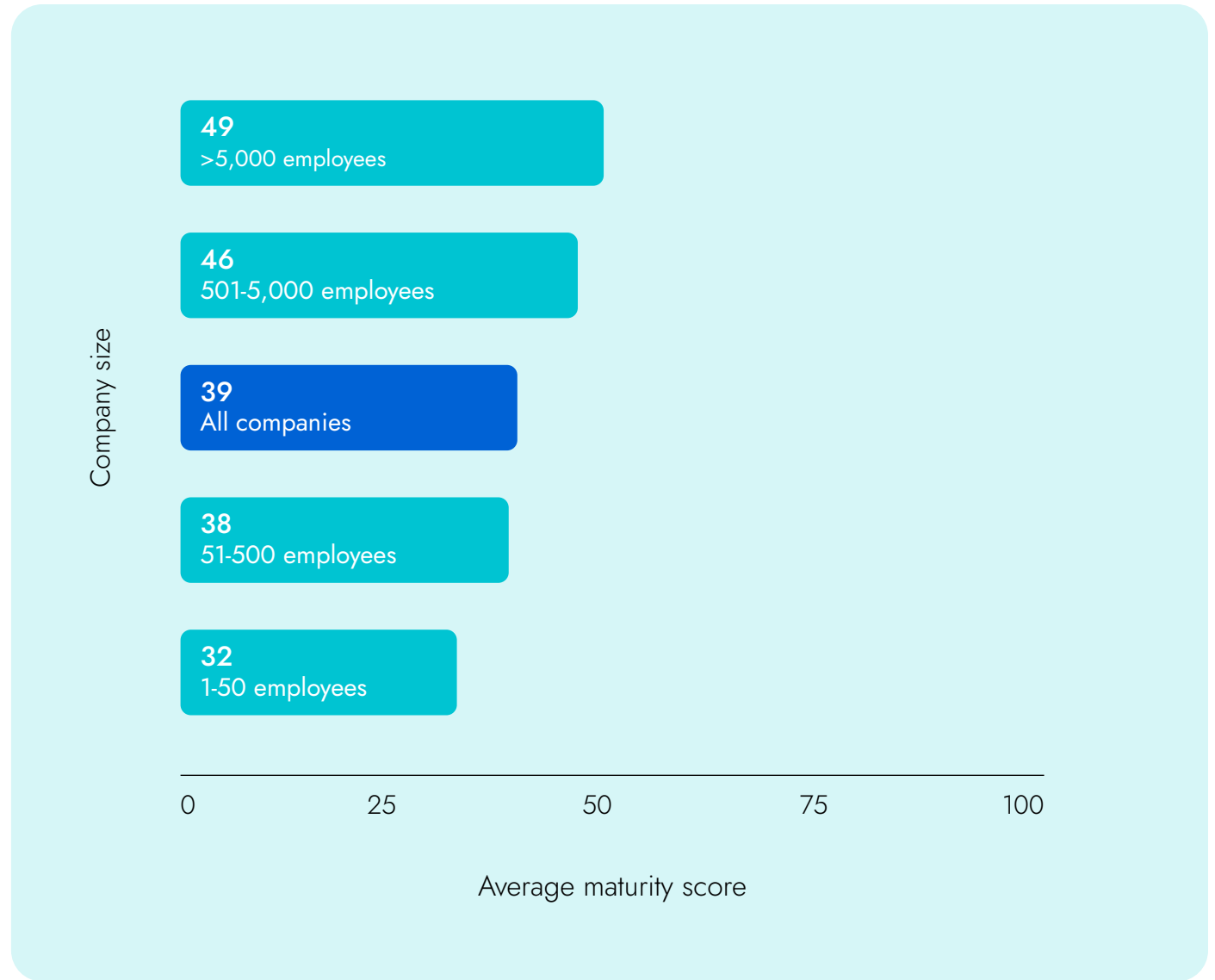
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**Q:** How do you expect your CI budget to change in 2023?



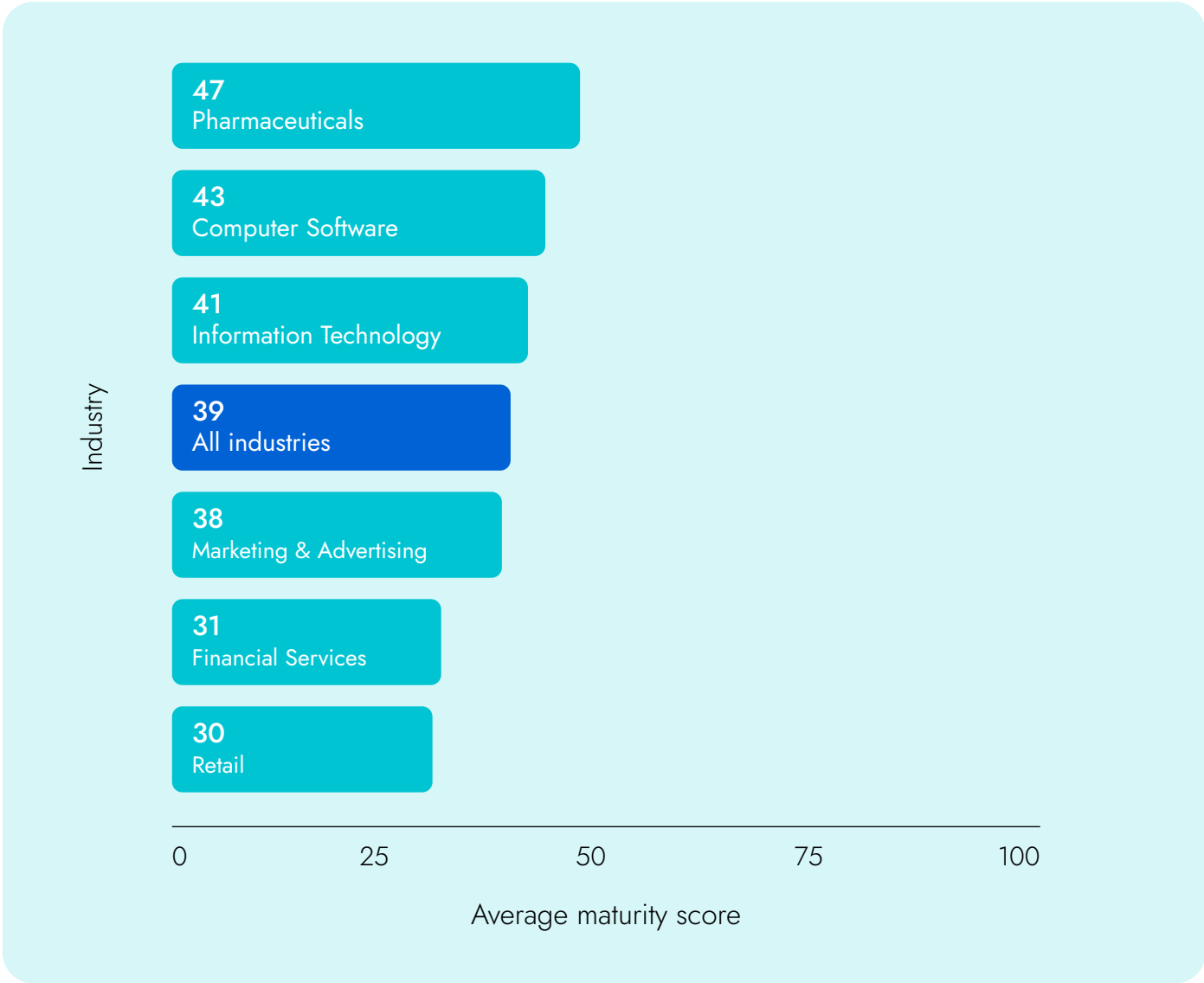
# COMPETITIVE INTELLIGENCE PROGRAM MATURITY

On a maturity scale from 0 to 100, the average CI program is at **39**.



Averages based on data from the Competitive Program Grader. Visit [crayon.co/grader](https://crayon.co/grader) to calculate the maturity of your CI program.

On average, CI programs in the **pharma**, **software**, and **IT** industries are relatively mature.

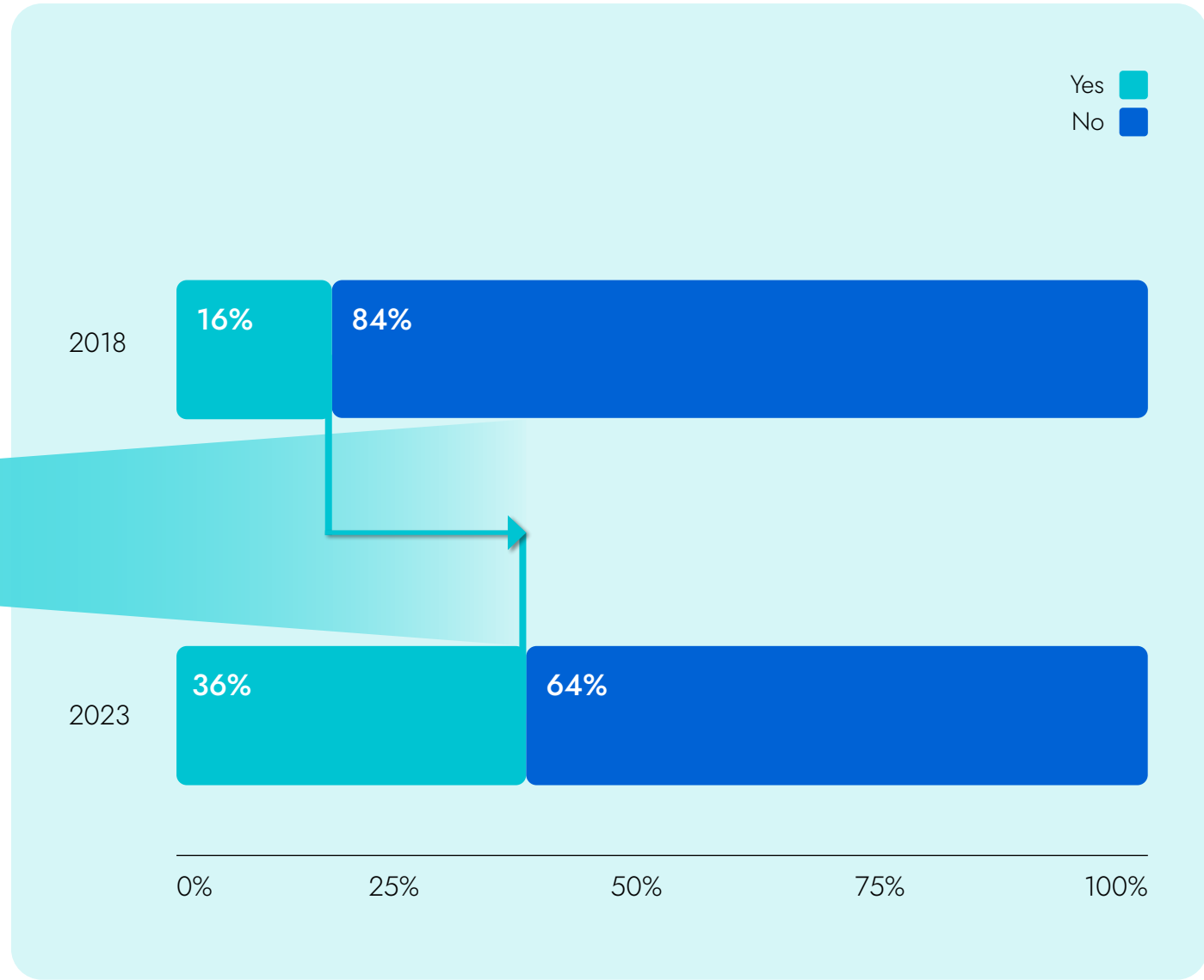


Averages based on data from the Competitive Program Grader. Visit [crayon.co/grader](https://crayon.co/grader) to calculate the maturity of your CI program.

