



AI in customer service trends report 2025.

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AI is revolutionizing the way we think about customer service.

2024 was the year that enterprises made real strides in terms of implementing generative AI in customer service use cases.

After a rough start, with several generative AI projects making headlines for all the wrong reasons, a handful of enterprises were able to successfully launch gen AI projects with gamechanging results.

According to Gartner research, generative AI is now the most frequently deployed AI solution in organizations, but they also say that at least 30% of gen AI PoCs will be abandoned.

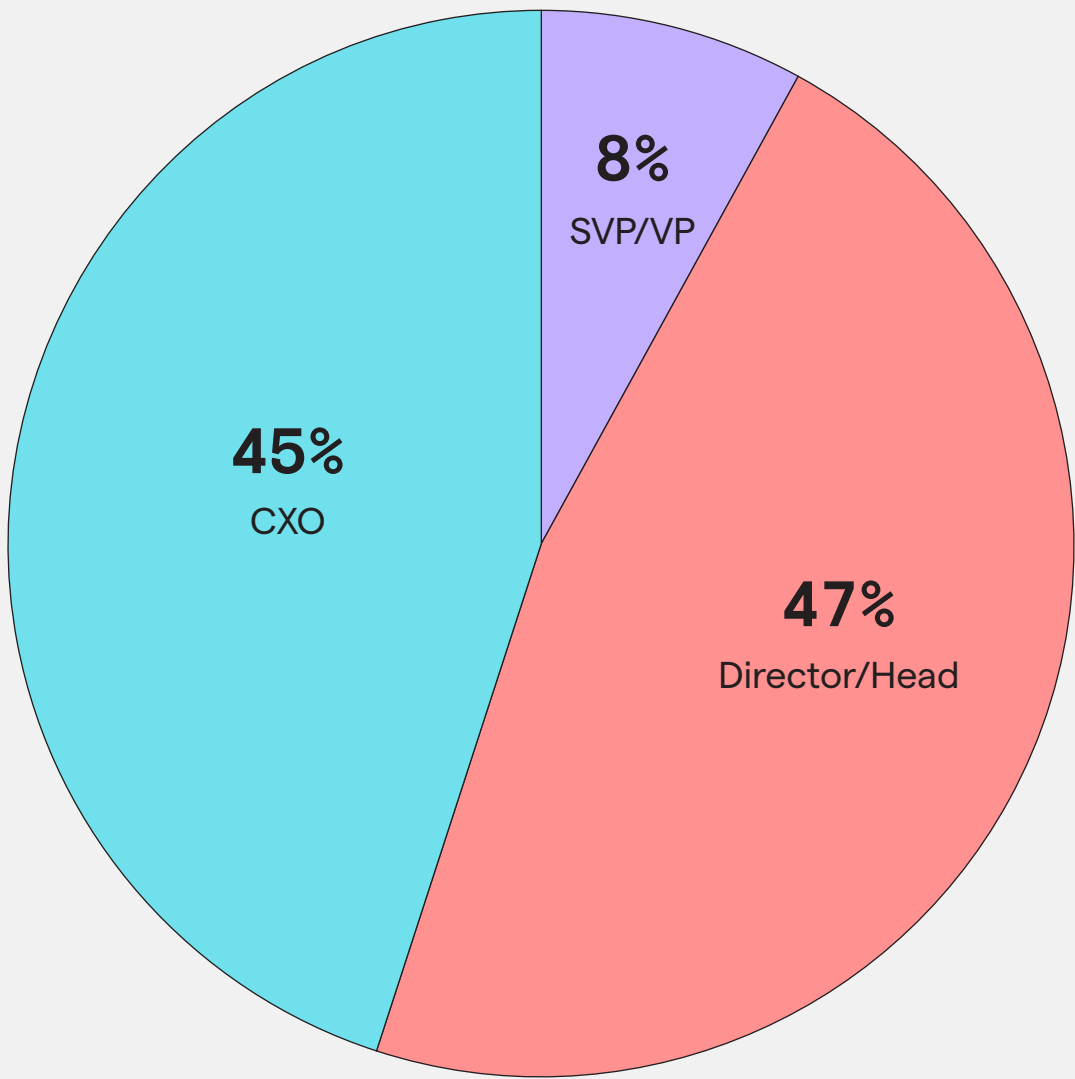
In an effort to cut through the noise, we surveyed CX and contact center leaders at enterprise companies with an annual revenue of \$500m+ to get the scoop on how AI is changing the customer service landscape.



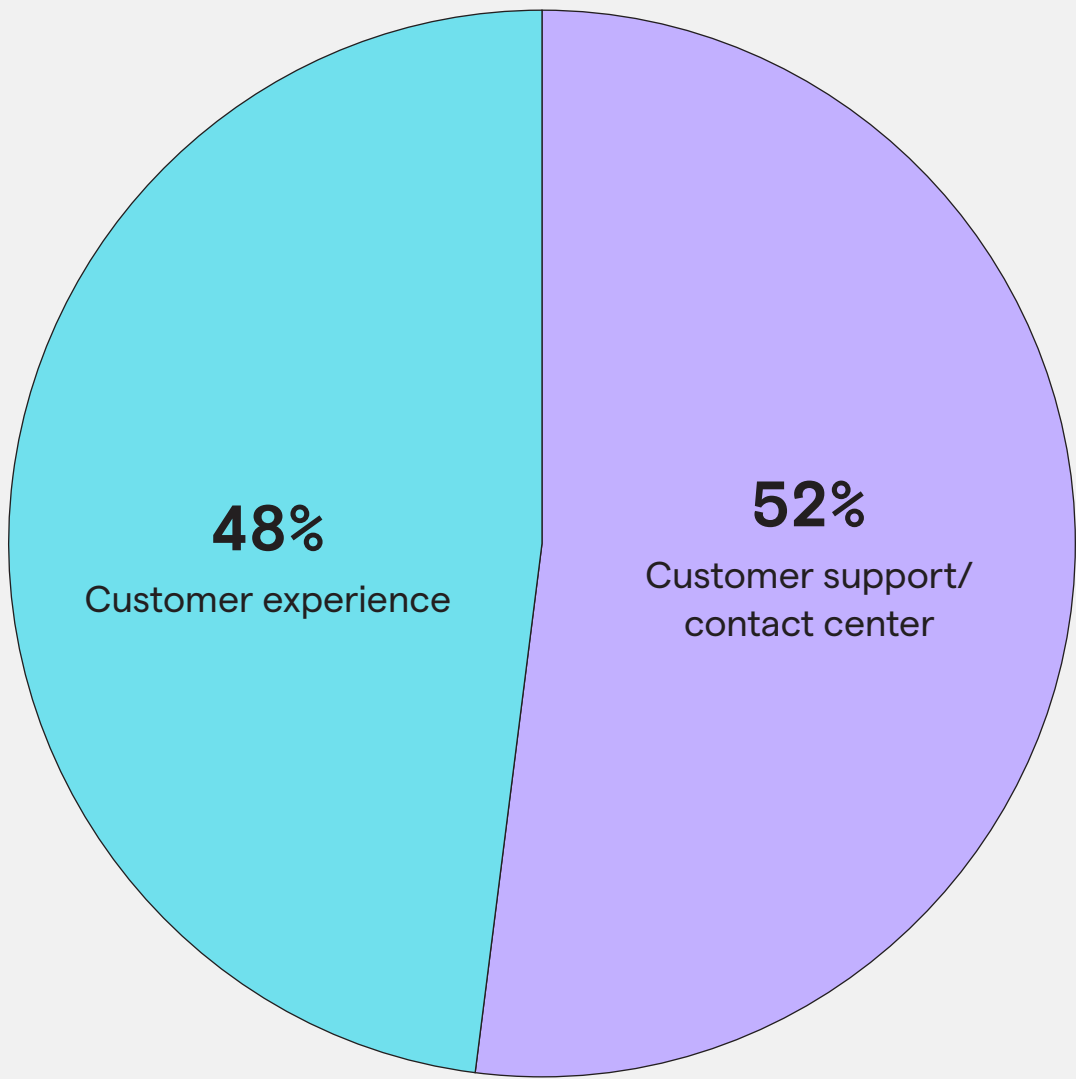
Breakdown of survey respondents by seniority level, department and vertical.

We surveyed 100 customer service and customer experience leaders in the USA and UK to find out how AI is changing customer service across five main themes: career aspirations, customer expectations, enterprise AI adoption, customer attitudes to AI and AI voice agents in the contact center.

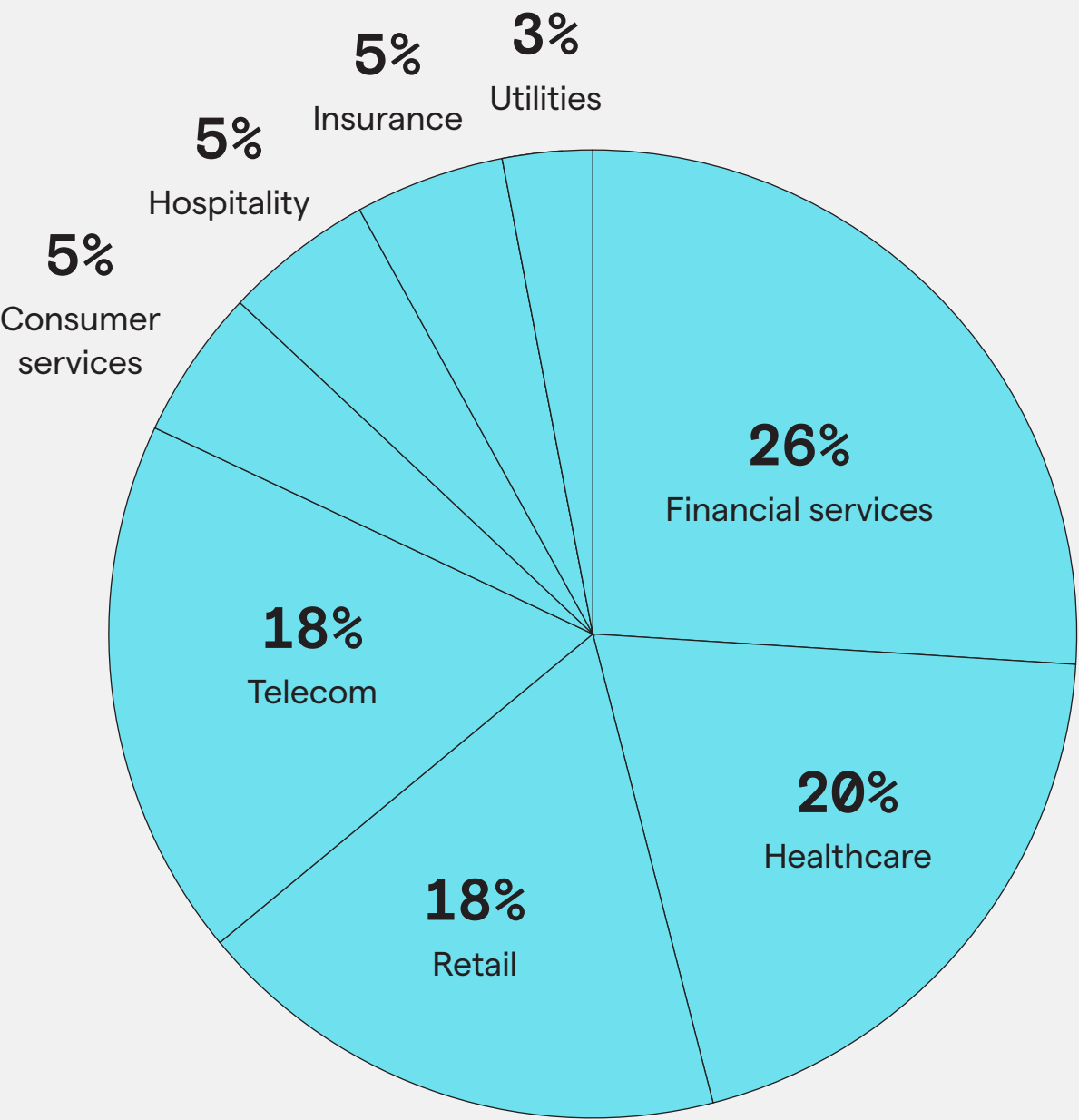
Seniority level



Department



Vertical



Trends at a glance.

TREND 1

AI is shaping leadership career aspirations.

Introducing AI in customer-facing roles is changing the way CX and contact center leaders think about their careers, with 34% agreeing that implementing an AI solution that demonstrates ROI is their top career goal in the next 5-10 years.

TREND 2

Customer expectations are higher than ever.

Customers want it all and they want it now. ¾ CX leaders agree that customers expect both immediate responses and more knowledge and guidance from advisors.

TREND 3

AI is becoming commonplace in the enterprise tech stack.

79% of CX and contact center leaders said that C-level executives are expecting them to make more use of AI. Enterprises hope that AI will solve the efficiency vs CX conundrum.

TREND 4

Customers are warming to AI voice agents.

87% of customers are happy or willing to use AI voice agents for customer service. Over ¾ of CX and customer service leaders believe that AI voice agents could one day replace human customer service representatives.

TREND 5

AI voice agents are revolutionizing the contact center.

60% of contact center and CX leaders are actively considering using AI voice agents to handle customer service phone calls. Agents understand that AI will enable them to focus on more rewarding work, but still worry it might replace them.





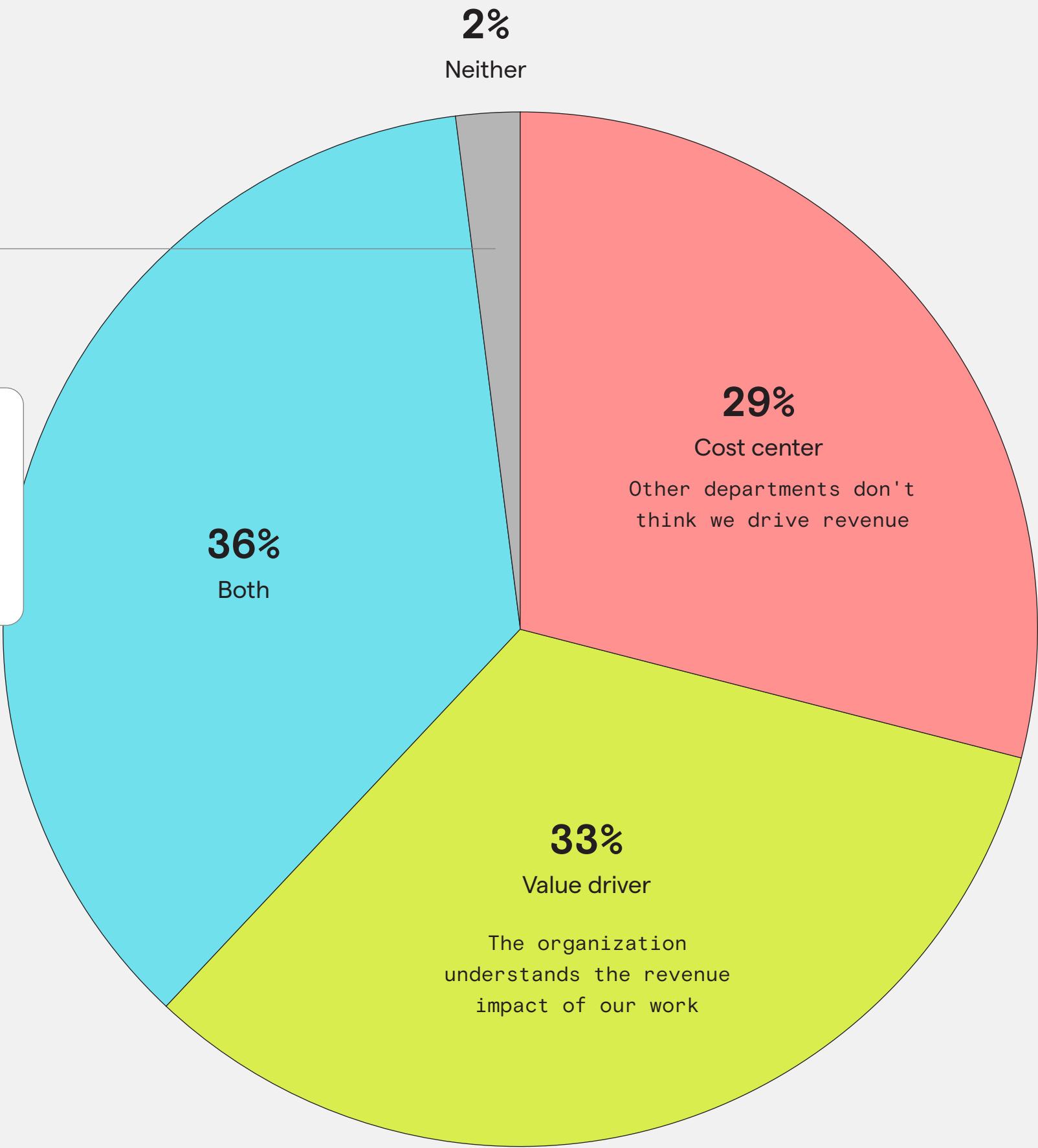
AI is shaping leadership
career aspirations.