# SUCCESS MEASUREMENT

**Q:** Do you have defined competitive intelligence KPIs (a.k.a. success metrics)?

**125%** increase in the share of CI programs with *KPIs*.



84% of those with defined KPIs use **both qualitative & quantitative** measures.

Compared to early-stage CI programs, mature CI programs are only slightly more likely to use both qualitative and quantitative KPIs. Even amongst programs that are still getting their footing, the use of only one type of KPI is rare.

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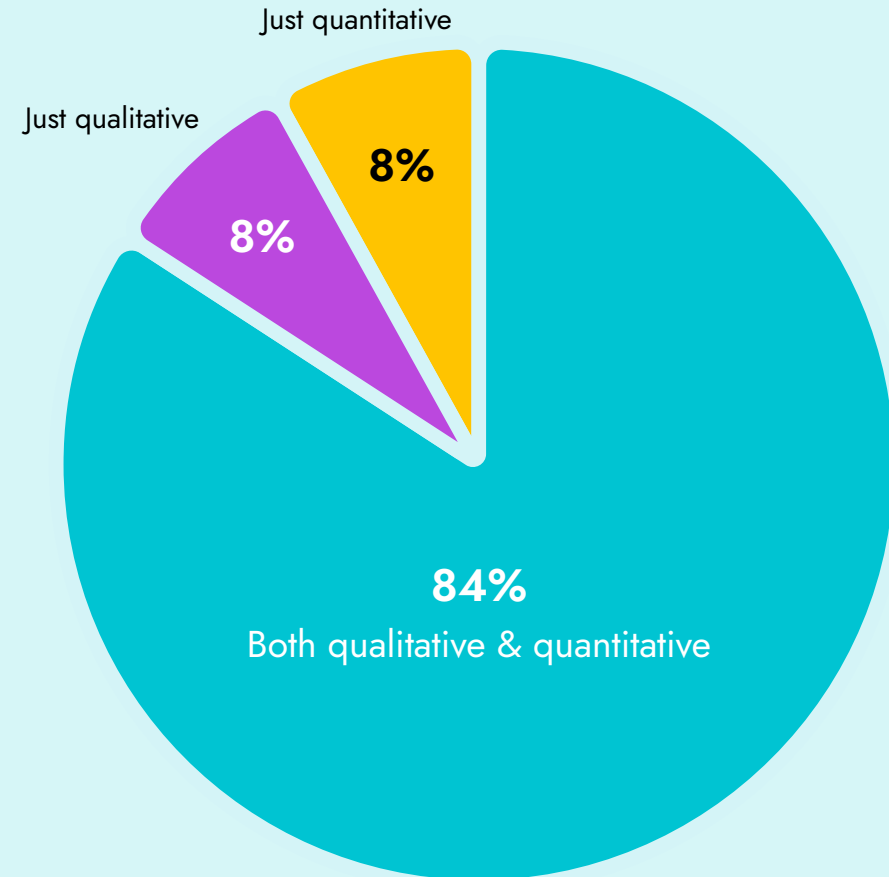


#### **WEBINAR**

How to Measure Your CI Program

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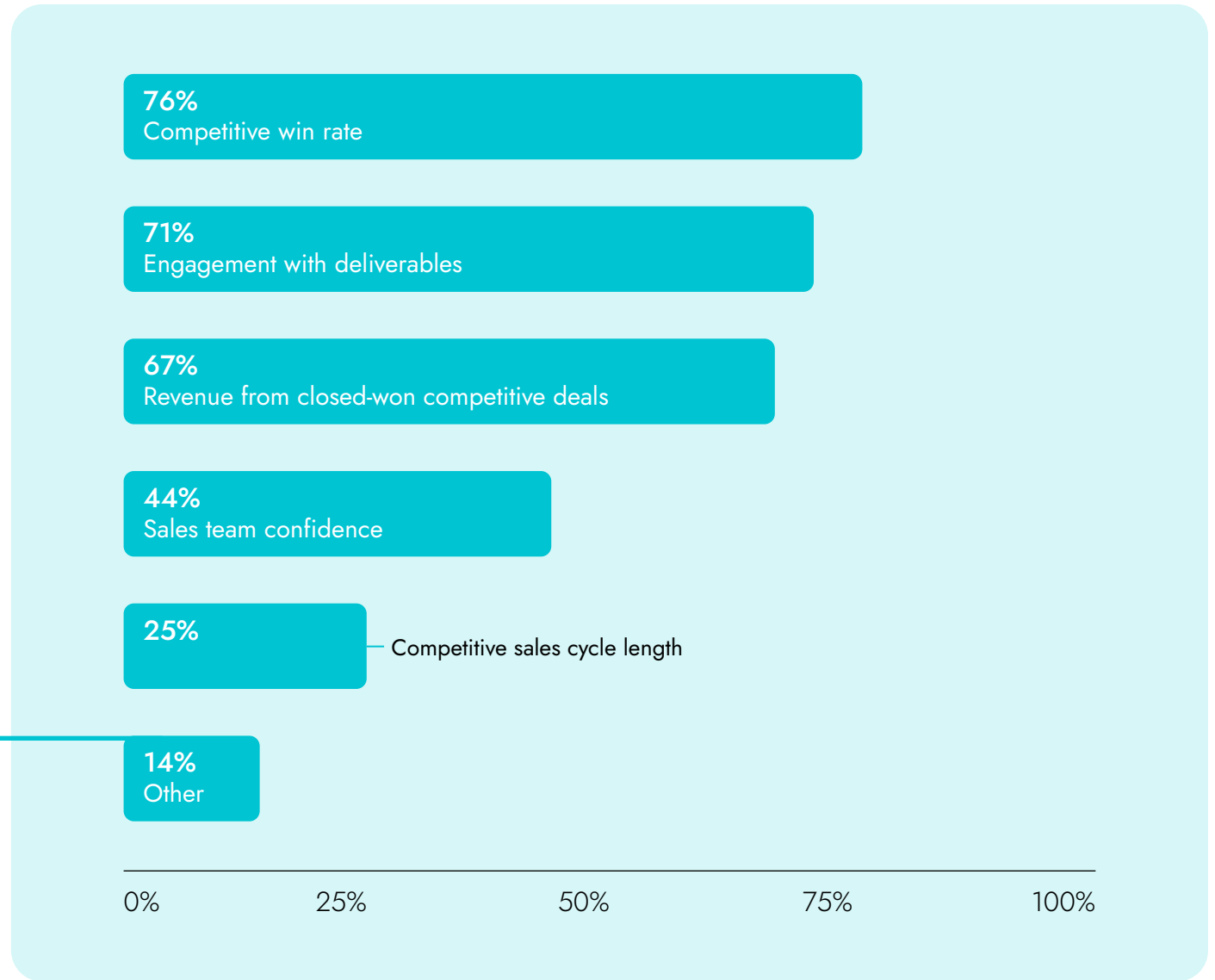
#### **Q:** What kinds of KPIs do you use?





**Q: Which KPIs do you use?**  
Select all that apply.

Some of the other KPIs submitted by respondents included number of deals supported, number of requests received, and stakeholder satisfaction.



# INTELLIGENCE COLLECTION

The average CI practitioner spends 40% of their time **collecting intel**.

Whether CI is the practitioner's primary focus at work makes no difference in how they divide their time. The average full-time CI practitioner spends 40% of their time collecting intel, and the same is true for the average part-time CI practitioner.

On staying focused:



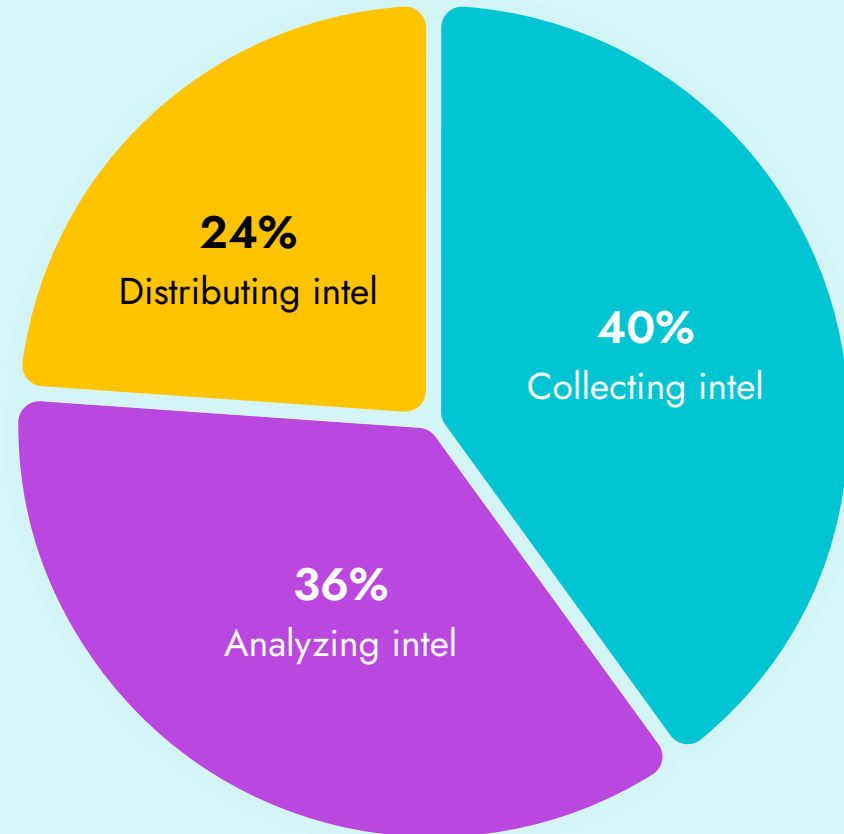
*Our space has hundreds of solutions, so crowded is an understatement. We're laser-focused on the who, the what, and—most importantly—the why of our customer base.*



**Kait Smith**

Product Marketing Manager / Intellum

**Q:** How much of your time do you spend on each responsibility?

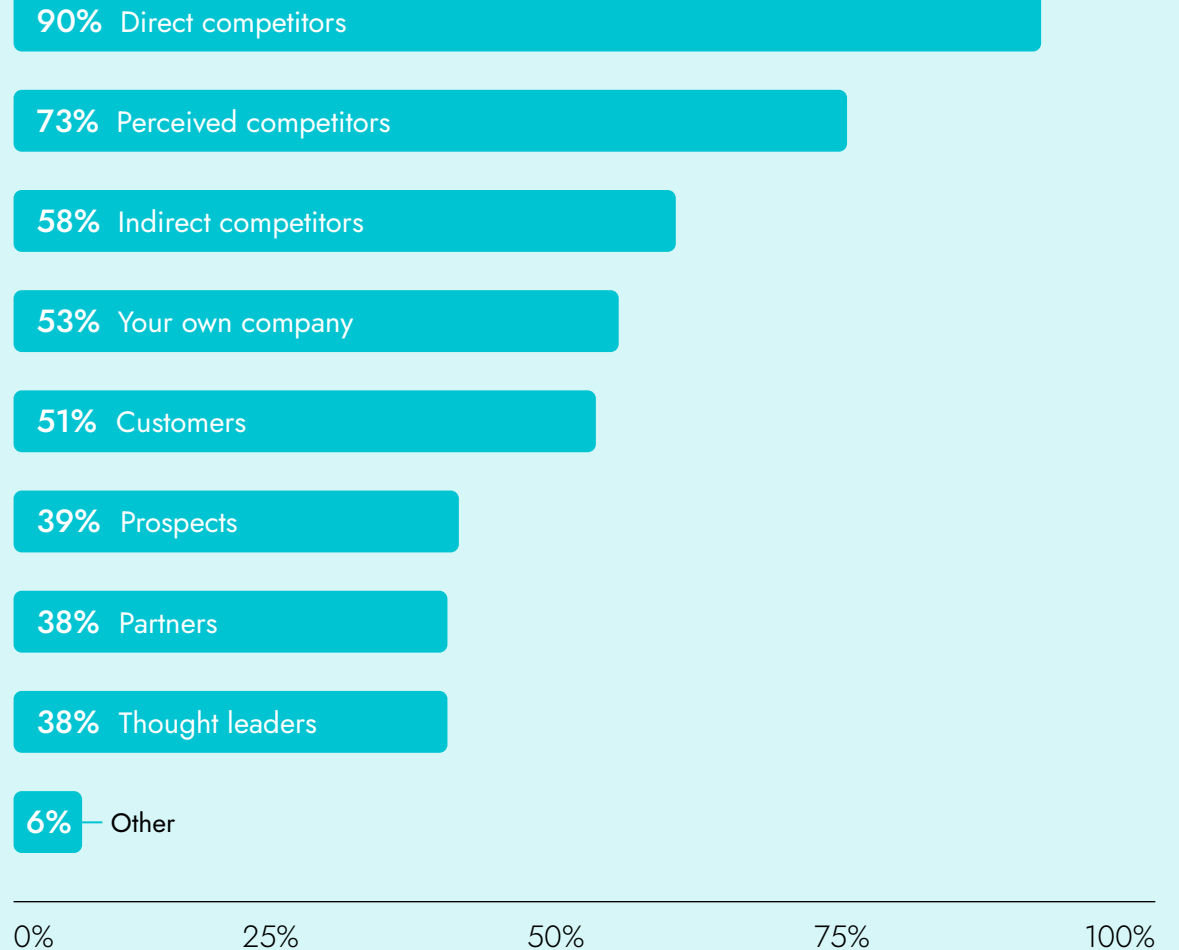


**Q:** On which of the following do you collect intel? Select all that apply.



**BEST PRACTICE**

Keep tabs on your indirect competitors to avoid getting blindsided by major moves.