The contact center is still viewed as a cost center.

Q. In your personal opinion, how is your contact center viewed by your organization at large?

COMMENTS

“The view of the contact center as a cost center and non-revenue driver is false. The contact center is one of my organization's most critical channels for customer support, engagement, and loyalty which in turn drives revenue.”



A promising 33% of respondents say their organization appreciates the contact center primarily as a value driver.

But a whopping 65% said their organization views the contact center, at least in part, as a cost center.



TREND 1

TREND 2

TREND 3

TREND 4

TREND 5

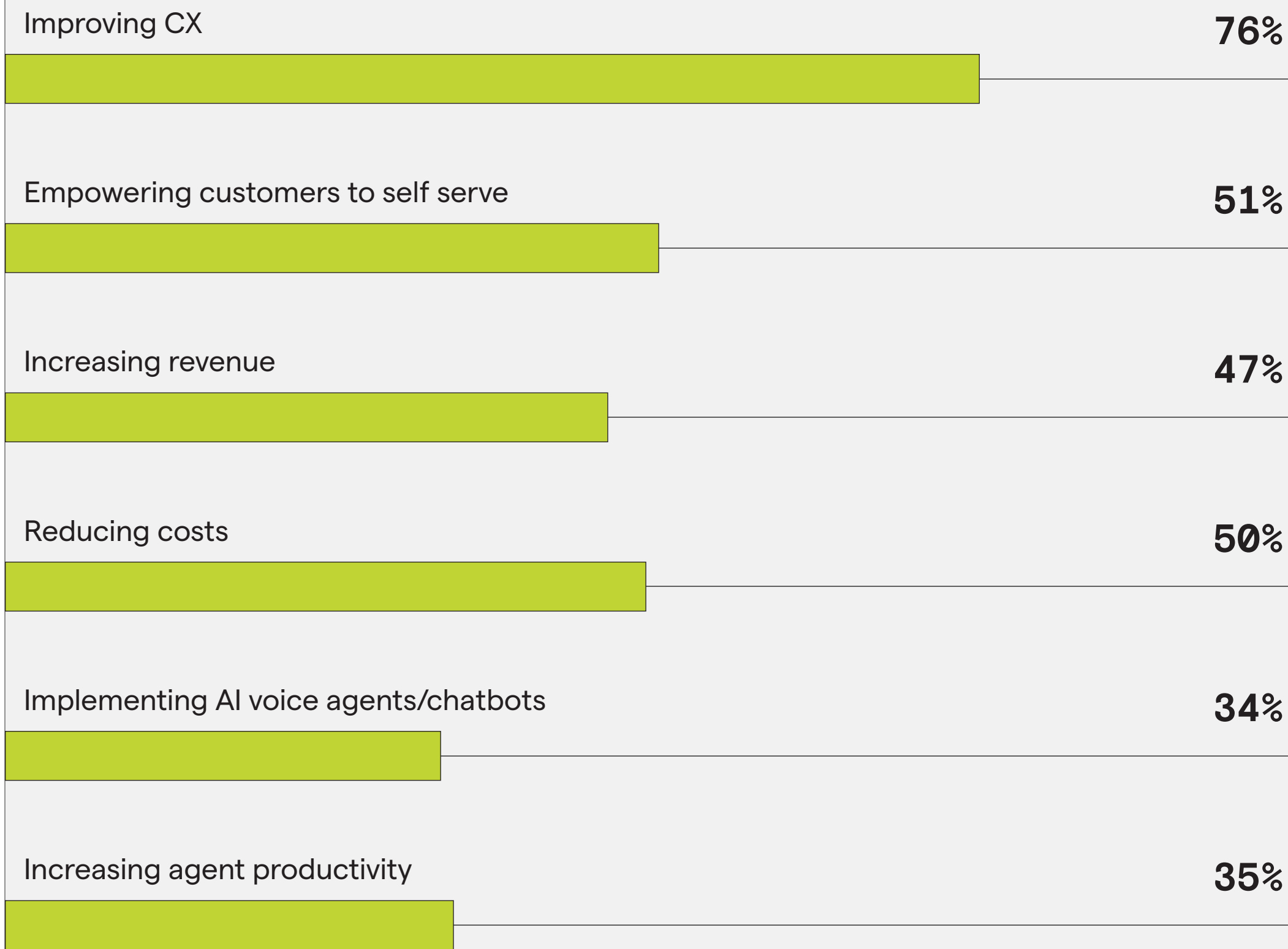
Customer support leaders are still balancing CX goals with financial restrictions.

Just over ¾ of respondents agreed that improving CX was a top priority.

With 51% of respondents stating a priority of increasing revenue and 47% stating a priority of reducing costs, it seems that contact centers are still feeling the age-old pressure to do more, with less.

It's understandable then, that half of all respondents are thinking about self-serve, with 34% demonstrating an intent to automate customer service conversations through AI voice agents or chatbots.

Q. What are the top priorities for your contact center this year?



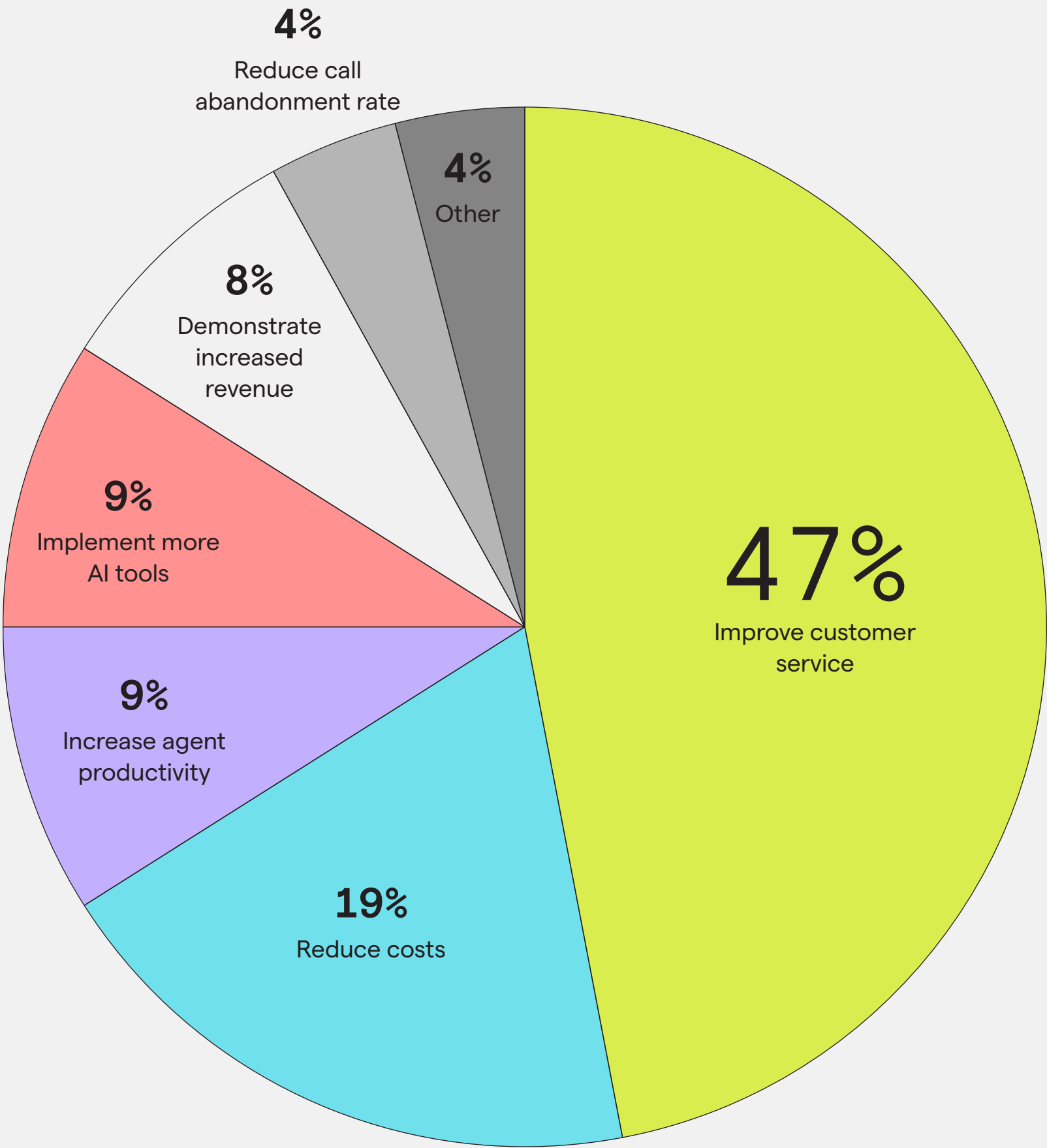
TREND 1
TREND 2
TREND 3
TREND 4
TREND 5

CX remains the most important KPI.

While CX and customer support leaders are clearly feeling the pressure to cut costs, 47% of respondents said their most important KPI is improving customer experience.

With 9% of respondents saying their most important KPI is to implement more AI tools, it's clear that AI is proving to be more than just a fad.

Q. Which of the following is the most important KPI tied to your success?



TREND 1
TREND 2
TREND 3
TREND 4
TREND 5

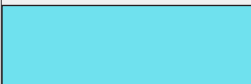
The line between customer service and CX roles is blurring.

75% of contact center leaders see themselves in a CX leadership position in the next 5 years.

Contact center leaders recognize their value as customer champions and are setting their sights on roles like Head of Customer Experience and Chief Customer Officer.



75%



12%

12% of CX leaders think their role will change to Head of AI in 5 years.

As AI plays a larger role in automating and optimizing customer journeys, CX leaders are seeing the opportunity to own AI strategy in their organizations.



TREND 1
TREND 2
TREND 3
TREND 4
TREND 5

Creating value with AI is a top career goal.

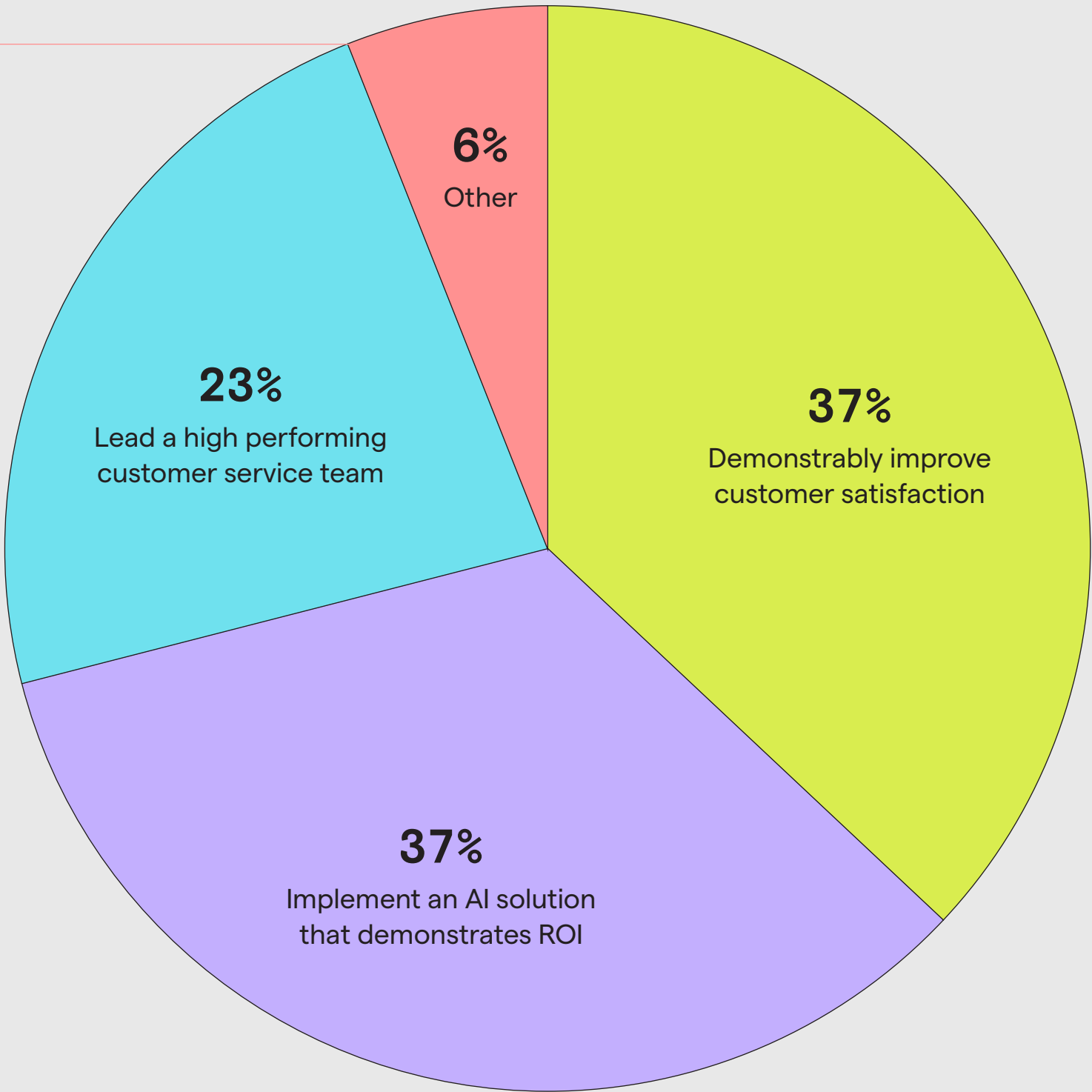
There’s a lot of noise about AI in customer service and customer experience, but with analysts claiming that as many as 90% of AI proofs-of-concept won’t make it into production any time soon, it’s no wonder that ROI is top of mind.

Just over 1/3 respondents said that implementing an AI solution that demonstrates ROI is their top career goal in the next 5-10 years.