## Q: How valuable do you consider each source of intelligence?

The intel you source from your coworkers is extremely valuable not only because it can inform strategy and tip deals in your favor, but also because it gets your coworkers involved in the process—which helps drive culture change and adoption of CI.

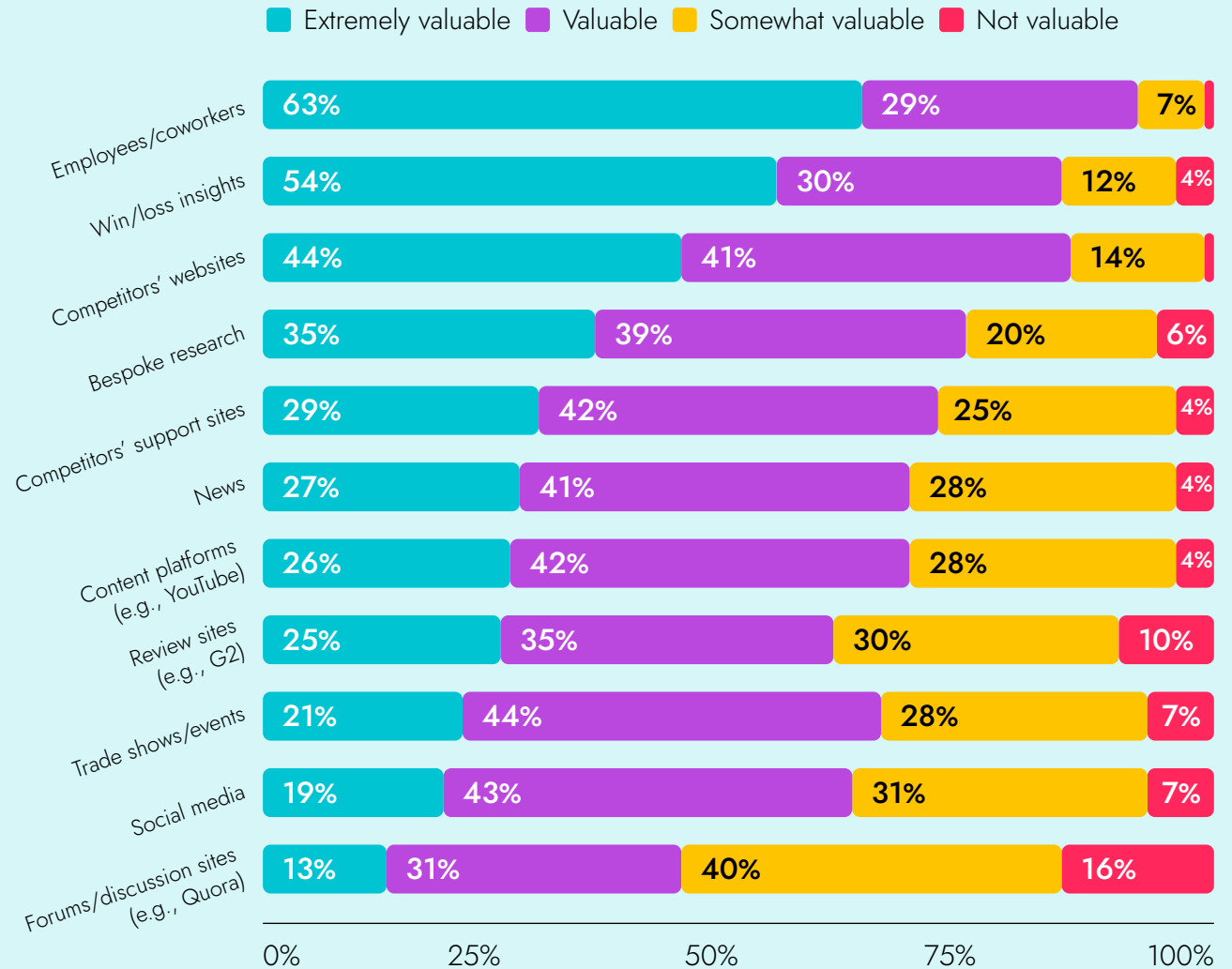
### Related Content



#### BLOG POST

5 Tips to Help You Capture Field Intelligence

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## 56% of CI leaders try to determine why they win some deals and lose others.

Of those with roles focused specifically on CI, 63% do win/loss analysis—compared to only 52% of those with responsibilities beyond CI. The less time you have for CI, the less likely you are to do win/loss.

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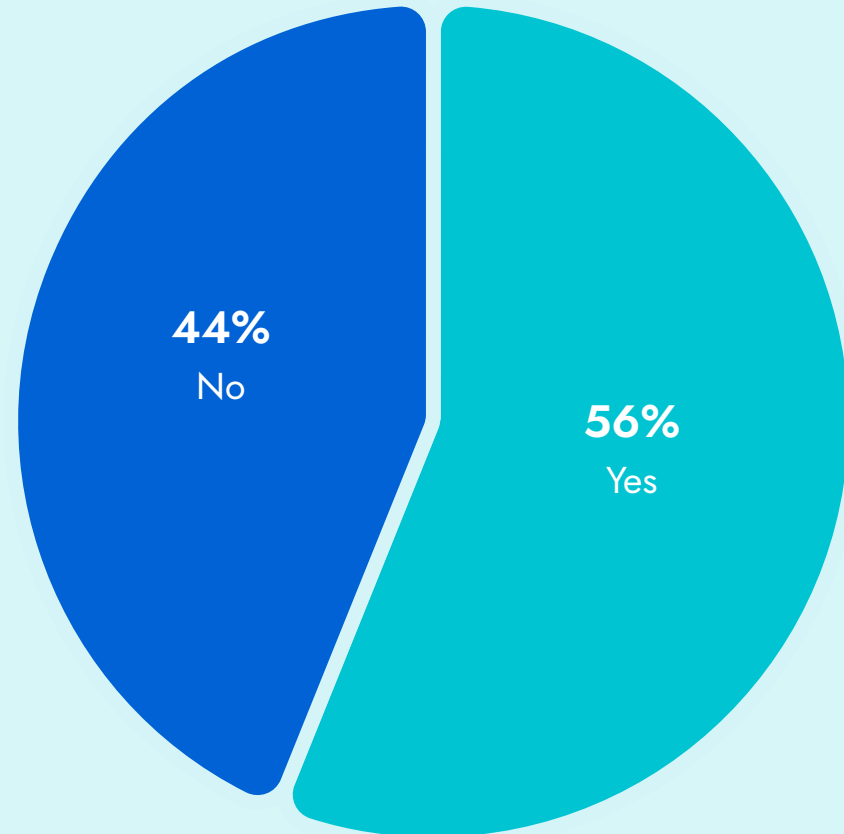


#### **EBOOK**

How to Succeed with Win/Loss Analysis

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### Q: Do you do win/loss analysis?



**28% of those who do win/loss analysis do it without any dedicated budget.**

Although dedicated budget is by no means required to get started with win/loss, it does unlock the ability to use specialized software and/or leverage the expertise of a consultant—both of which are tremendously valuable.

On making the case for win/loss:



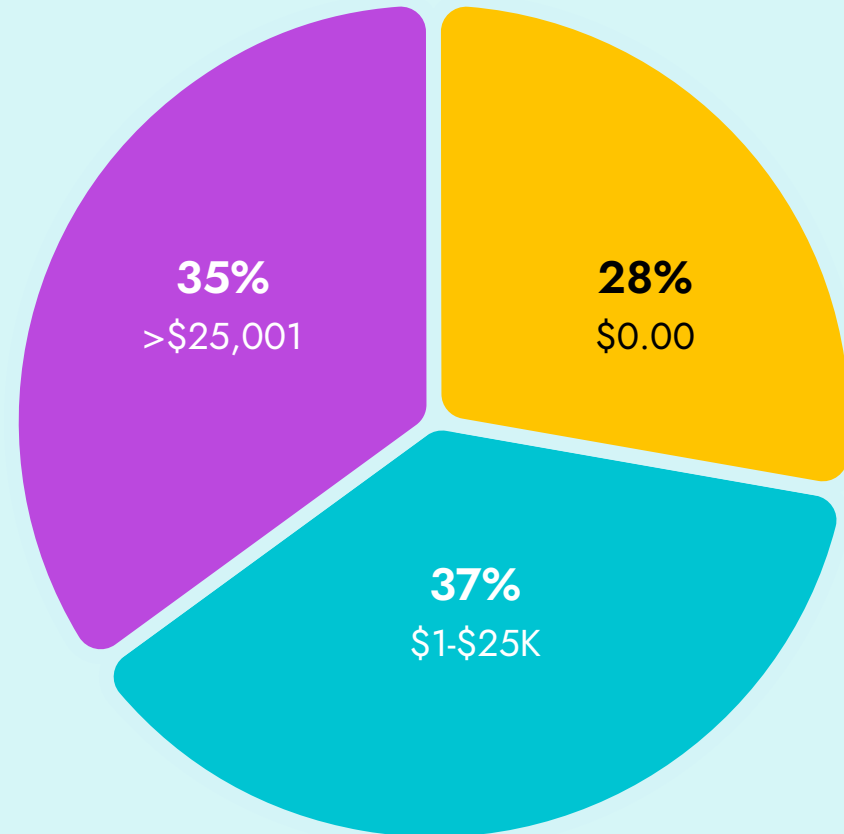
*Win/loss helps you understand operational gaps and highlights opportunities for leaders to increase win rates, reduce churn, drive higher revenue, and delight buyers.*



**Carolyn Klinger**

Director, Market & Competitive Intel / Affinity

**Q: What is your annual win/loss analysis budget?**



**29% of those who do win/loss analysis do it on an **ad-hoc (as needed) basis.****

Of those with roles focused specifically on CI, only 24% do win/loss on an ad-hoc basis—compared to 33% of those with responsibilities beyond CI. This reinforces the notion that the latter group does not yet consider win/loss essential.

On programming win/loss:



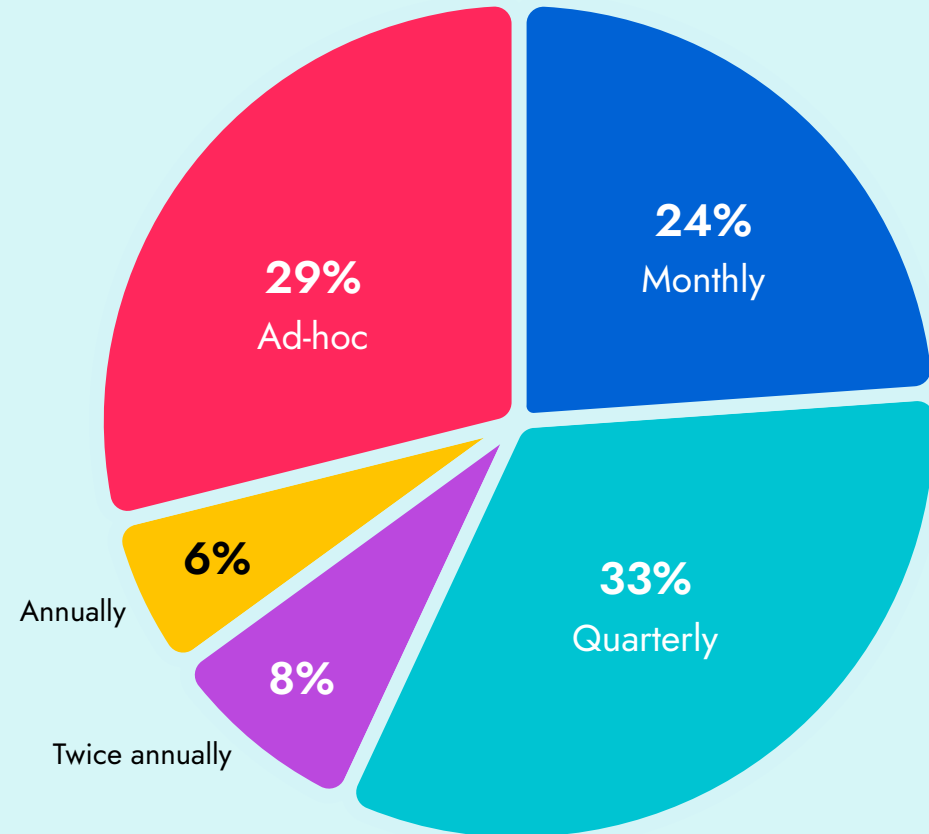
*Win/loss analysis is an ongoing program that's built to bring in insights on a quarterly basis.*



**Penny Moran**

Head of Competitive Intelligence / Zuora

**Q:** How often do you do win/loss analysis?



**67% of those who do win/loss get insights directly from their buyers.**

Of those who do win/loss regularly, 70% get insights directly from their buyers—compared to only 58% of those who do win/loss on an ad-hoc basis.

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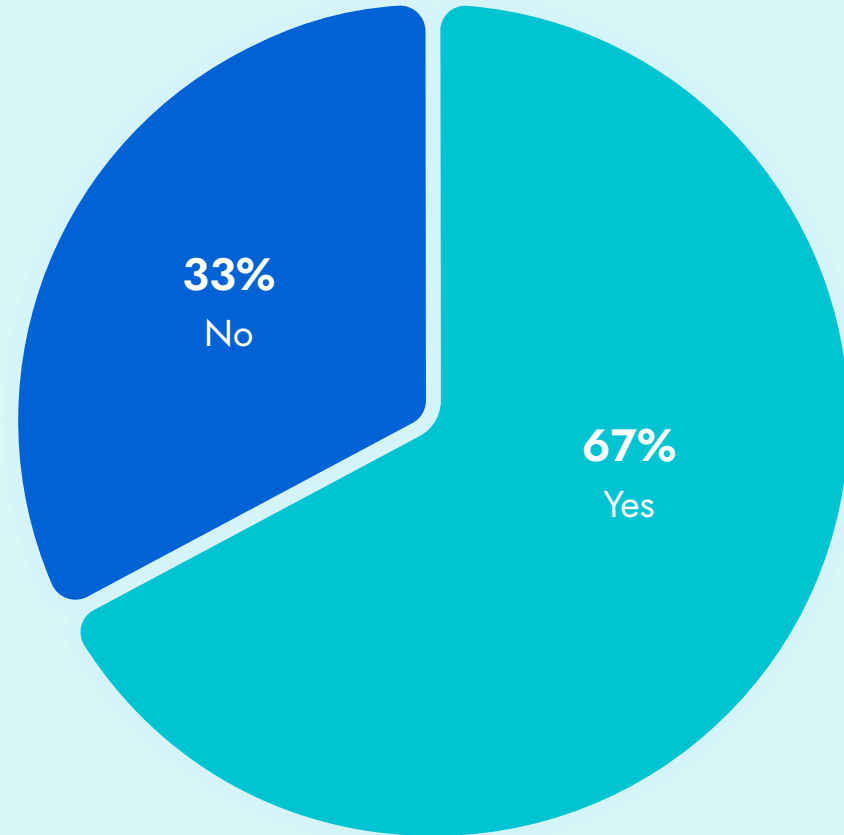


**PODCAST**

How to Create a Win/Loss Program

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**Q: Do you do win/loss interviews?**





# INTELLIGENCE DISTRIBUTION

**Q:** Rate the importance of these stakeholder groups.

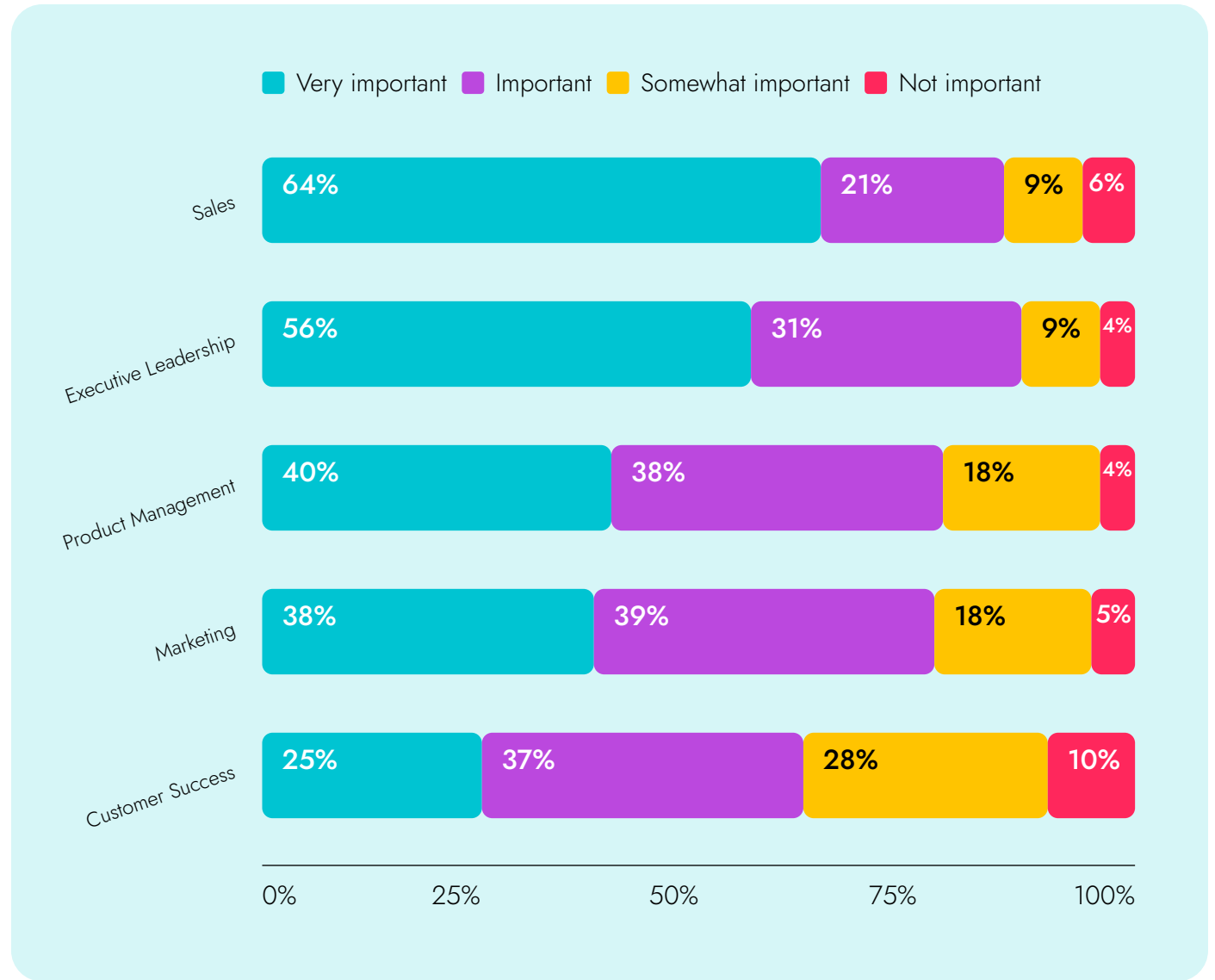
Related Content



## BLOG POST

3 Strategies Customer Success Managers Need to Keep Customers From Switching to Competitors

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**Q:** Which of the following channels do you use to distribute intel? Select all that apply.



**BEST PRACTICE**

Improve adoption by embedding CI into your stakeholders' favorite tools and existing workflows.

71% Meetings

68% Email

53% Slack/Teams

48% Knowledge sharing site (e.g., SharePoint)

39% Competitive intelligence platform

31% Sales enablement platform

27% CRM

5% Other

0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

## 30% of respondents share intel on an ad-hoc basis.

Headcount makes a big difference here. Of those with roles focused specifically on CI, only 16% say they share intel on an ad-hoc basis—compared to 37% of those who have responsibilities beyond CI.

On sharing intel with stakeholders:



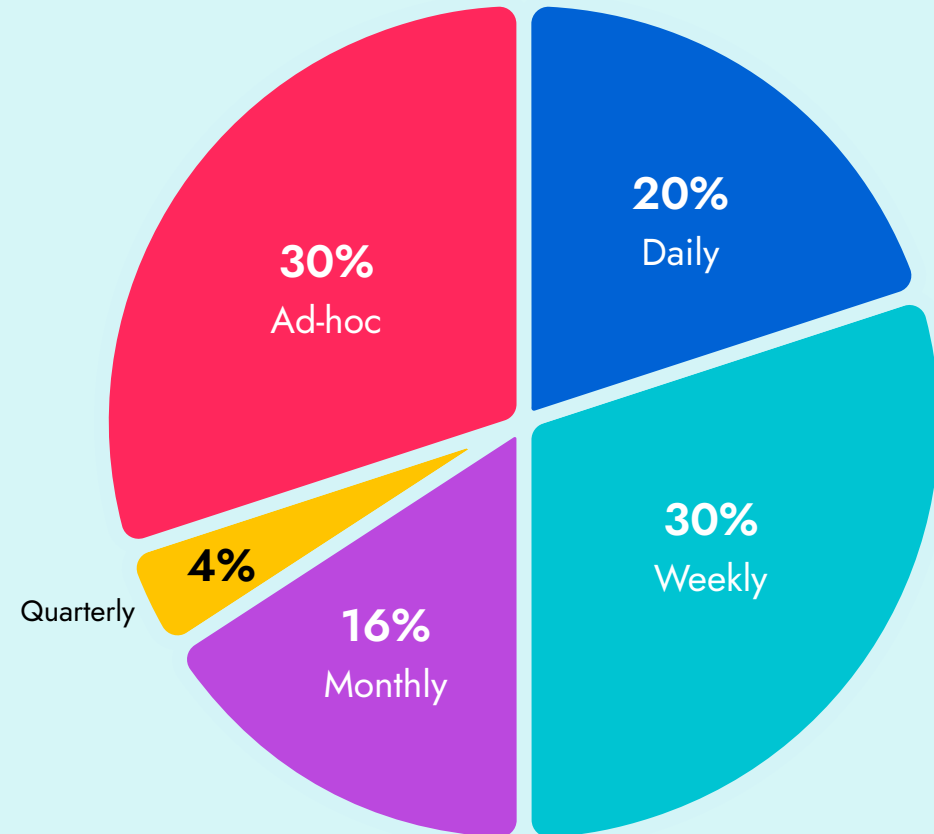
*Don't overlook obvious insights; they can be more actionable than you may think. There's value in validation.*