OTHER

- Lead a top tier enterprise tech firm
- Balancing human and tech touch
- Prove the ROI on client experience to top execs
- Broaden beyond just cx
- Additionally, demonstrate revenue generation driven by my team
- Retire

Q. What is your top career goal for the next 5-10 years?



TREND 1
TREND 2
TREND 3
TREND 4
TREND 5

Customer expectations
are higher than ever.

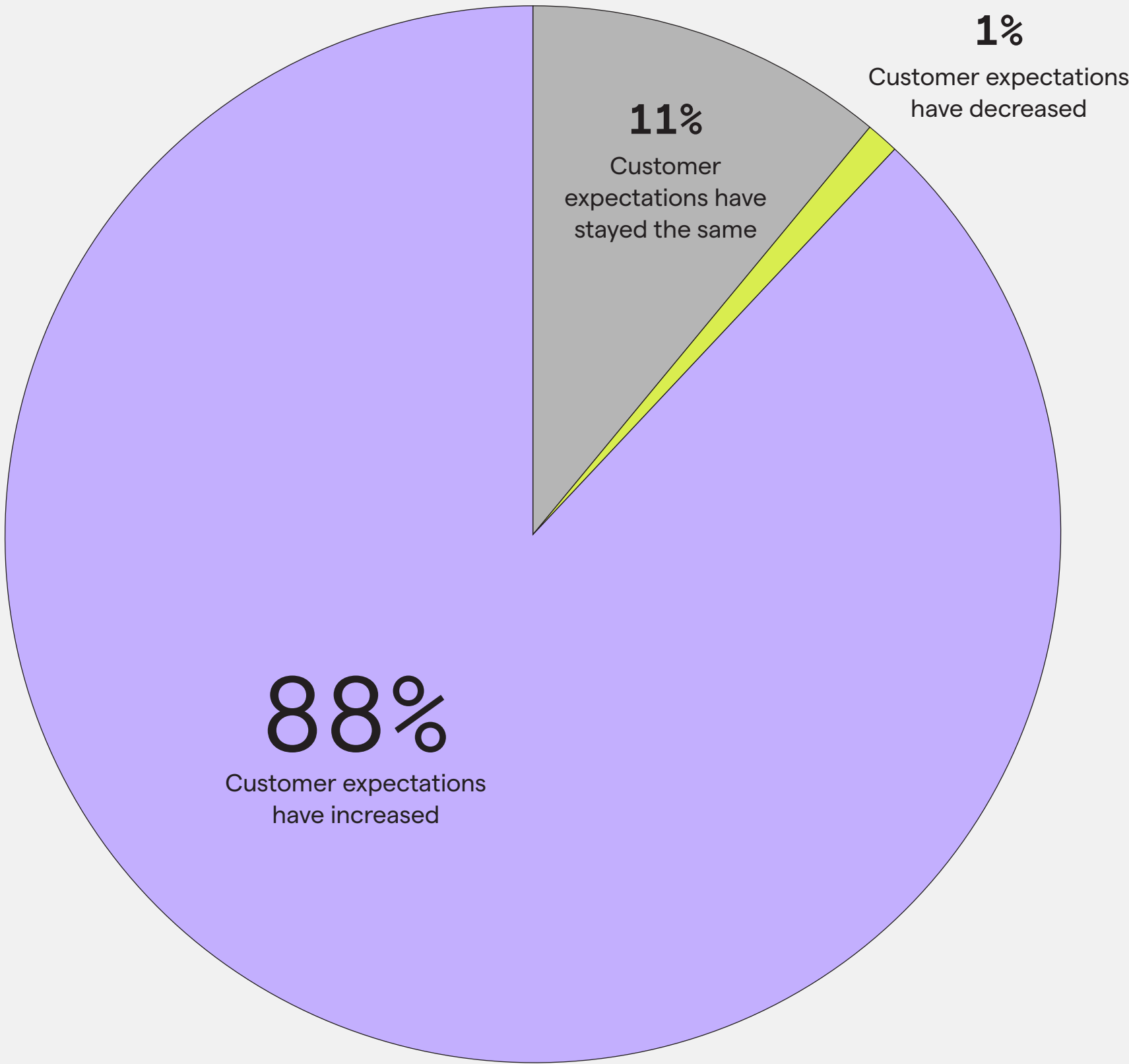


Customer expectations are on the rise.

A massive 88% of customer service and CX leaders said that customer expectations have increased over the last year.

With almost half of all respondents claiming a pressure to reduce costs, finding efficient ways to meet rising customer expectations will continue to be a crucial goal in 2025.

Q. How have customer expectations changed over the last year?



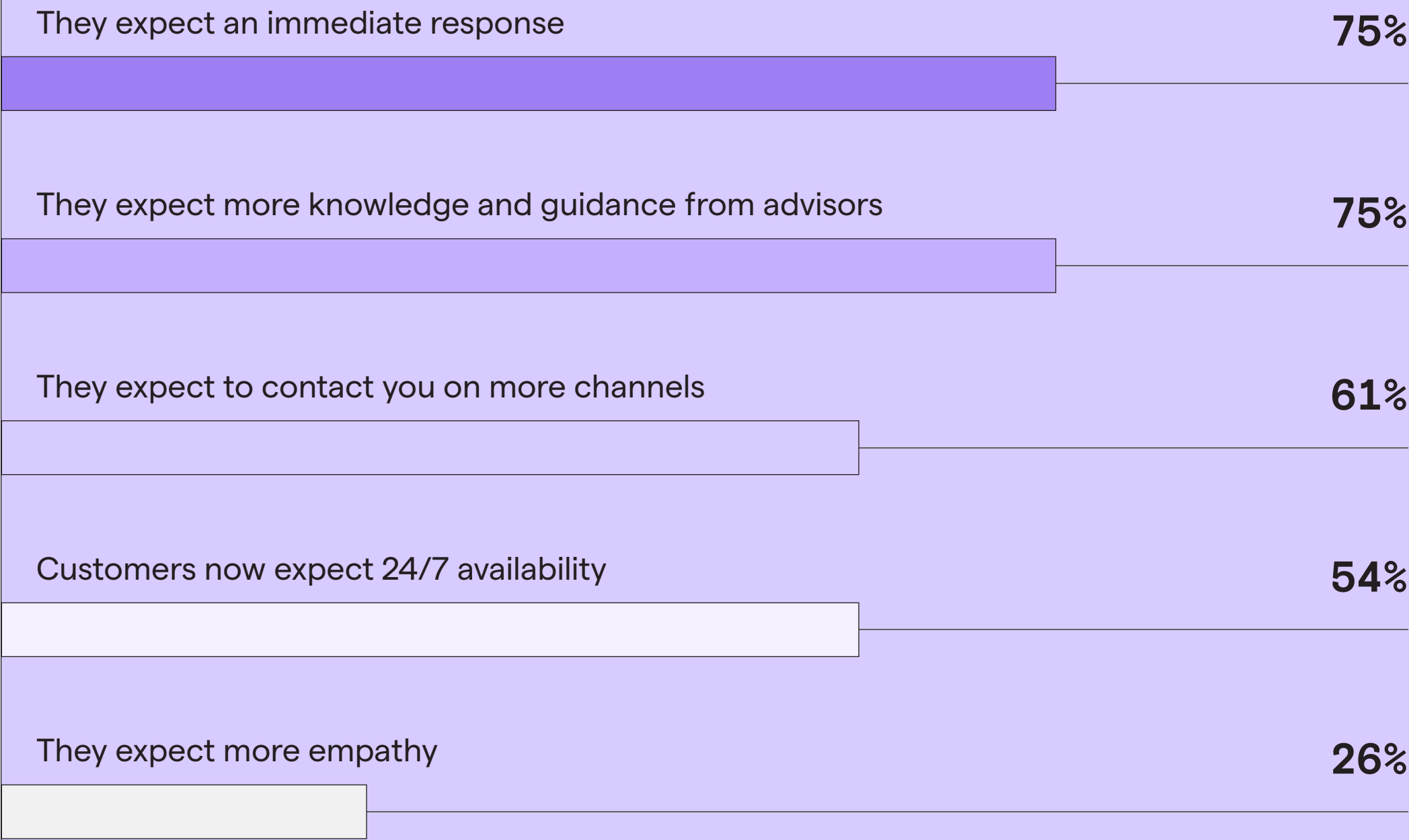
Customers want it all and they want it now.

¾ respondents agreed that customers expect both immediate responses and more knowledge and guidance from advisors.

Rushing through interactions to reduce the call queue won't cut it in 2025.



Q. In what areas have customer expectations risen the most?



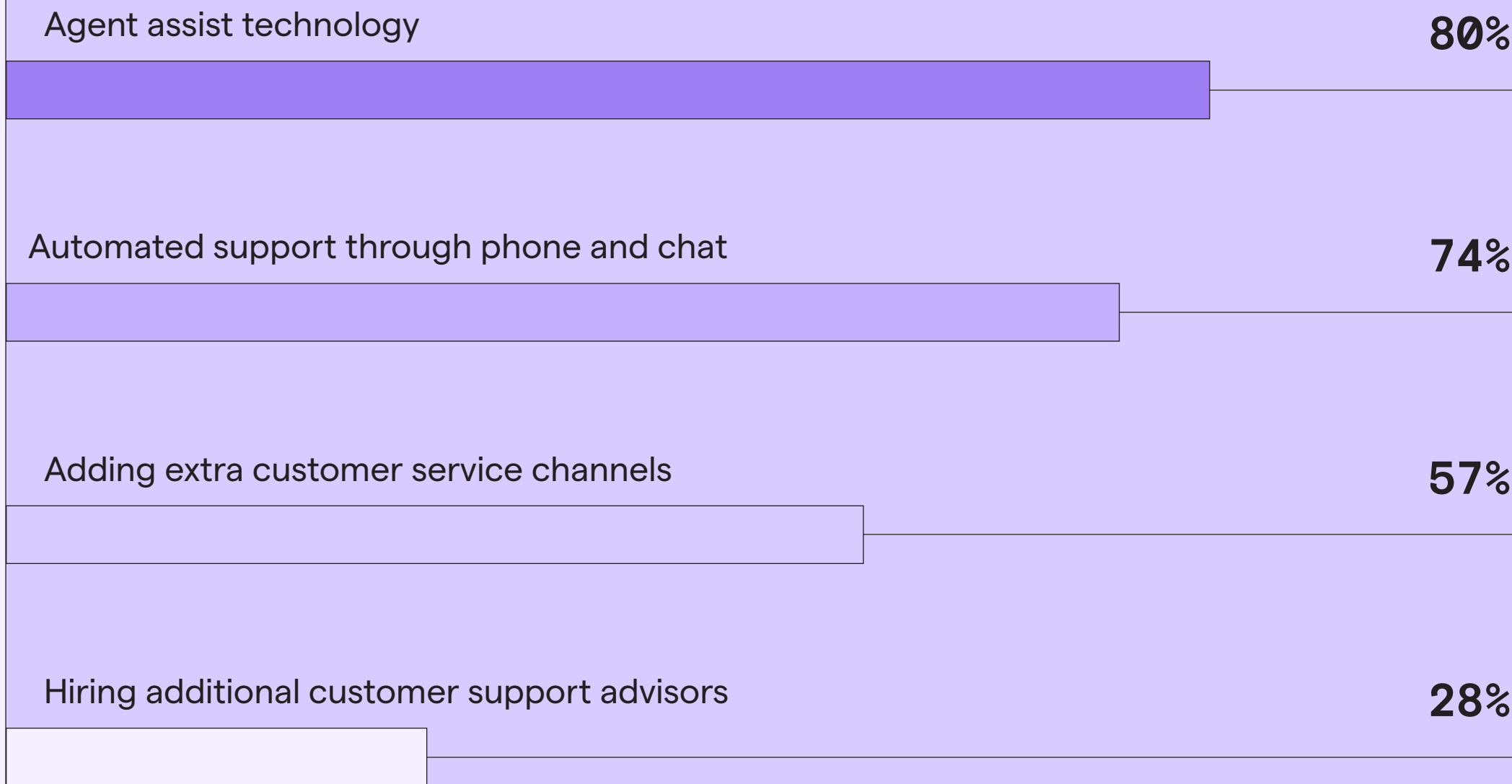
Customer service and CX teams are turning to AI to meet customer demand.

74% of respondents are considering automating customer service interactions, while 80% are looking to AI to enhance productivity through agent assist.

The slight preference for agent assist technology over automated support suggests that there's still skepticism around the capability of AI to provide competent and brand-worthy experiences.



Q. What initiatives are your team exploring to better meet customer expectations?



TREND 2

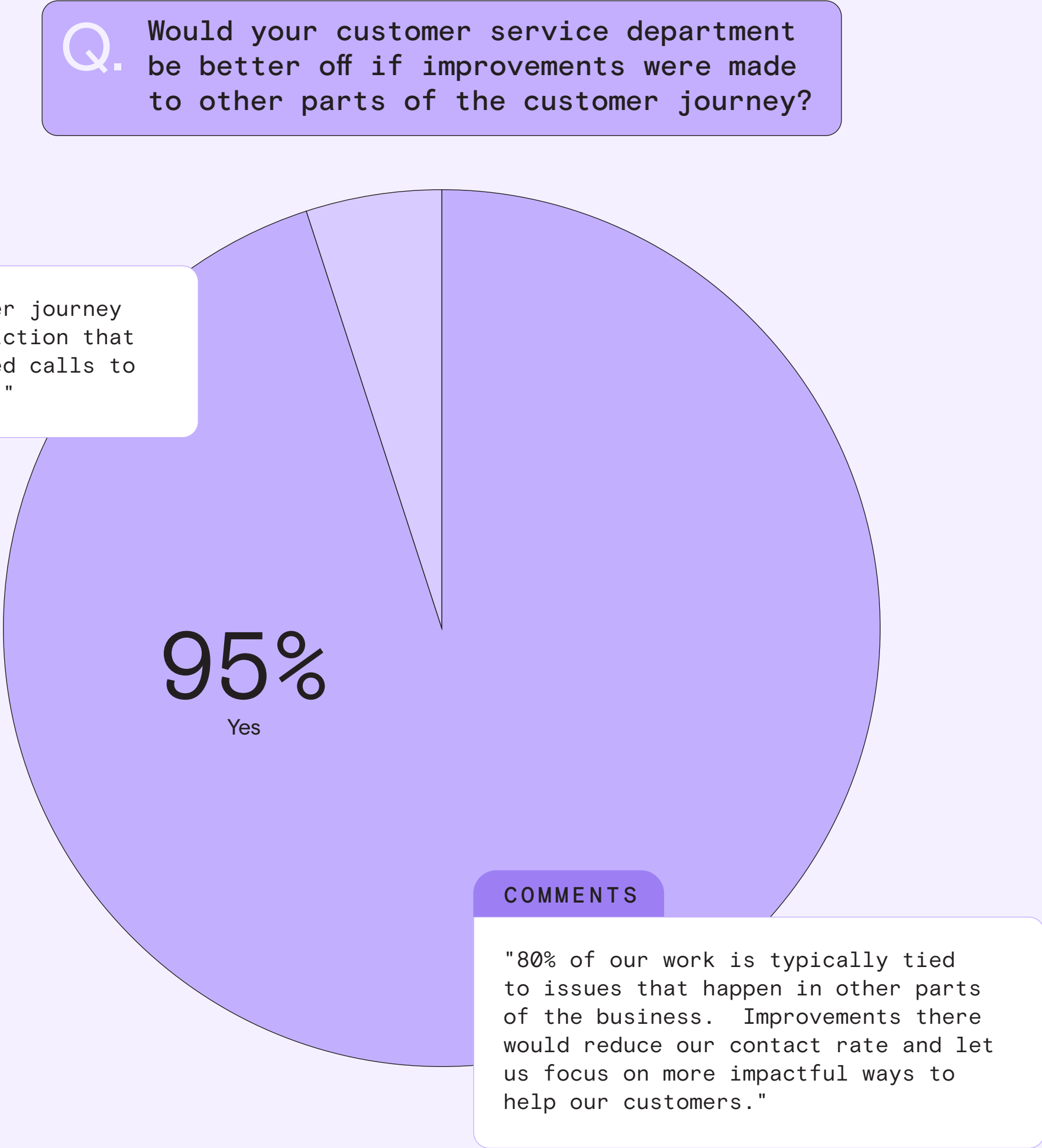
TREND 3

TREND 4

TREND 5

Up to 80% of customer service inquiries could have been avoided.

95% of respondents agree that friction points in other parts of the customer journey cause problems for customer service teams.



There’s room for improvement when it comes to delivering brand value through customer care.

On the whole, most respondents feel that their contact center is aligned with their organization’s broader brand strategy. But there’s room for improvement.

Q. Does your contact center feel aligned with the company’s broader brand strategy?

COMMENTS

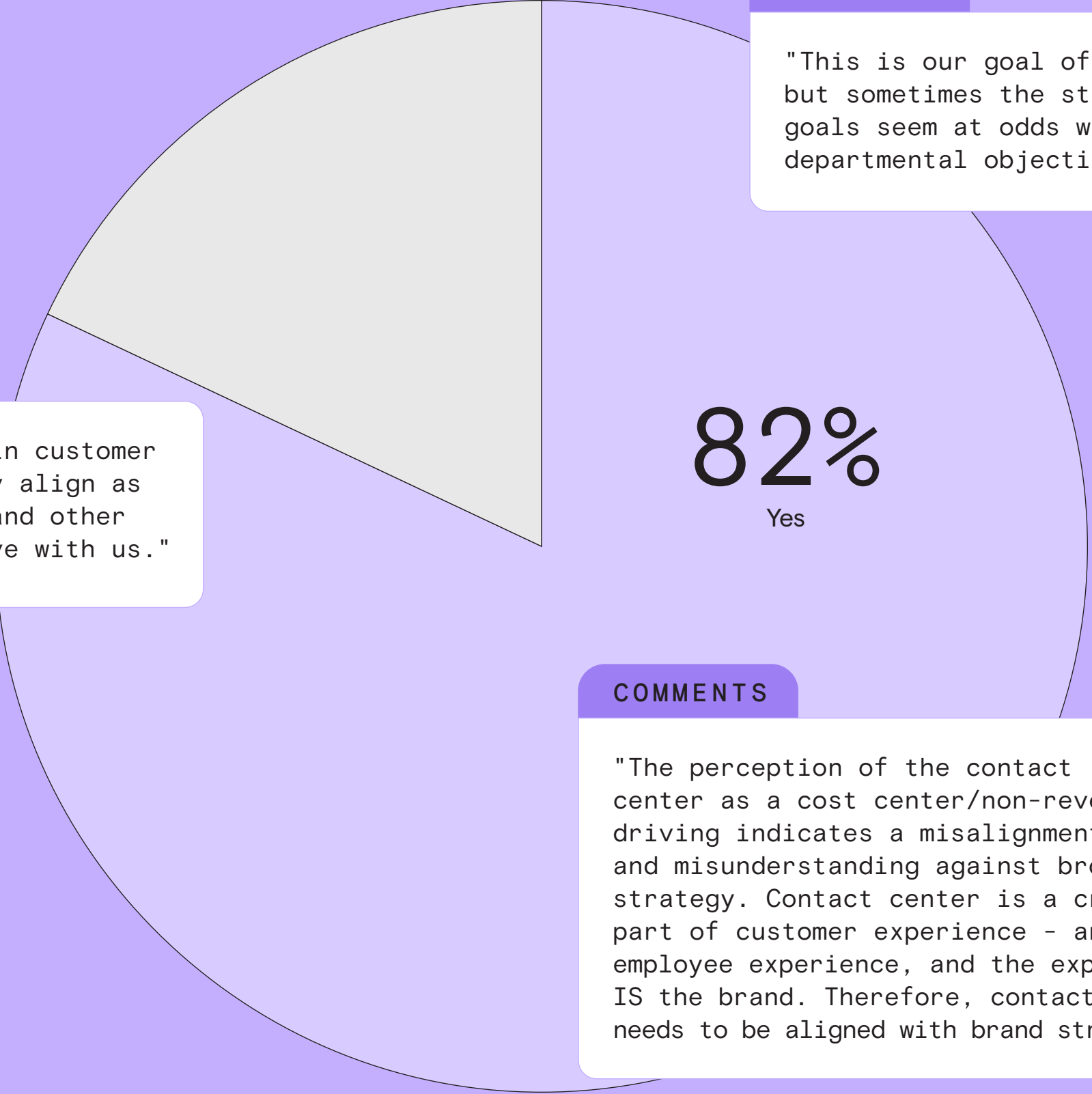
"Sadly the investments in customer experience do not nearly align as well with the products and other experiences shoppers have with us."

COMMENTS

"This is our goal of course, but sometimes the strategic goals seem at odds with our departmental objectives."

COMMENTS

"The perception of the contact center as a cost center/non-revenue driving indicates a misalignment and misunderstanding against broader strategy. Contact center is a critical part of customer experience - and employee experience, and the experience IS the brand. Therefore, contact center needs to be aligned with brand strategy."



AI is becoming
commonplace in the
enterprise tech stack.

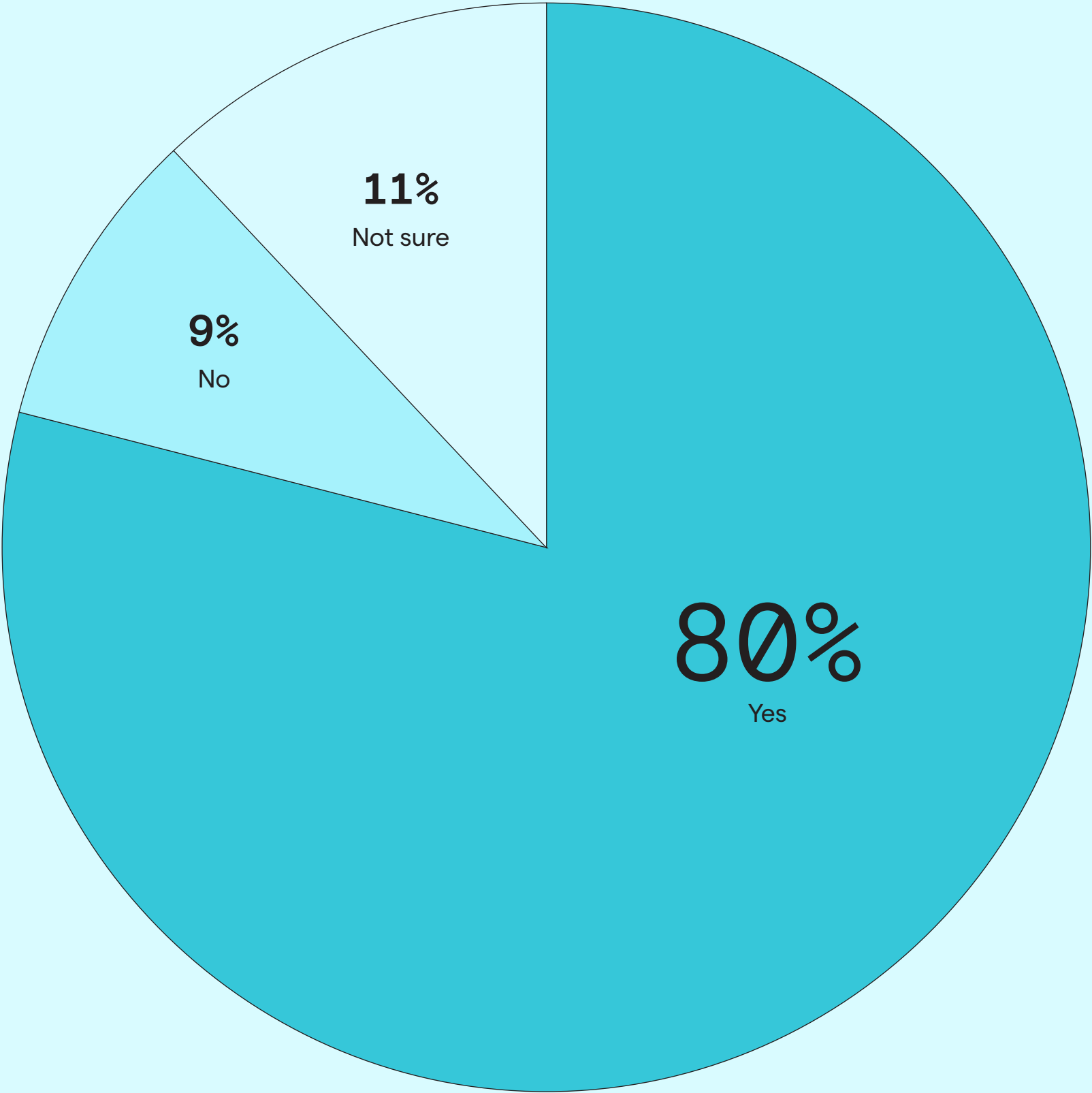


The appetite for AI is coming from the top.

80% of CX and contact center leaders said that C-level executives are expecting them to make more use of AI.

This added pressure to ‘use more AI’ may result in more organizations investing in the technology for the sake of it. Successful AI projects will remain mindful of business goals to create solutions that drive ROI.

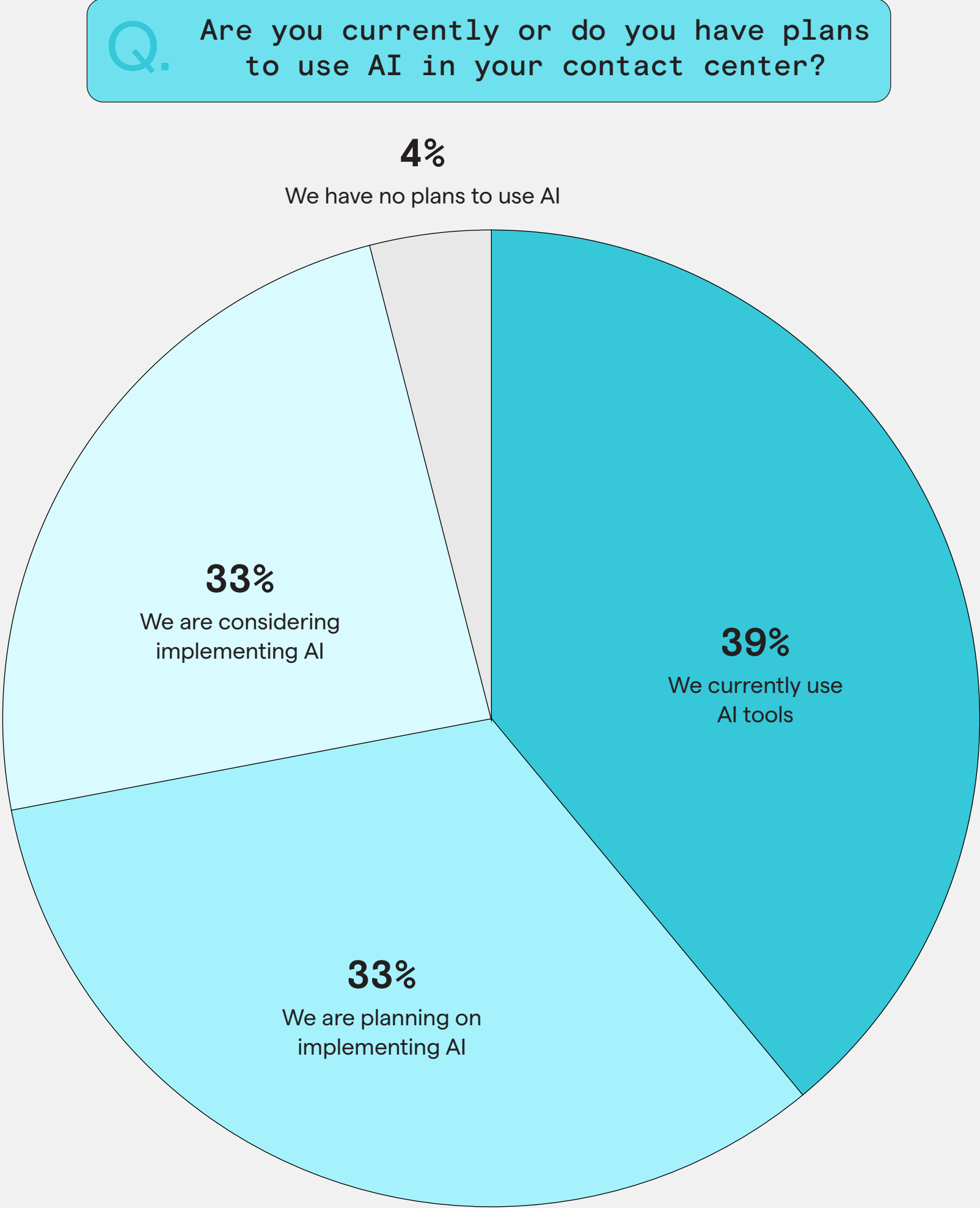
Q. Do C-level executives expect you to use more AI?



Most contact centers already use, or plan to use AI.

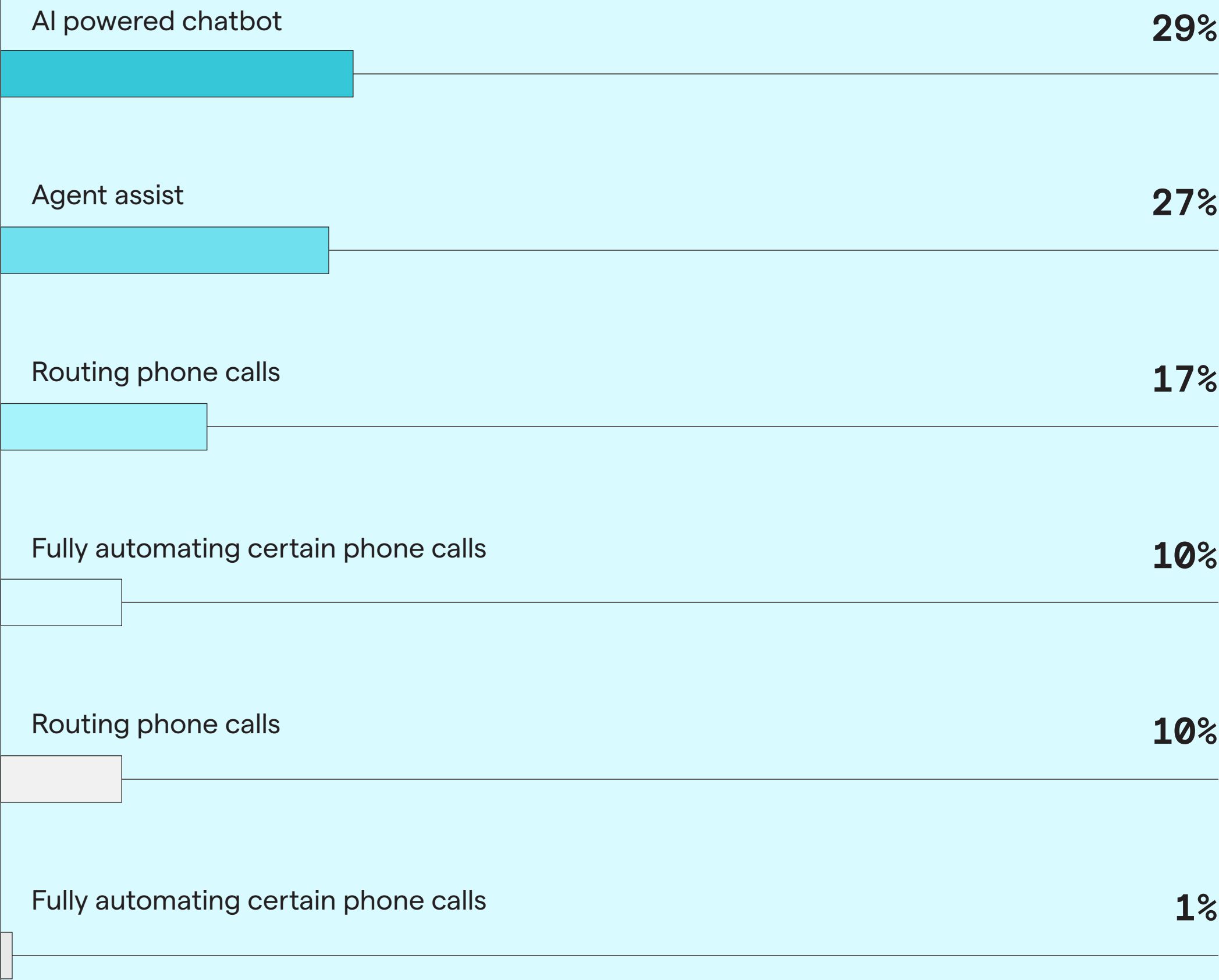
39% of respondents said they are already using AI in the contact center, while 57% are in the consideration or planning stages.