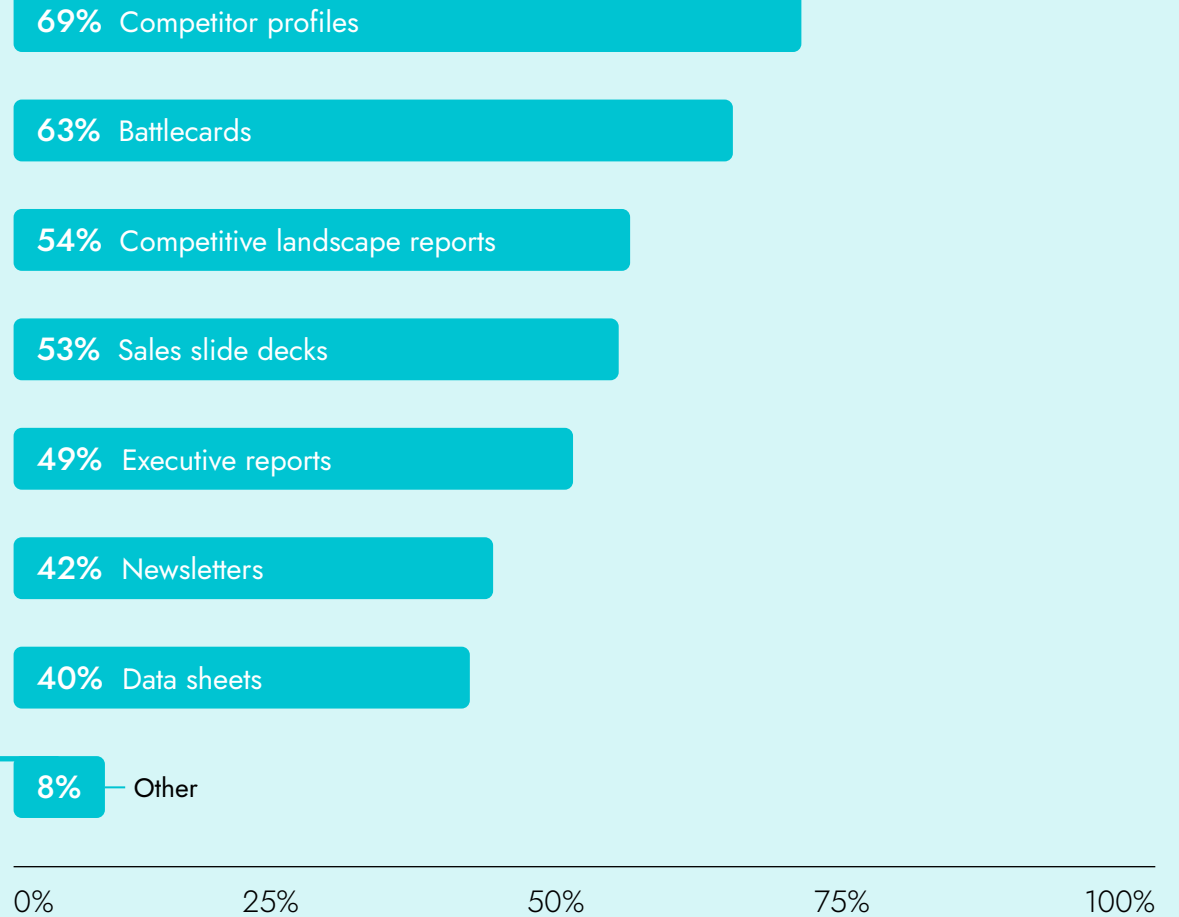
**August Jackson**

VP, Market Intel & Competitive Strategy / Deltek

**Q:** How often do you and your colleagues share competitive intel?



**Q:** Which deliverables do you produce? Select all that apply.



Some of the other deliverables submitted by respondents included SWOT analyses, thought leadership articles, and analyst briefings.

## Nearly half of CI leaders update deliverables on an **ad-hoc basis**.

Once again, headcount makes a big difference. Of those with roles focused specifically on CI, only 34% update their deliverables ad-hoc—compared to 52% of those who have responsibilities beyond CI.

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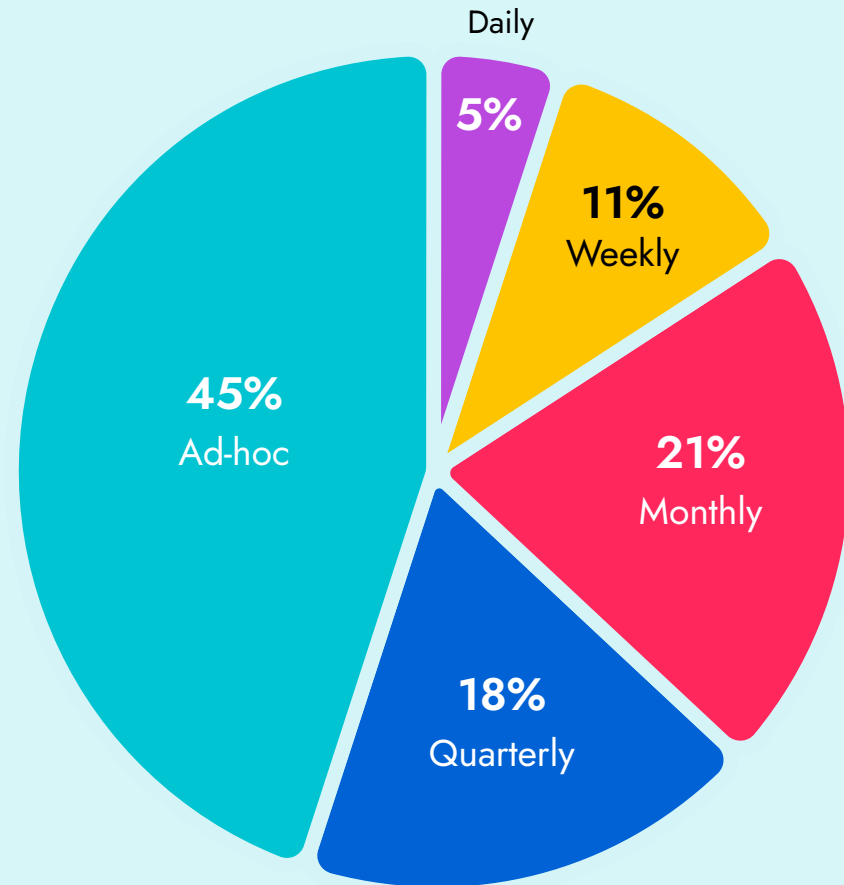


#### **BLOG POST**

How to Create a Competitive Culture

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### **Q:** How often are your deliverables updated?



## 36% of CI leaders are able to measure the usage of their deliverables.

Headcount doesn't matter much here—but technology does. Of those with a dedicated CI platform, 49% can measure the usage of their deliverables—compared to only 24% of those without a dedicated CI platform.

On the value of conversations:



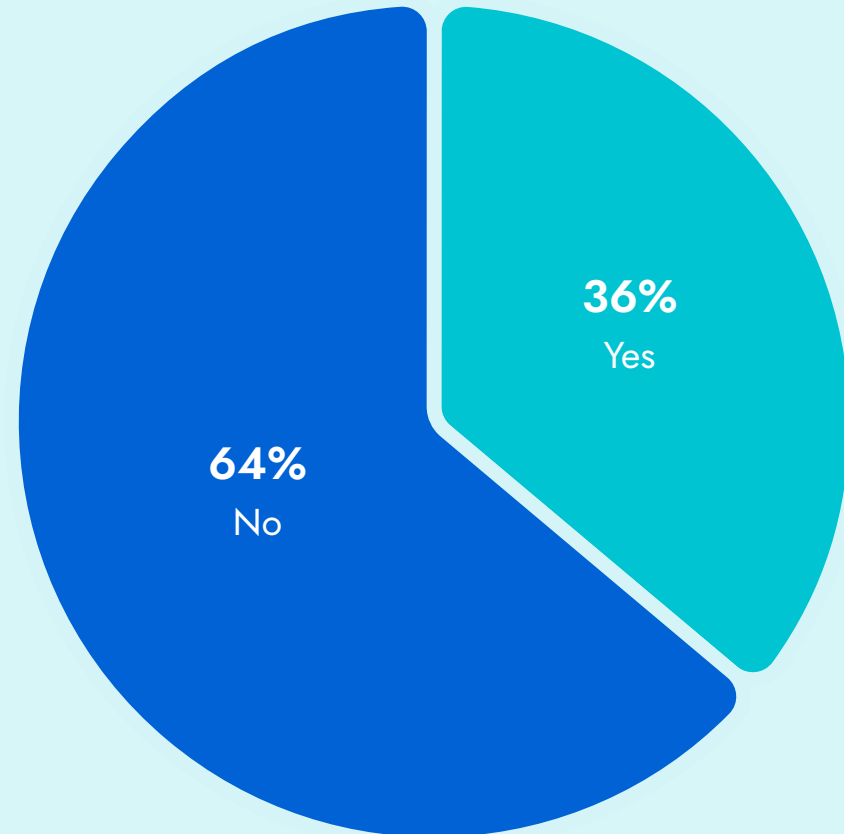
*1-on-1 conversations with stakeholders help you better understand their areas of focus for the coming quarter and year, enabling you to better customize insights and meet their needs.*



**Carolyn Klinger**

Director, Market & Competitive Intel / Affinity

**Q:** Do you have a way to measure the usage of your deliverables?



## 63% of CI leaders enable their sellers with **competitive battlecards**.

Competitive battlecards are ubiquitous in the software sector, where competition is particularly intense. 86% of CI leaders at software companies enable their sellers with battlecards.

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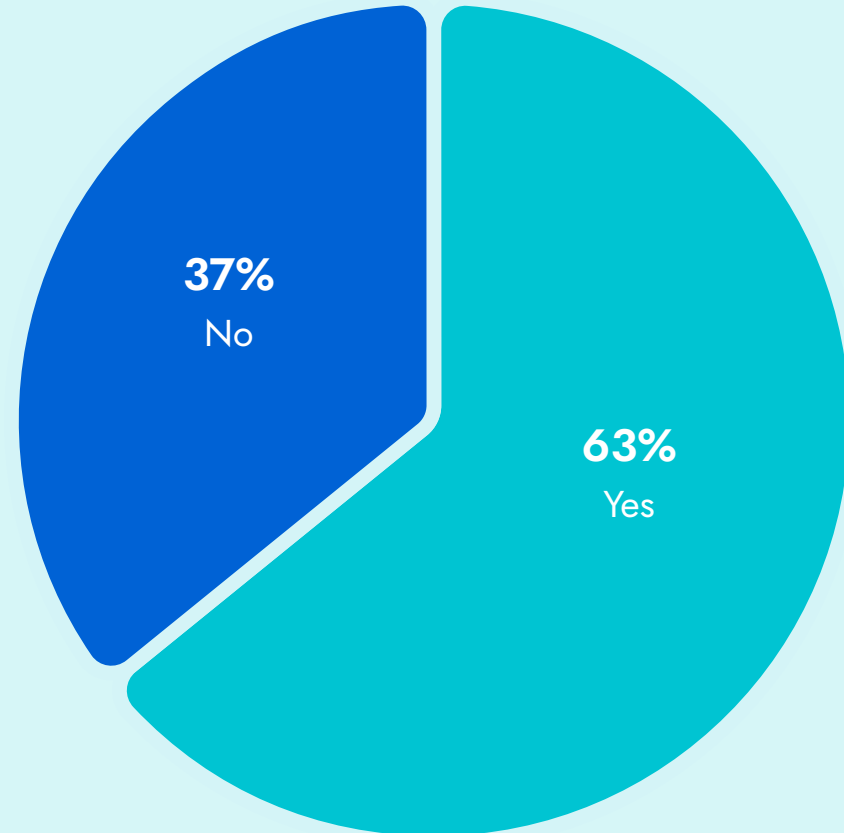


#### **WEBINAR**

The Ultimate Battlecard Breakdown

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**Q:** Do you produce competitive battlecards for your sales team?