Only 4% of respondents said they have no plans to use AI in the contact center.



Of those already using AI, chatbots were the most common application, with agent assist coming in a close second. With only 10% of respondents using AI to handle phone calls, there is a clear opportunity for innovation in the voice channel.

Q. How do you use AI in your call center today?

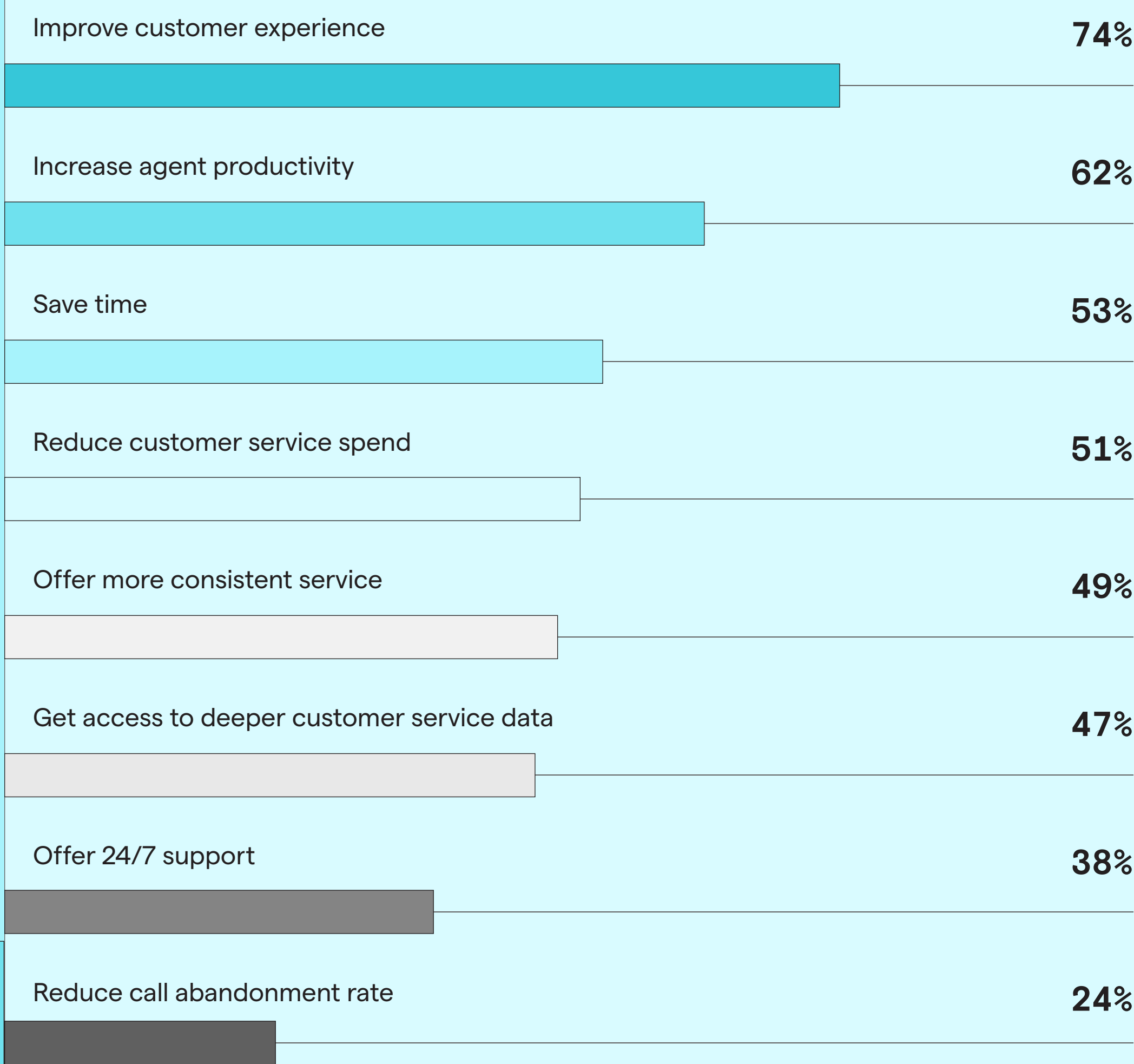


Enterprises hope that AI will solve the efficiency vs CX conundrum.

While efficiency goals like increasing productivity, saving time and reducing spend are popular in AI projects, the most commonly shared goal for AI is to improve customer experience.

Organizations are seeing the capacity of AI to help them walk the line between efficiency and experience, and hopefully, deliver against the pressure on contact centers to do more, with less.

Q. What problems are you looking to AI to solve in 2025?

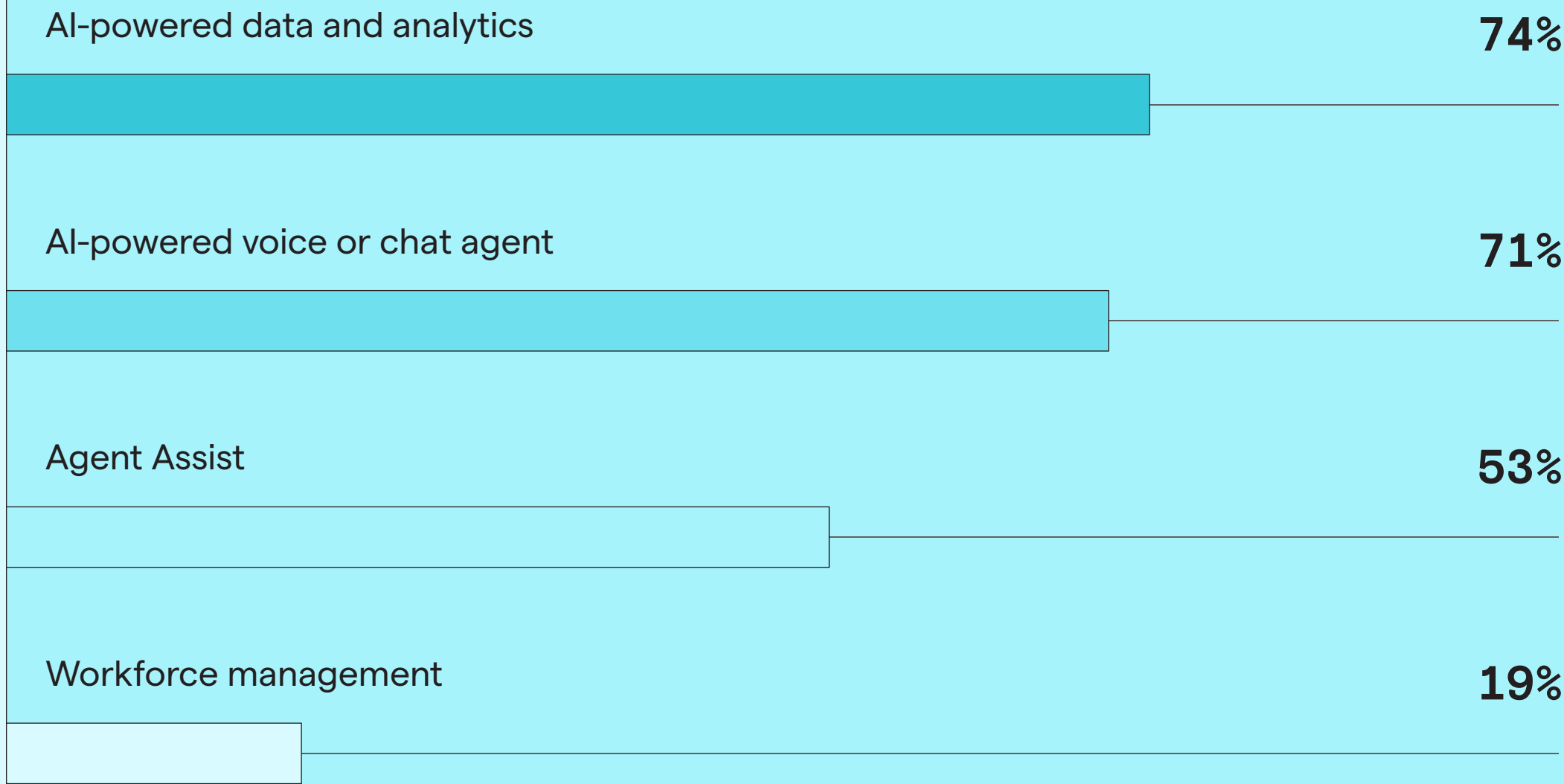


CX leaders are investing in AI-driven analytics and conversational automation.

74% of CX and contact center leaders are planning to use AI to learn more about their customers. 71% are planning to deploy an AI voice or chat agent.

Combining these efforts will enable enterprises to access first-party customer data, direct from the source. This data can drive operational changes that improve the whole customer journey, not just customer support.

Q. What functions of AI do you plan to invest more in 2025?



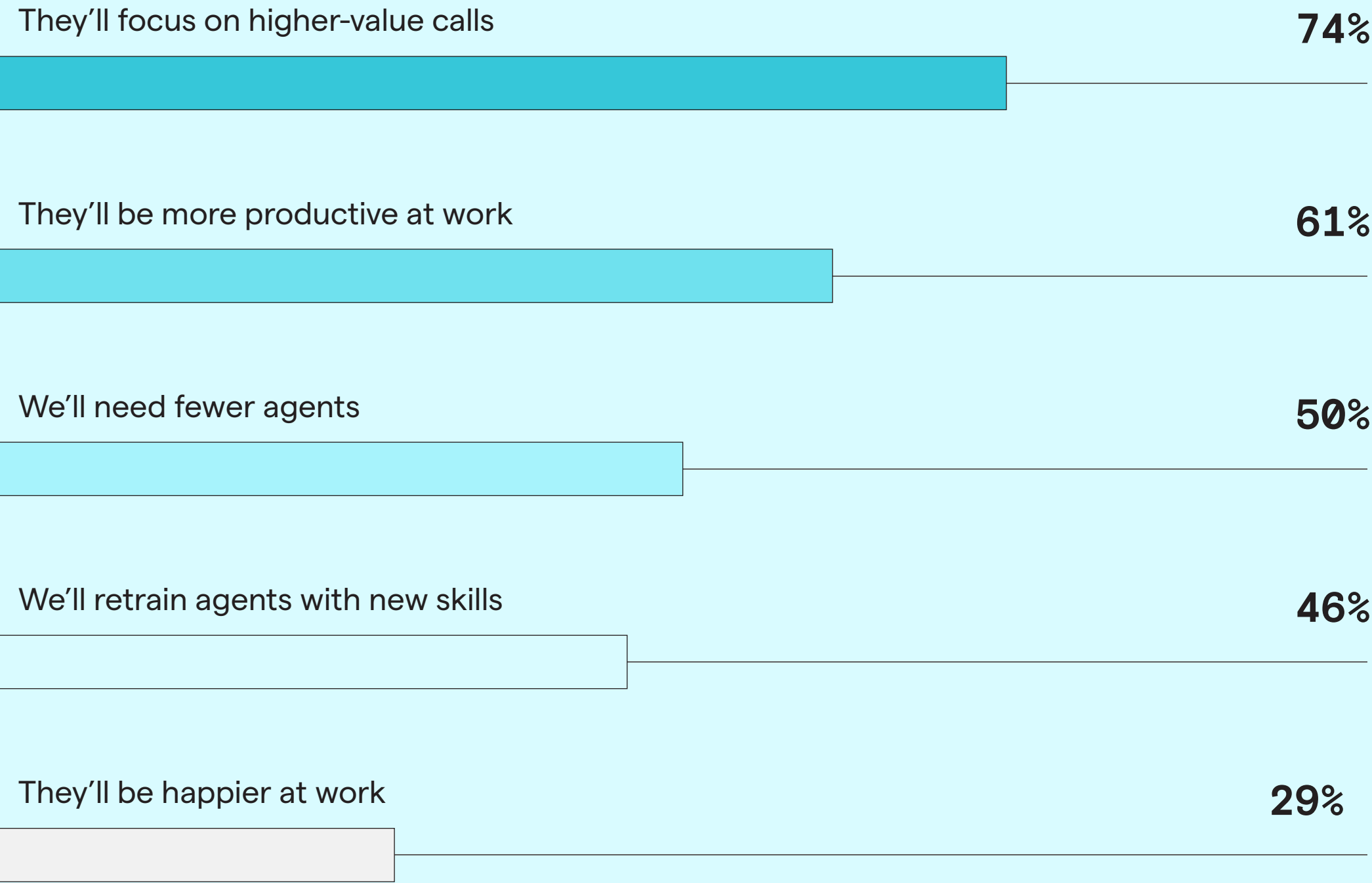
AI will make customer service jobs better.

Almost ¾ of respondents agree that AI will enable customer service representatives to focus on high-value calls, while just under ½ expect that AI will enable them to train able to train agents with new skills.

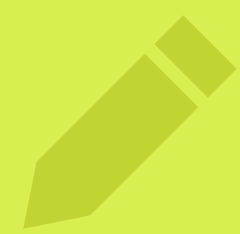
Automating repetitive tasks will enable organizations to give high-performing agents more rewarding work, while reducing the need for continuous hiring.



Q. How will your customer service representatives' jobs change as more AI is introduced into the call center?



Customers are warming
up to AI voice agents.

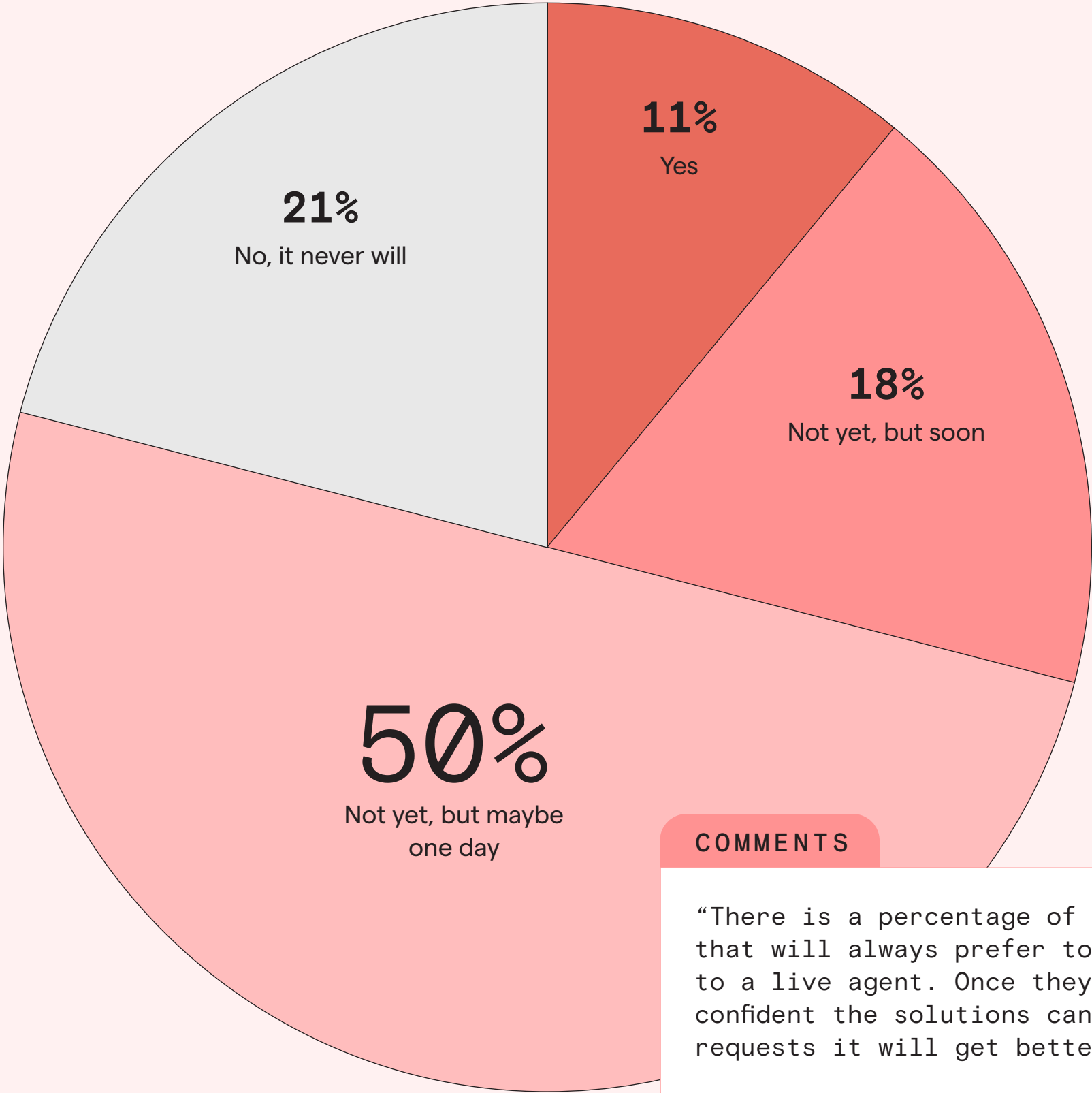


AI voice agents *could* replace human customer service representatives.

79% of CX and customer service leaders believe that AI voice agents could one day replace human customer service representatives.

11% believe that AI is already capable of replacing representatives and we anticipate that this number will grow in 2025.

Q. Could voice AI replace human customer service representatives?

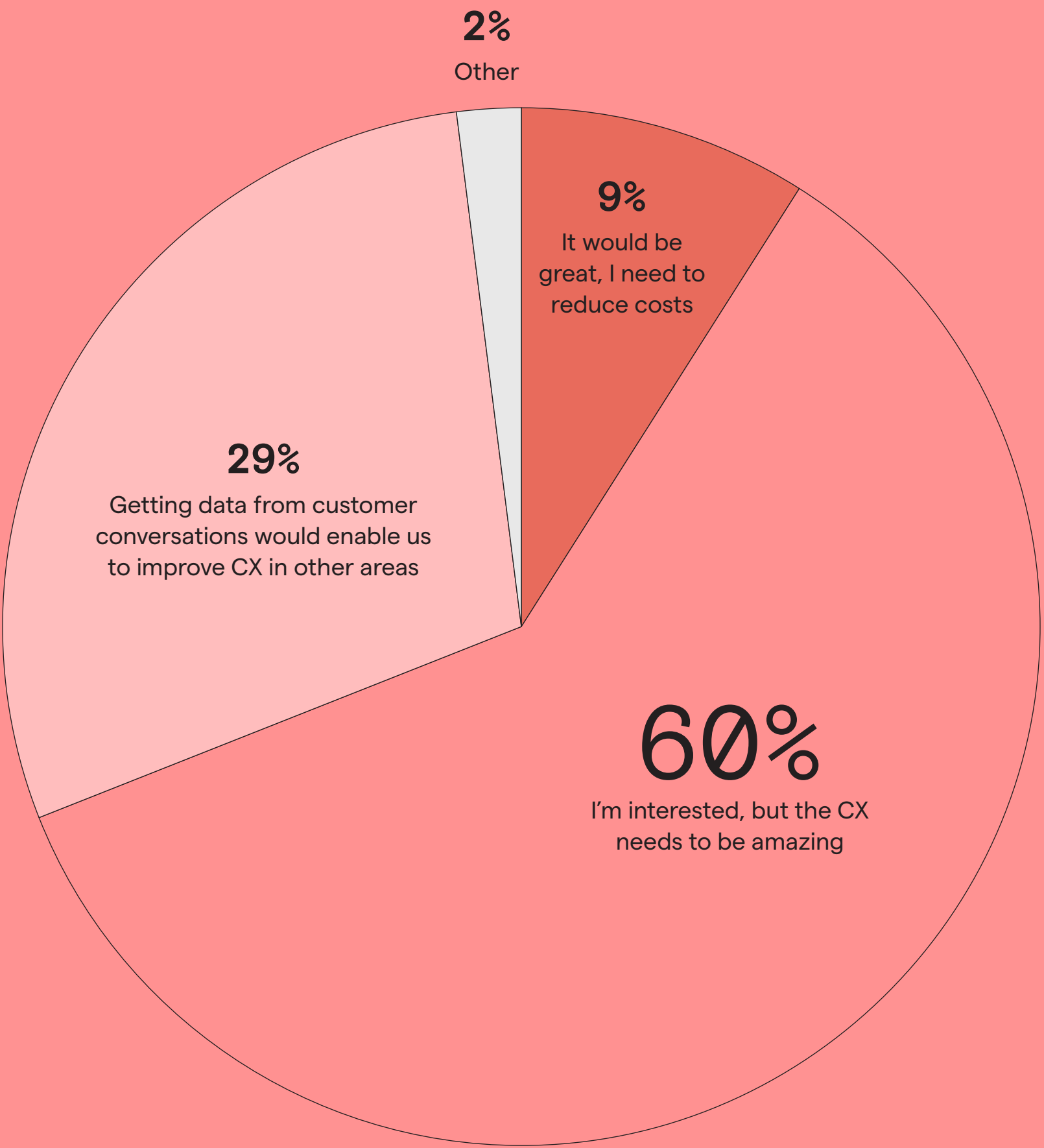


CX leaders see the benefit in using AI voice agents to handle customer service calls.

98% of respondents see a benefit in using voice AI to handle customer service calls, but they are not willing to compromise on CX.

Once again, the focus is on empowering customers with great experiences, rather than simply cutting costs.

Q. How do you think about using voice AI to handle customer service calls?



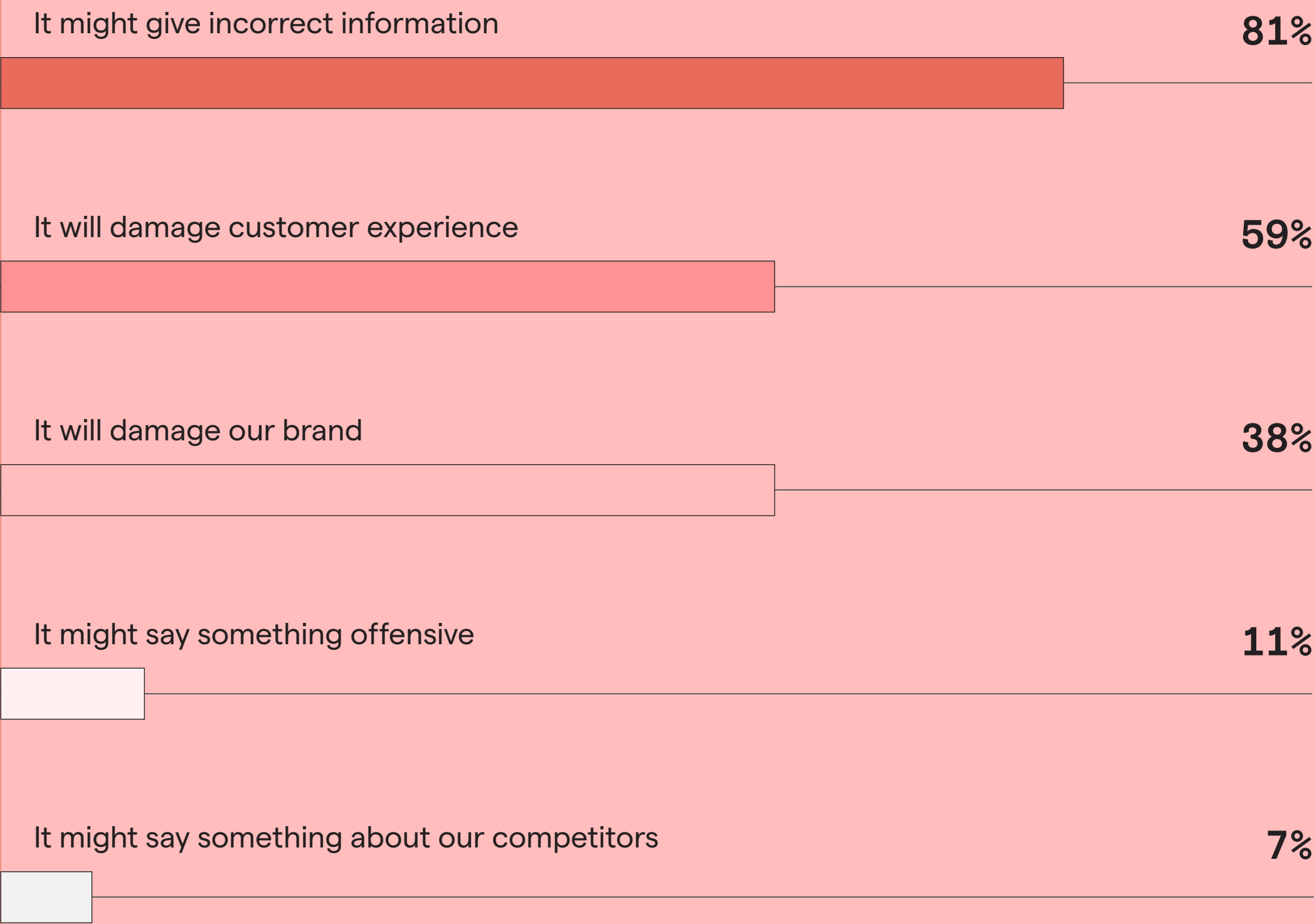
Concerns around accuracy and experience may slow down AI innovation.

Attitudes to voice AI are, on the whole, positive; but many CX and customer service leaders are concerned that AI voice agents may give inaccurate responses and damage customer experience.

These concerns will come as no surprise to anybody following the latest commercial applications of generative voice AI, and highlight the need for robust guardrails to keep LLMs on track, and lifelike voice design that enables brands to consistently deliver their best experience.



Q. What are your biggest concerns about using voice AI to handle customer service phone calls?



Customers are warming up to AI voice agents.

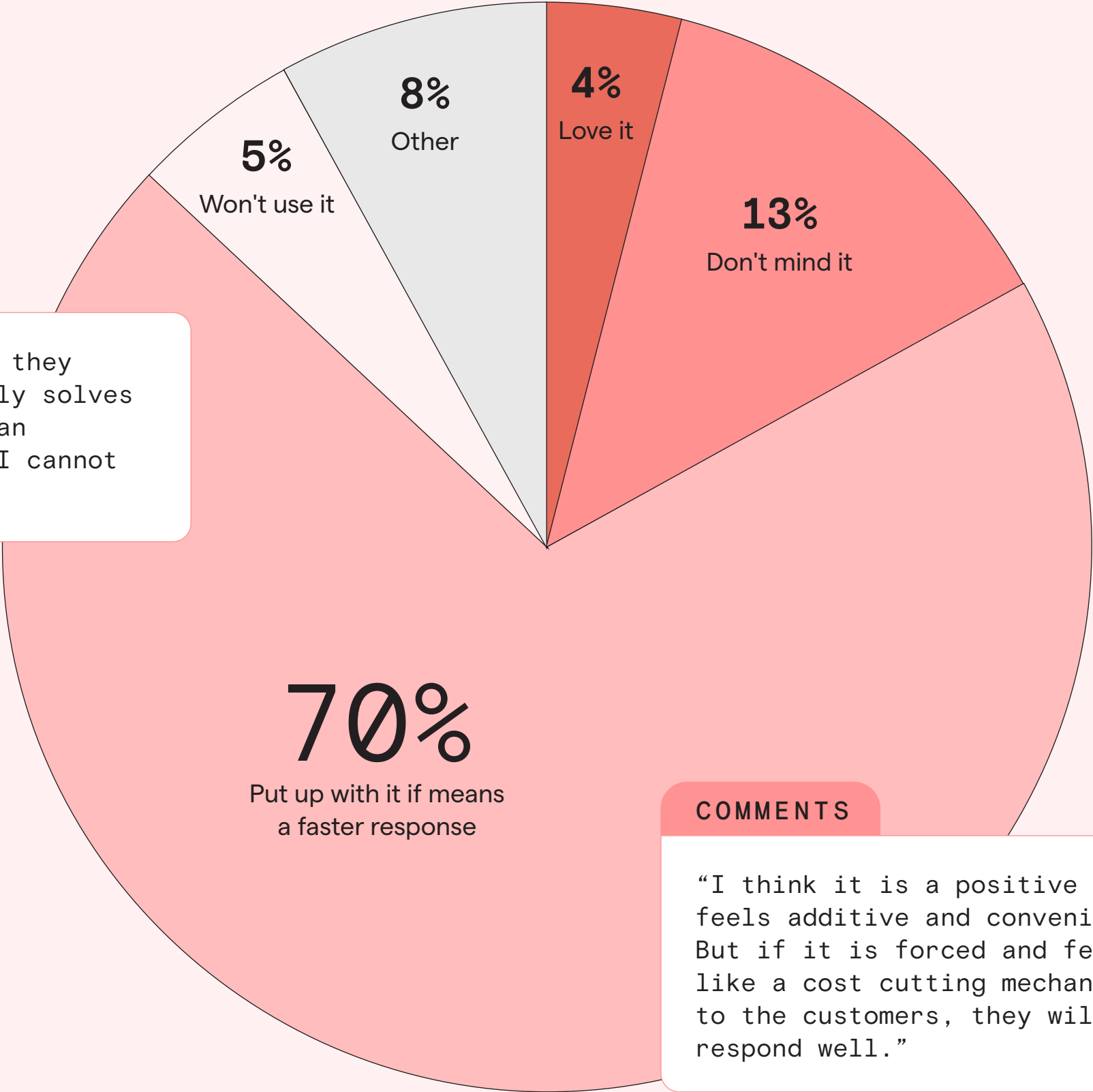
It's been almost 15 years since the launch of Apple Siri in 2011, but there's still a lot of uncertainty around conversational AI.