**54%** of respondents say they maintain **at least 10** battlecards.

For comparison, 56% of respondents from software companies say they maintain at least 10 battlecards.

#### Related Content

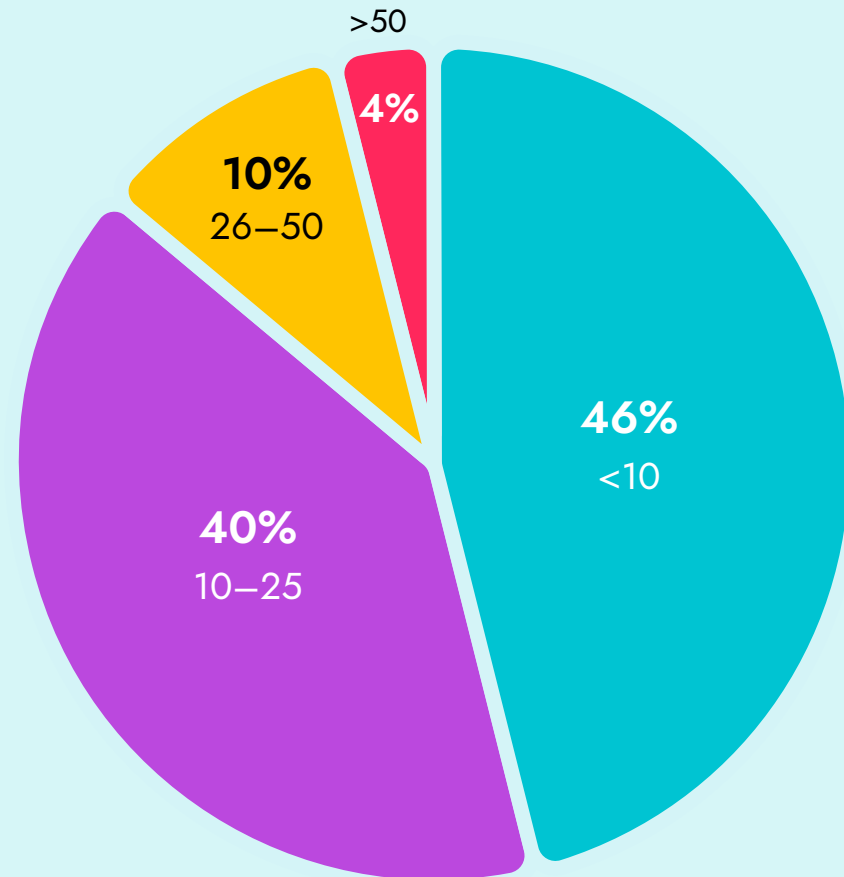


#### **CASE STUDY**

Learn how Dropbox increased battlecard adoption by 400%

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**Q:** How many battlecards do you maintain?





## 56% of those who create battlecards are able to measure usage.

Again, the right technology makes all the difference here. Of those with a dedicated CI platform, 71% can measure the usage of their battlecards—compared to only 31% of those without a dedicated CI platform.

On the value of conversations:



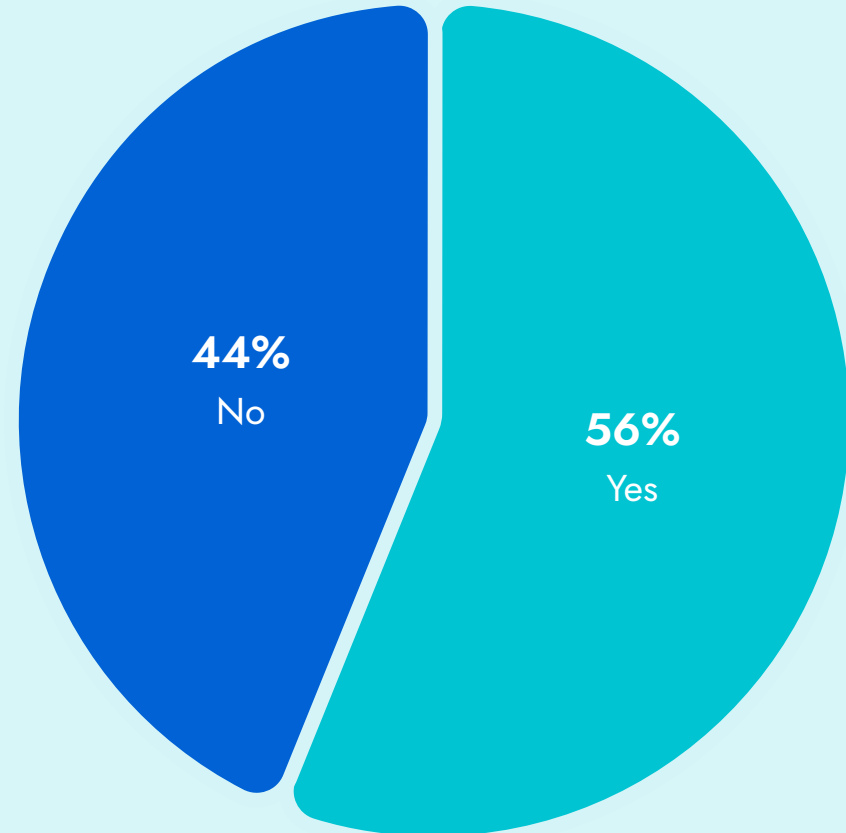
*Consistent check-ins with sellers allow the PMM and sales enablement teams to understand what is working in the field vs. what is falling short of expectations.*



**Casey Ward**

Senior Product Marketing Manager / Mural

**Q:** Do you have a way to measure the usage of your battlecards?



## 58% of those who can measure their battlecards think they're well-adopted.

68% of respondents from very large companies (>5,000 employees) say their battlecards are well-adopted. Only 42% of respondents from very small companies (<50 employees) say the same.

On working with sales teams:



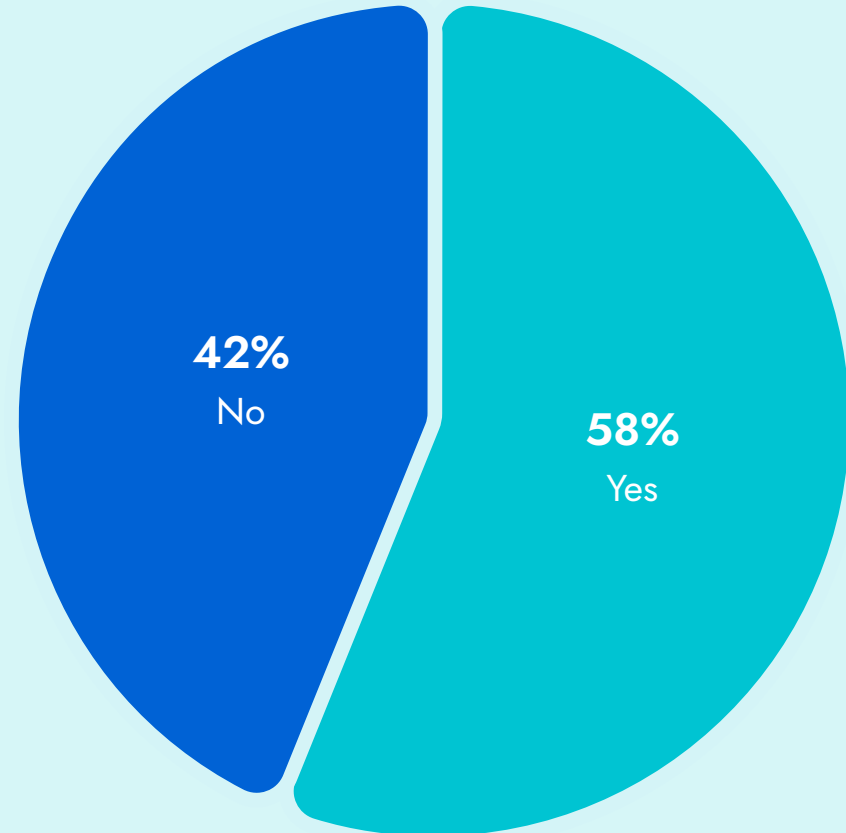
*I've established with our field teams that talking about our industry, and especially our competitors, is healthy. If we don't know what's in our space, we'll fail to differentiate.*



**Kait Smith**

Product Marketing Manager / Intellium

**Q:** Do you consider your battlecards to have strong adoption?



## Most respondents are **unsure** if battlecards have improved win rates.

56% of CI leaders can tell you whether their battlecards are being used—but only 34% can tell you whether they're impacting win rates. Getting to this next level of measurement will be a key area of focus in 2023 and beyond.

### Related Content

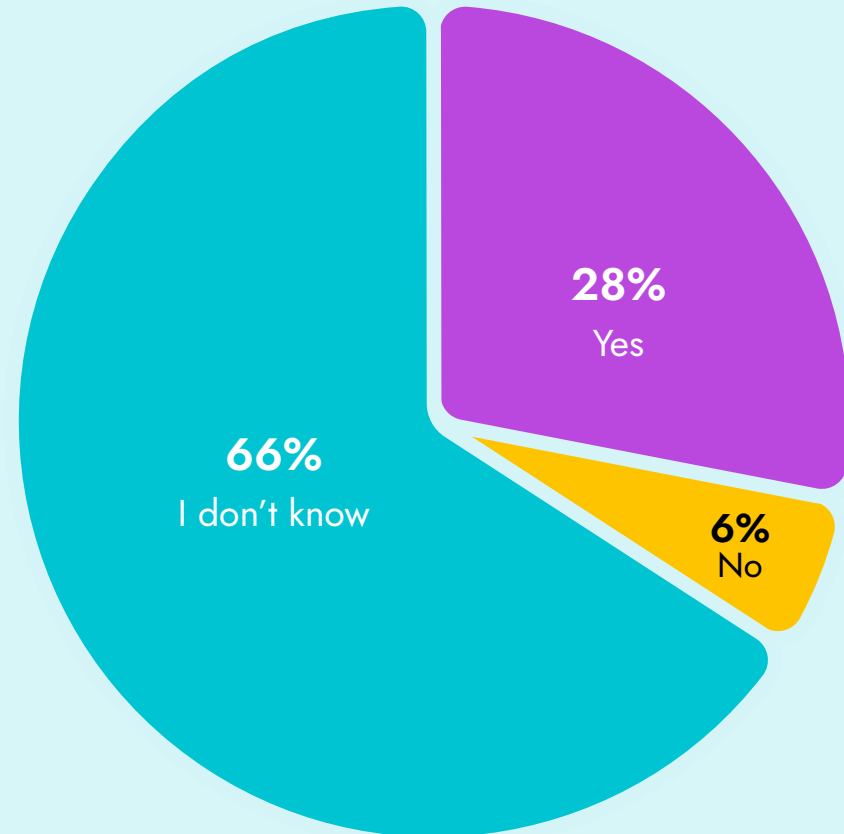


#### **PODCAST**

The ROI of Competitive Intelligence

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### **Q:** Have battlecards improved your competitive win rate?



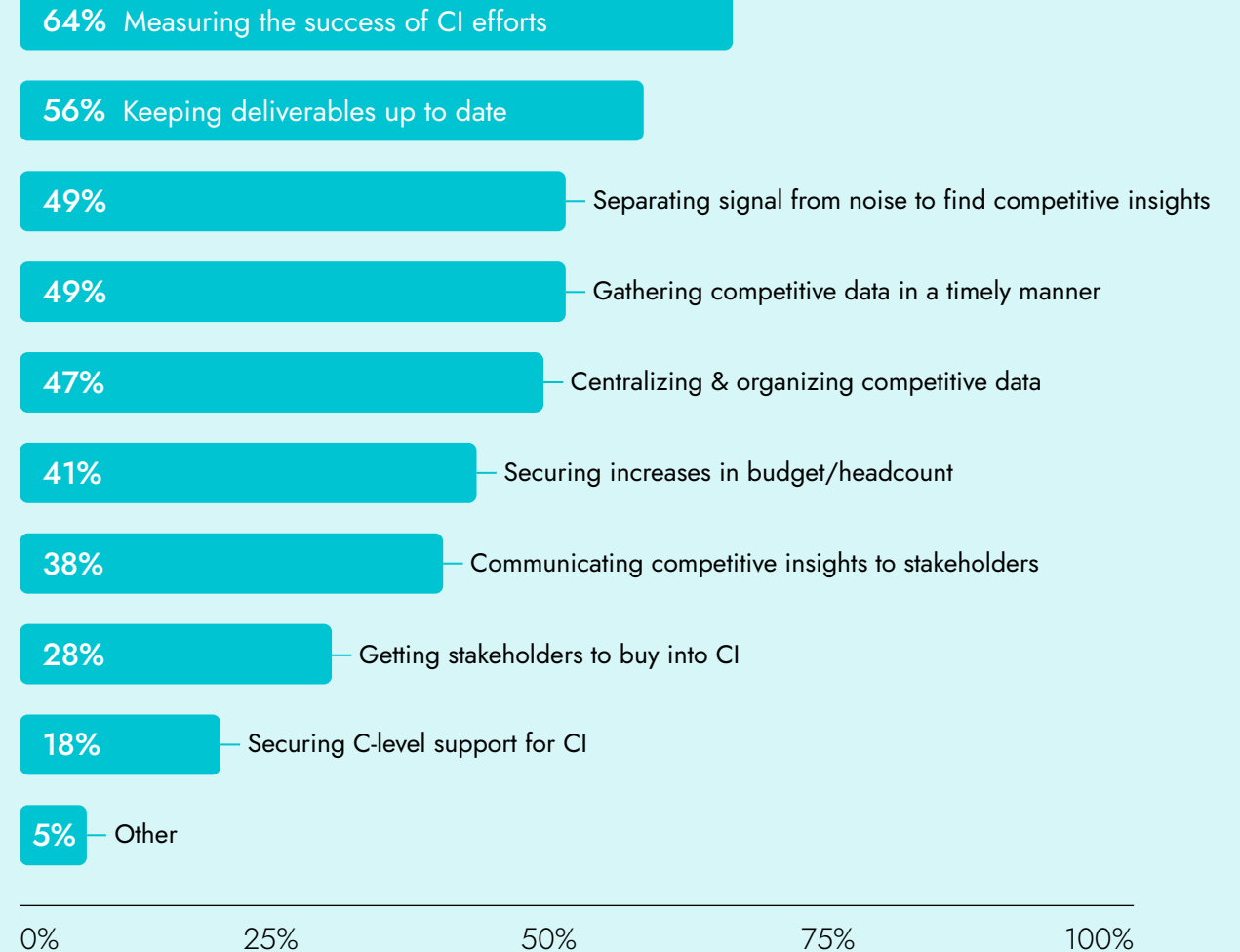
# CHALLENGES

**Q:** With which of the following do you struggle? Select all that apply.



## BEST PRACTICE

Measure the success of your CI efforts by establishing KPIs that roll up to your stakeholders' KPIs.



## STAKEHOLDERS' EXPECTATIONS & PREFERENCES

Quality of insights is **8x more important** than deliverable UX/UI.

Sellers are particularly indifferent to UX/UI—they don't seem to care much about the visual presentation of intel. 62% say quality of insights is most important. 31% say ease of access is most important. 7% say timeliness is most important. None of them say UX/UI is most important.

### Related Content

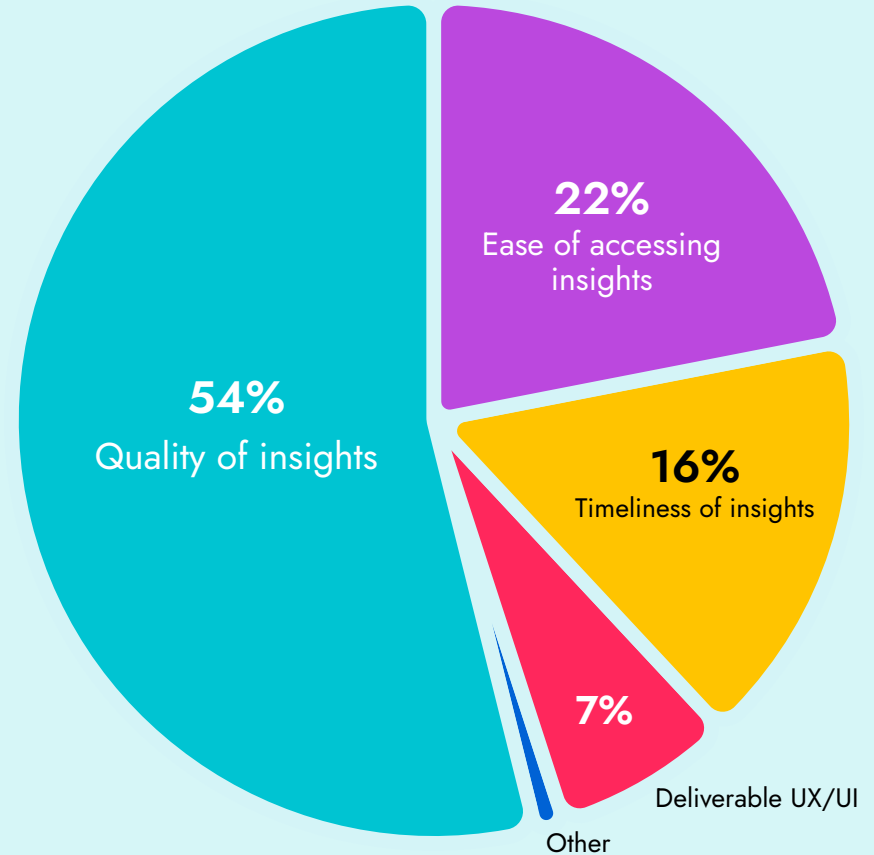


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**Q:** What is most important to you as a consumer of competitive insights?



## Most CI teams provide support on **ad-hoc requests** from stakeholders.

Not all stakeholders have the same need for ad-hoc support. Whereas 73% of sellers say their CI teams help them with ad-hoc requests, only 60% of product managers say the same.

On prioritization:



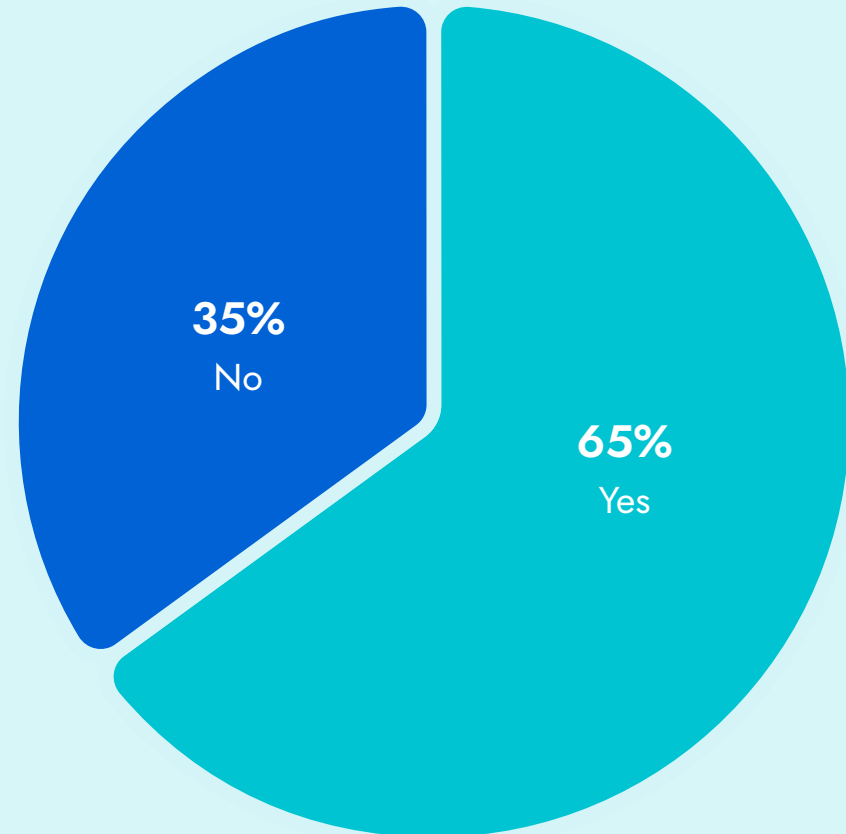
*What has worked for our team is prioritizing ad-hoc requests based on urgency, impact to revenue, and impact to future partnerships and growth.*



**Casey Ward**

Senior Product Marketing Manager / Mural

**Q:** Does your CI team help you with ad-hoc requests?

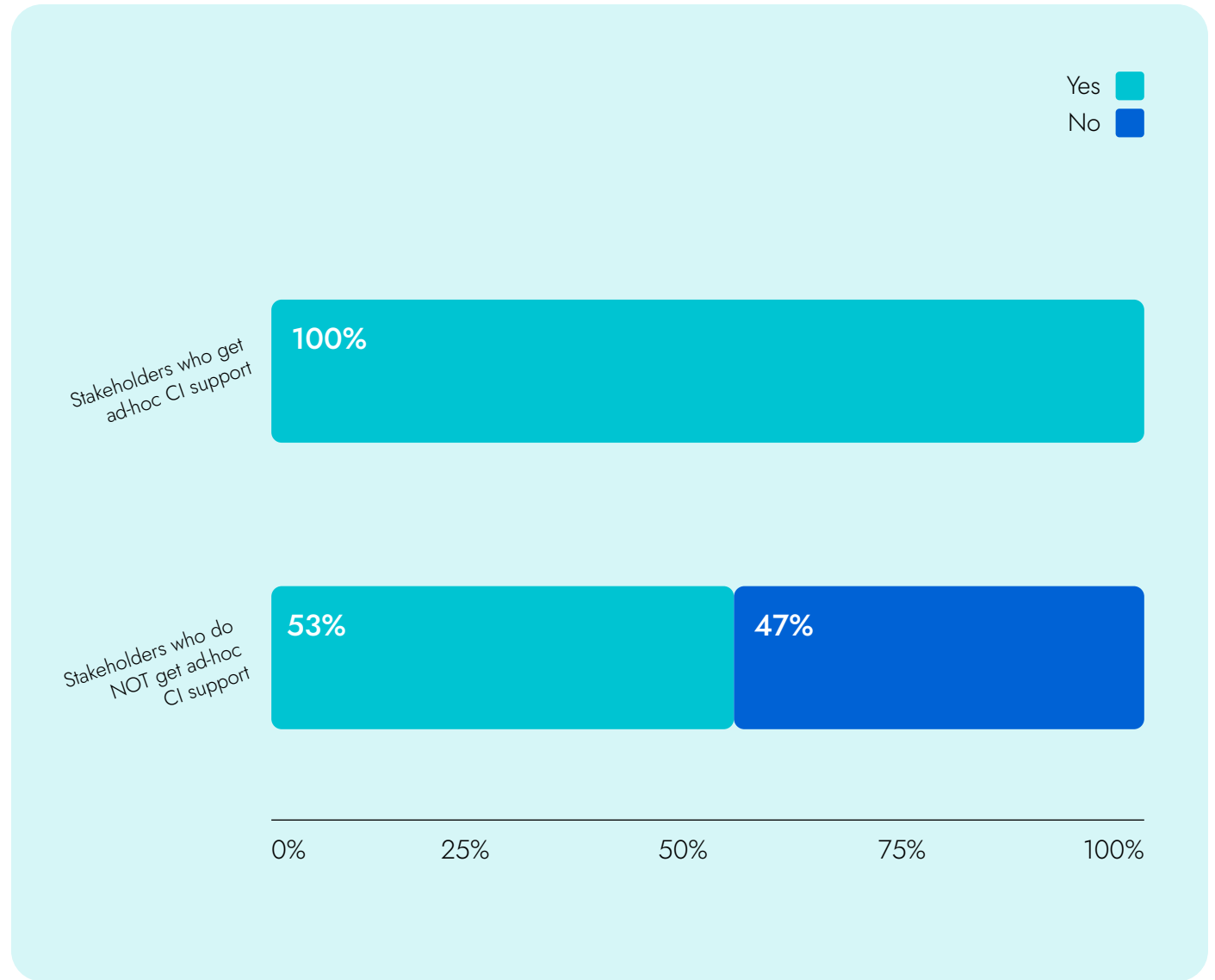


**Q:** Do you trust the insights you get from your CI team?



**TAKEAWAY**

Earn your stakeholders' trust by creating a system to respond to their ad-hoc requests.