Over the last few years, a new generation of conversational technologies has been changing customers' minds. Today, 70% of CX and customer service leaders believe that customers will 'put up with' AI voice assistants and chatbots if it means they get a faster response.

Q. How do you think your customers feel about AI-powered customer service like voice assistants and chatbots?

COMMENTS

"They like to use it if they know it is AI, accurately solves the problem, and they can transfer to humans if AI cannot solve their issue."



COMMENTS

"I think it is a positive if it feels additive and convenient. But if it is forced and feels like a cost cutting mechanism to the customers, they will not respond well."



Most customers believe a person would understand them better than AI.

While customers are getting used to conversational AI, they still believe that people are more competent at handling customer service.

77% of CX and contact center leaders believe that customers think a person would understand them better than AI would; while 68% say customers think a human customer service agent would be more empathetic and open to negotiating.

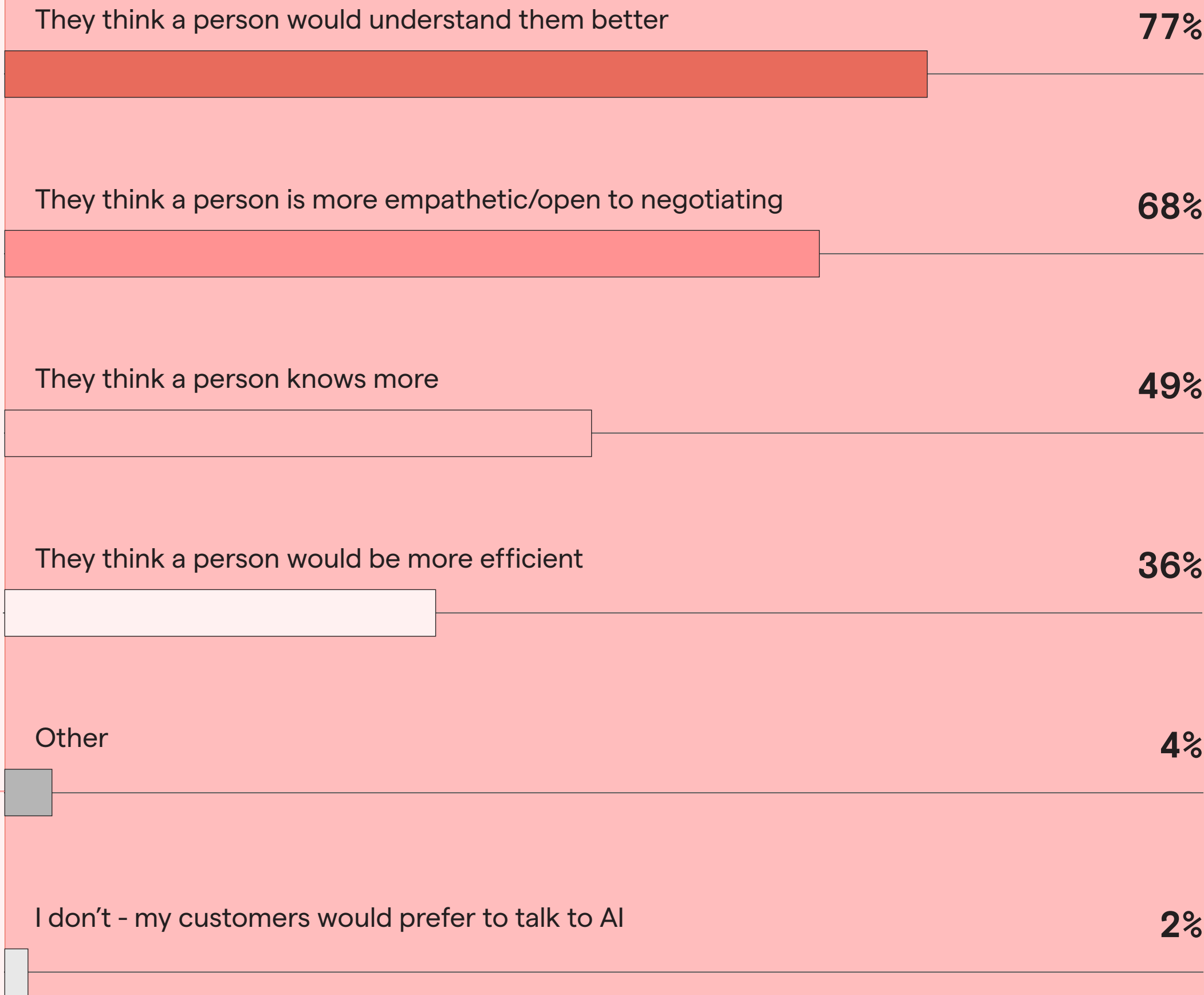
COMMENTS

"They can get better answers from a human."

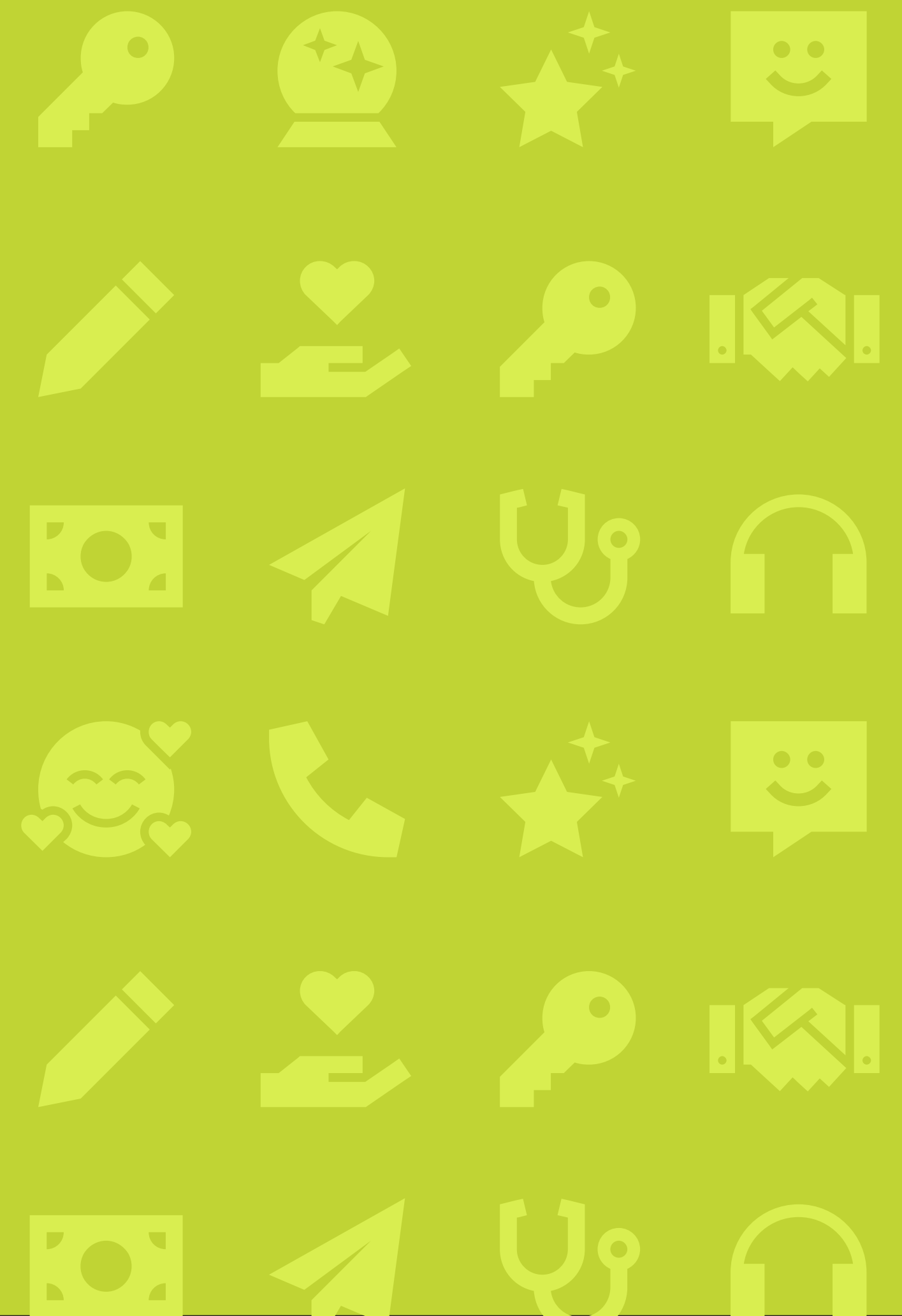
COMMENTS

"Their needs are more complex (or emotional) than an AI can effectively handle."

Q. Why do you think your customers might want to talk to a person instead of AI?



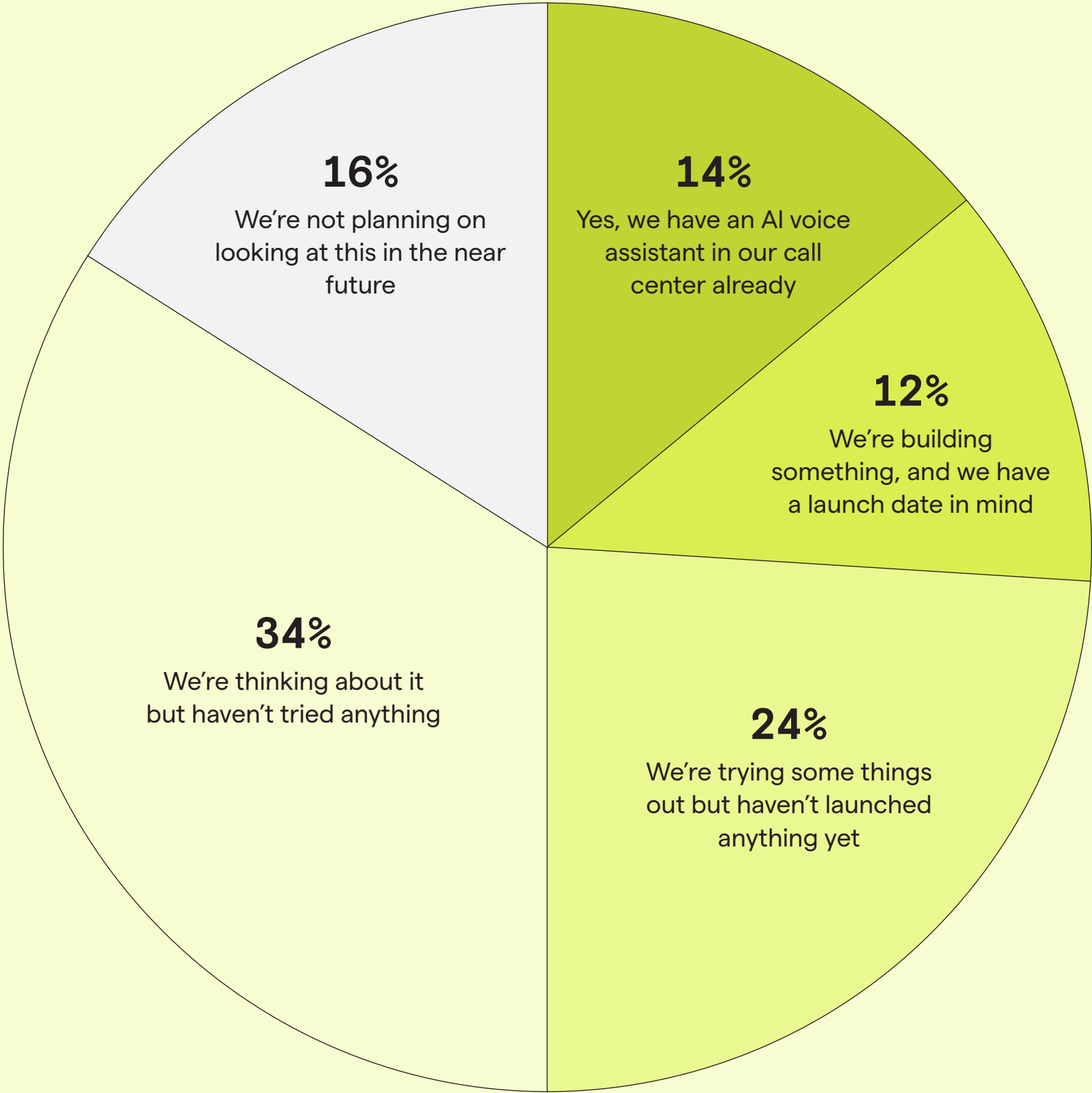
- Voice AI is revolutionizing the contact center.



Most CX leaders are considering using AI voice agents to handle customer service phone calls.

While there are concerns around the accuracy and experience delivered by AI voice agents, 60% of contact center and CX leaders are actively considering using voice AI to handle customer service phone calls. 14% are already using an AI voice assistant in the call center.

Q. Have you tried to create a voice assistant to handle customer service phone calls?

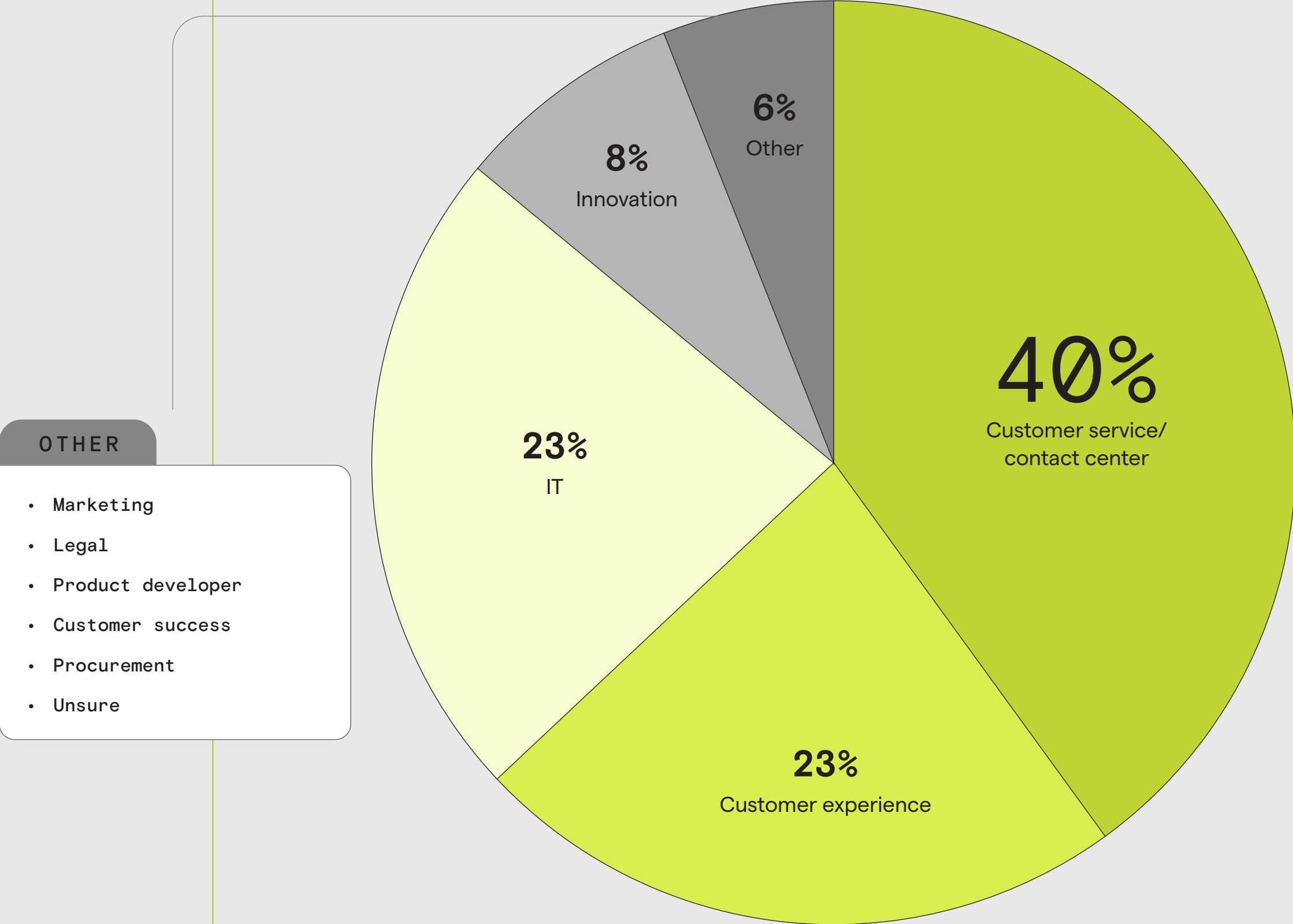


Customer service leaders are driving voice AI adoption in the enterprise.

While enterprise software buying teams are becoming larger and broader, 40% of respondents agree that customer service/contact center teams would lead the process of buying or building a voice assistant to handle customer service phone calls.

23% of respondents said CX teams would lead voice AI projects, while another 23% said IT teams would lead. It seems that there is some uncertainty around exactly where voice AI initiatives should sit.

Q. Which department leads, or would lead the process of buying or building a voice assistant to handle customer service phone calls?

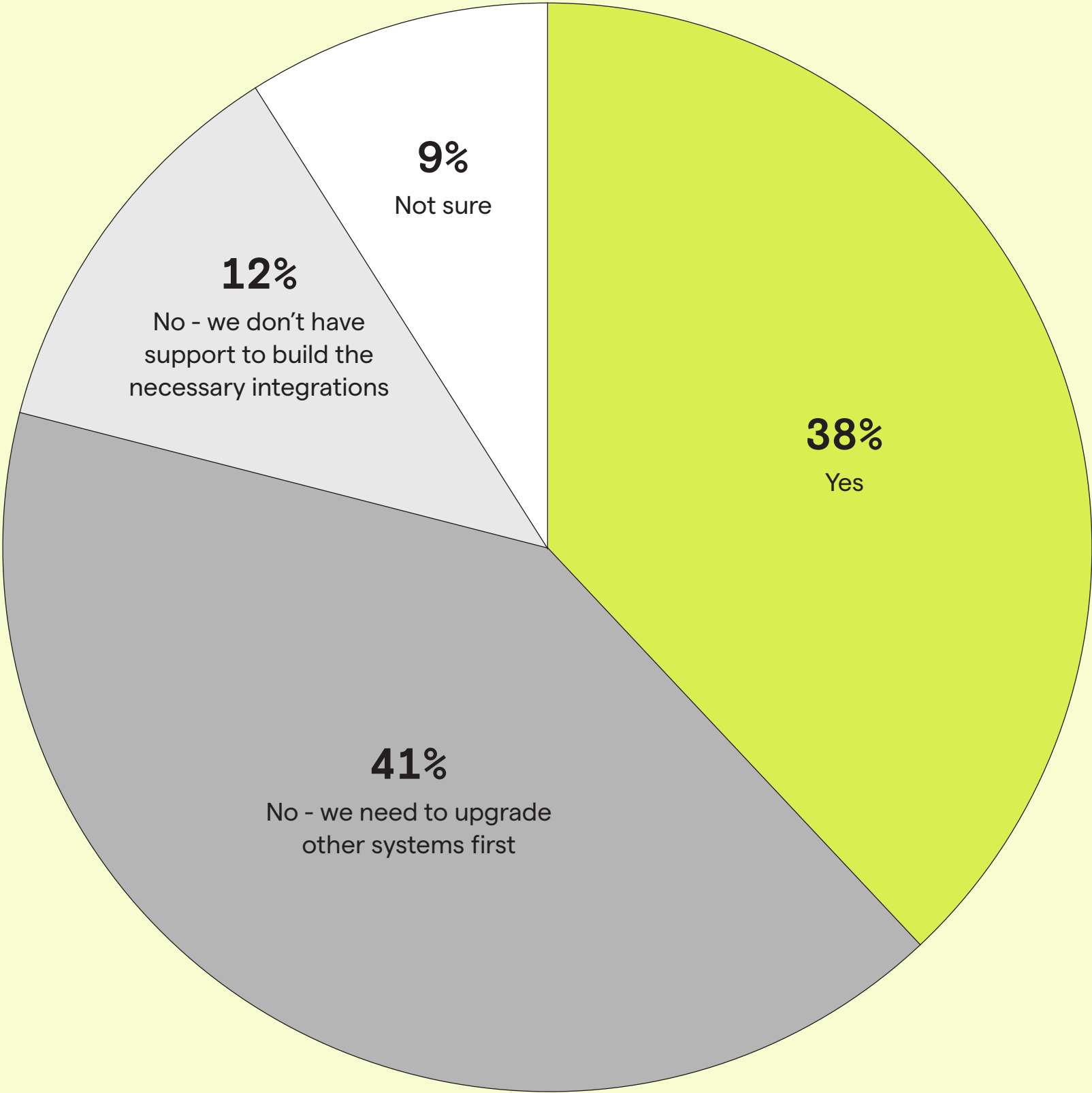


Most companies feel their tech stack is not ready to support voice AI.

While the appetite for voice AI is strong, 53% of respondents feel that their tech stack is not currently in a fit shape to implement a voice assistant for customer service.

Of those who said their tech stack isn't ready, 47% blamed their legacy stack while 17% felt that they did not have the people resources to support an implementation.

Q. Is your tech stack in fit shape to implement a voice assistant for customer service?

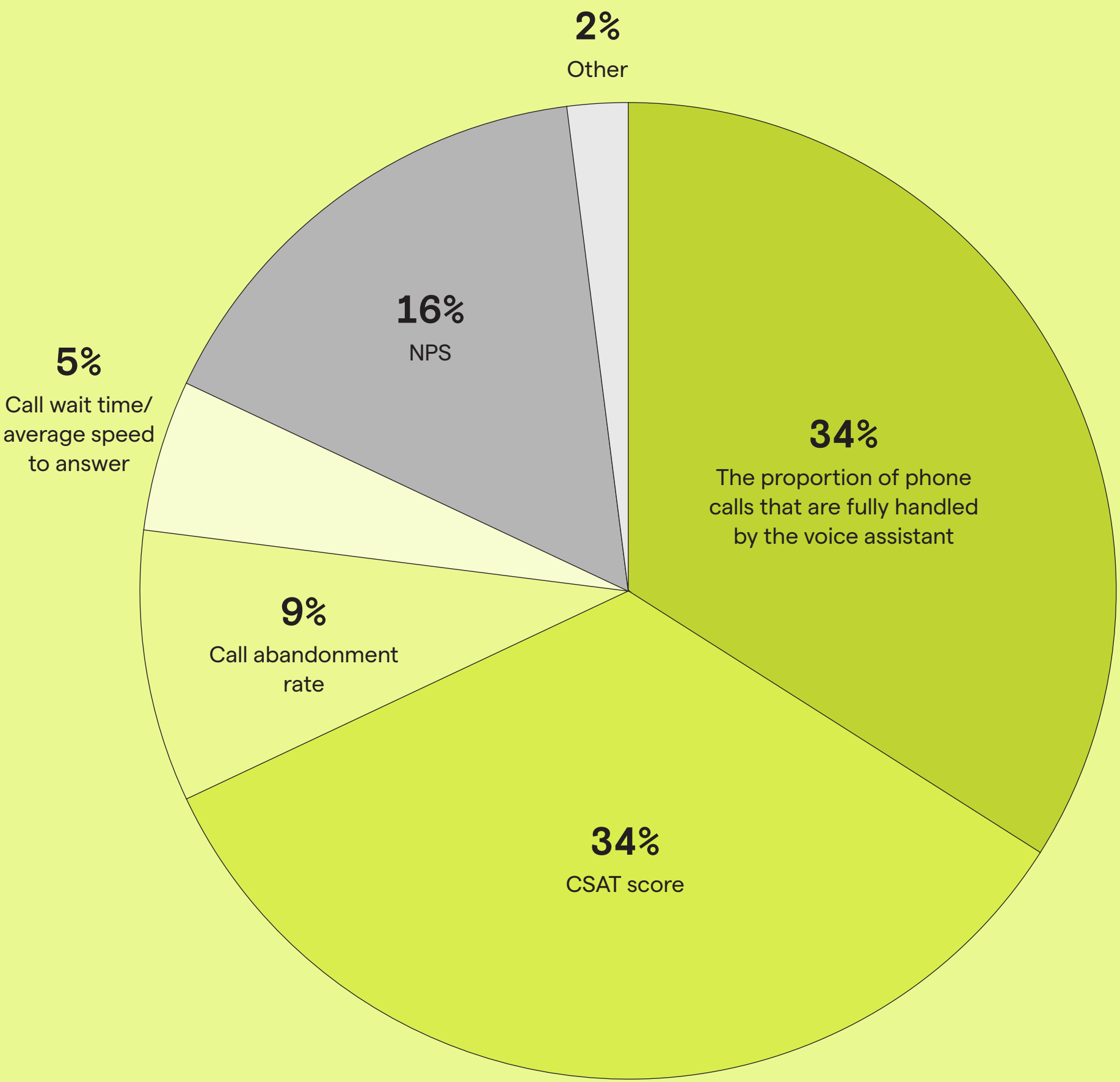


Efficacy and experience are the key outcomes for voice AI projects.

Contact center and CX leaders are split on what constitutes success for a customer service voice assistant.

34% say the key success metric for voice AI projects is the proportion of calls that are fully handled by the voice agent, while another 34% say the key metric is CSAT score.

Q. What key metric would you use to measure the success of a voice assistant for customer service?

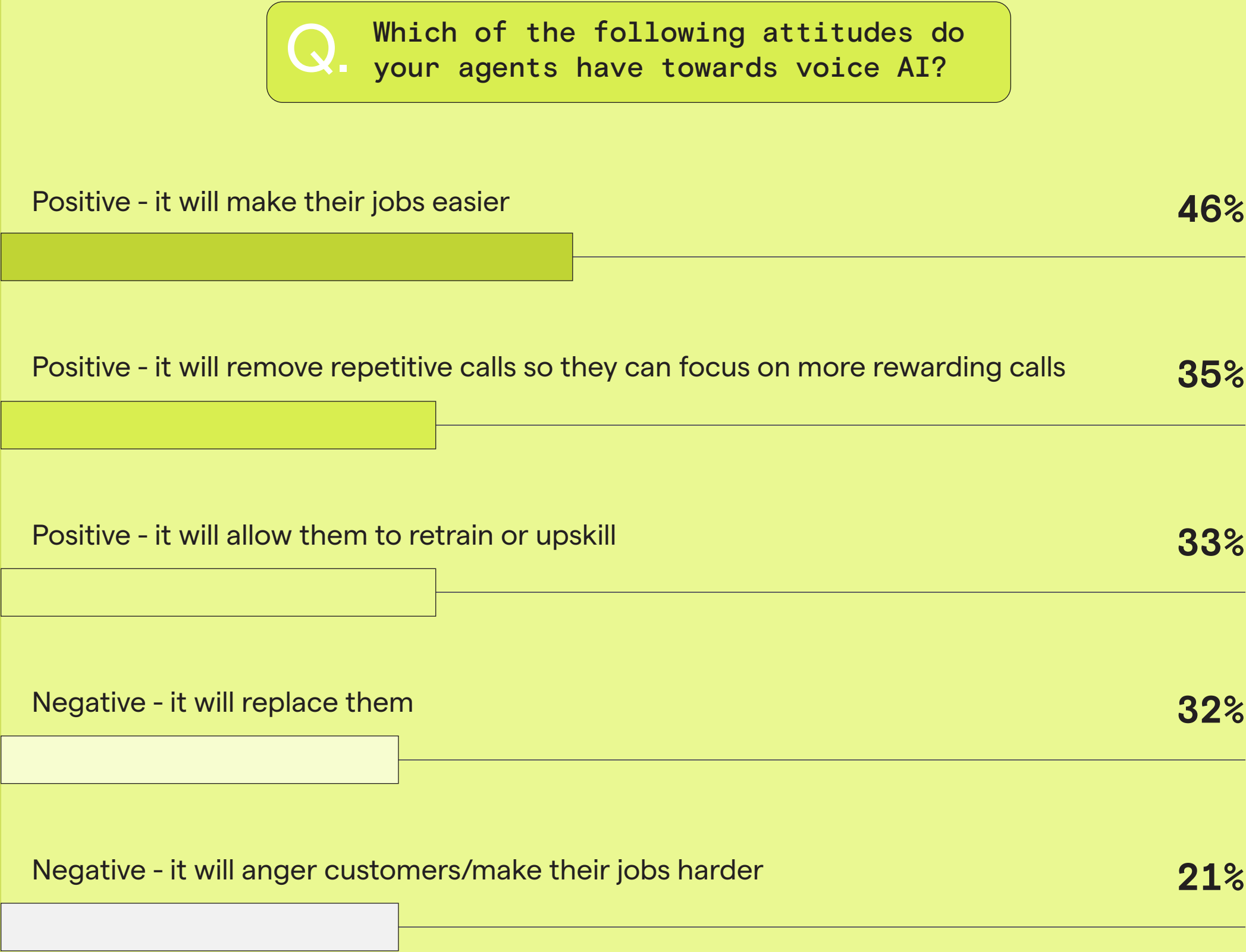


Customer service representatives have mixed feelings about AI voice agents.

Most contact center and CX leaders believe that customer service representatives have both positive and negative attitudes towards voice AI.

46% of respondents agree that customer service reps believe AI will make their jobs easier, and 35% say using AI to remove repetitive calls will allow them to focus on more rewarding work.

That said, there is still a concern that voice AI will replace customer service reps and make their jobs harder by angering customers.



What do CX and contact center leaders really think about voice AI?

We asked respondents to fill in the missing word.
Here's what they had to say:

Q. Having voice AI handle customer service in my contact center would be...

Great				Gamechanging				Beneficial	
Amazing						Good			
Helpful						Awesome		Valuable	
Efficient				Cost-effective		Enabling			
Ideal		Profitable		Transformational		Breakthrough	Effective	Evolutionary	Exciting
Fun	Exploratory	Impactful	Innovative	Life-changing	Revolutionary	Significant	Smart	Tremendous	Bold
Useful			Interesting	New	Nice	Optimal	Shocking	Long	Slow
Tricky	Uninteresting	Bad	Counterproductive	Hurtful	Mistake	Problematic		Worrying	
Scary		Challenging			Risky				

Ready to start your AI voice agent journey?

PolyAI is the world's most lifelike conversational AI agent for enterprise customer service.

PolyAI enables your customers to say whatever they want, however they want, to get the help they need, without the pain of being misunderstood.

What are you waiting for?

Resolve over 50% of calls and consistently deliver your best brand experience.

Visit **poly.ai** to learn more, or book a custom demo, today.