## 88% of CI stakeholders want updates on a regular basis.

Remember: Only 70% of CI leaders say they share intel on a regular basis—so there's a bit of a gap between what stakeholders expect and what they're actually getting.

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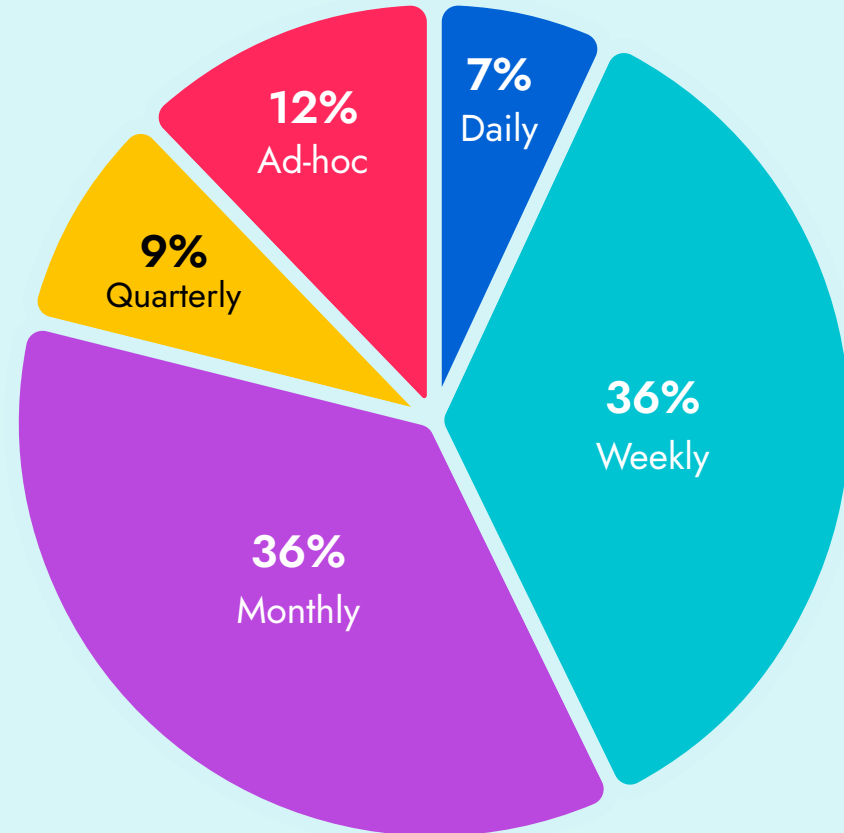


#### **WEBINAR**

How to Drive Adoption of CI

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### Q: How often would you like to receive competitive intelligence updates?



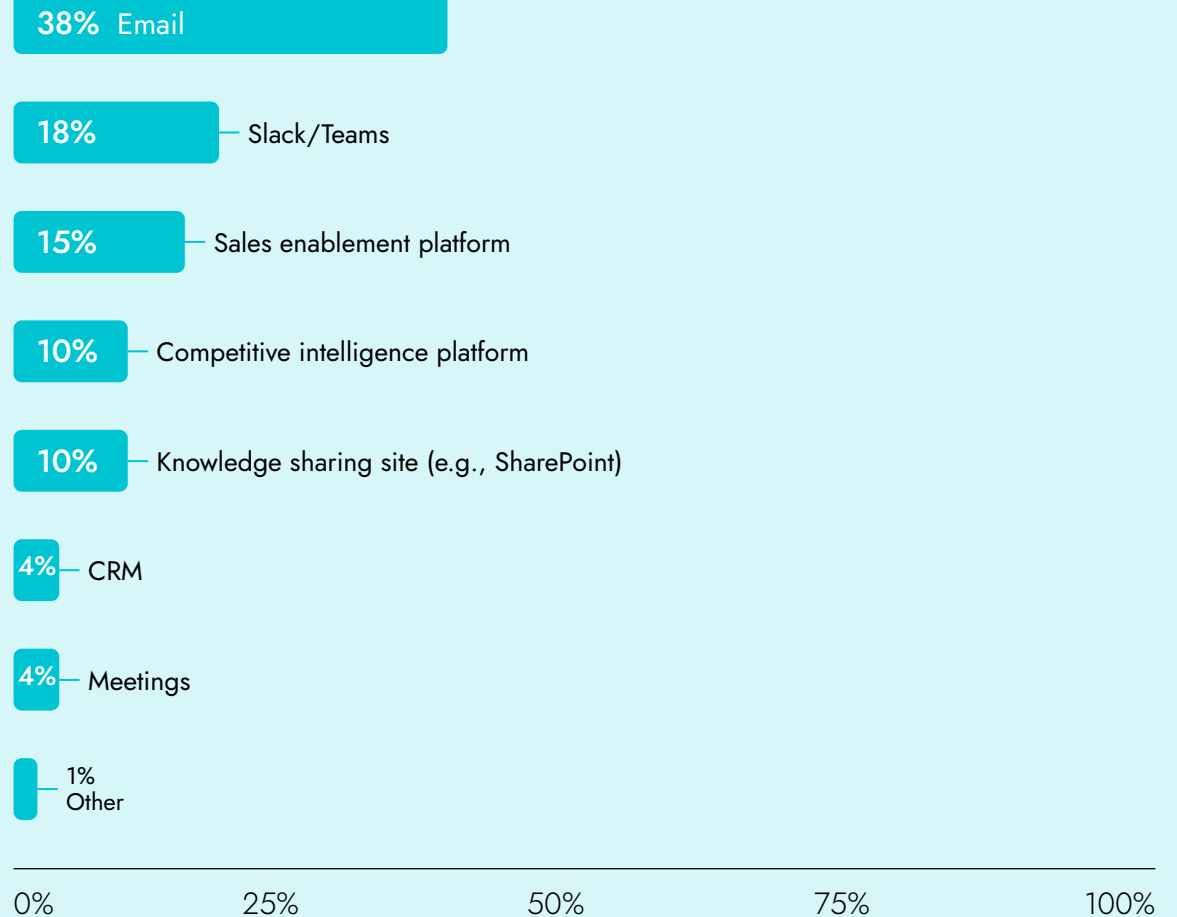


**Q:** What is your preferred channel for receiving CI updates? Select one option.



**TAKEAWAY**

Email still reigns supreme, but when it comes to other channels, there isn't a clear preference. CI leaders should cover their bases by putting intel everywhere their stakeholders spend time.



## Nearly half of stakeholders want to **self-serve** competitive insights.

Once again, preferences differ across groups: Whereas 60% of the product managers we surveyed said they want to self-serve competitive insights, only 31% of the sellers we surveyed said the same.

On sharing intel with stakeholders:



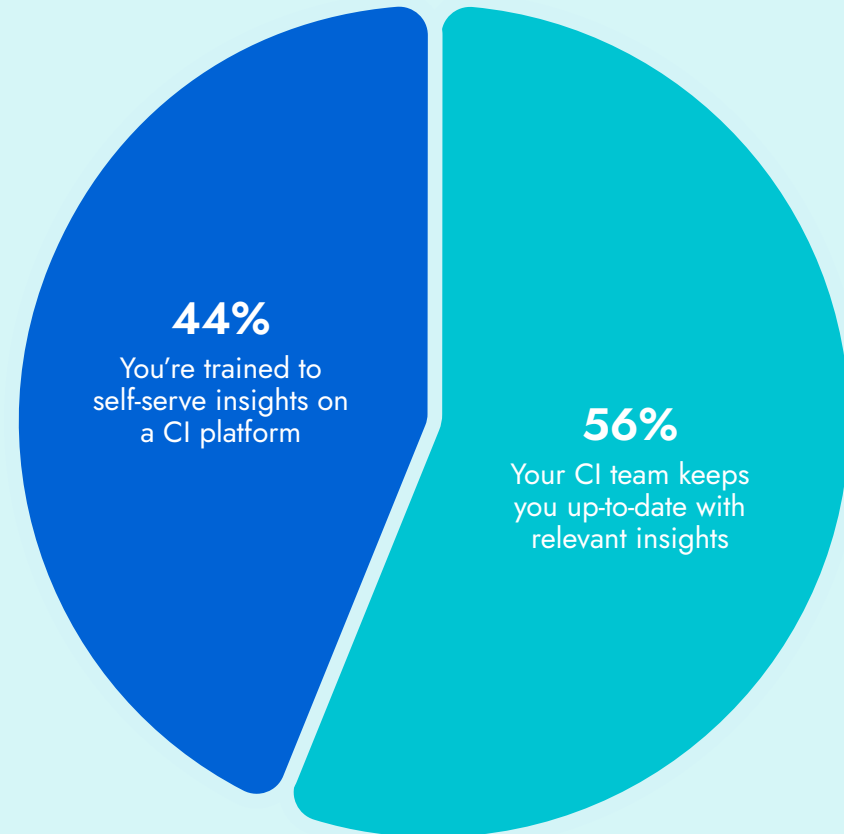
*Begin with the end in mind:  
What do your stakeholders need  
to know? What decisions do they  
need to make?*



**August Jackson**

VP, Market Intel & Competitive Strategy / Deltek

**Q:** Which of the following would you prefer?  
Pick one.



# CONCLUSION

If someone on your sales team is working 6 deals right now, chances are 4 of them are competitive—at least. Which means you, as your company's point person for competitive intelligence, have a tremendous opportunity sitting in front of you.

Because if you can help your sellers win competitive deals at even a slightly higher rate, you'll drive some serious revenue growth.

So go make it happen, keeping in mind some of the key takeaways from this report:

- Sellers value quality of insights and ease of access over everything else
- The best competitive insights typically come from sellers themselves
- Different people want to consume competitive insights in different places
- Providing ad-hoc deal support helps create trust

Throughout this report, it's apparent that measuring your CI program is no longer optional. Make sure to measure the success of your work using your peers' favorite KPIs: competitive win rate, engagement with deliverables, and CI-influenced revenue.

And speaking of your peers: As you work to create a show-stopping CI program, remember that you don't have to do it alone. We collaborated with your peers on many of the webinars, podcasts, ebooks, and other pieces of content linked throughout this report—so make sure to check those out and learn from the experiences of others.

Until next year!

Team Crayon

## METHODOLOGY

With the exception of Chapter 4 (Competitive Intelligence Program Maturity), everything in this report is based on Crayon's State of Competitive Intelligence survey, which yielded more than 900 responses between September and December 2022.

Chapter 4 is based on user data from Crayon's free tool, the Competitive Program Grader, used by more than 450 CI leaders as of February 2023.

### About Crayon

Crayon empowers revenue teams to win and keep more customers by putting real-time competitive intelligence at their fingertips. Hundreds of companies, including Gong, ZoomInfo, and Dropbox, use Crayon to capture and distribute the competitive insights they need to achieve their revenue goals. Learn more at [www.crayon.co](http://www.crayon.co).

### About SCIP

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