



# The State of PR 2022

How PR teams connect with journalists, allocate budget,  
measure success and more

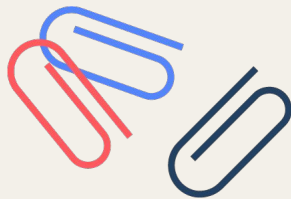
A STUDY BY

**MUCK RACK**

# In this report, we seek to answer:



- 1** | What are the top challenges and priorities for PR pros?



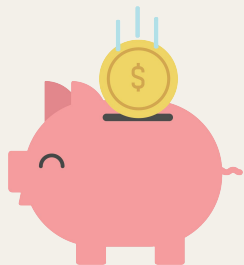
- 2** | What tech and tools do PR teams use to do their jobs?



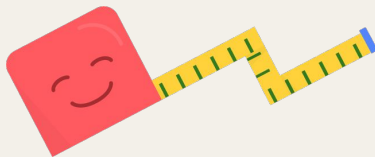
- 3** | How do PR pros connect with journalists?



- 4** | Which social platforms do PR pros value most?



- 5** | How do PR teams allocate budgets and what do PR salaries look like?



- 6** | How do PR teams measure success?



- 7** | What is the future of PR?

# Research partners



**Michael Smart** **PR**

# About this survey

WE SURVEYED 1,887 PR PROS FROM APRIL 12TH to MAY 3RD, 2022.

## Company type:

- 55% agencies
- 31% brands
- 12% nonprofits
- 3% government

## PR team size:

- Solo: 12%
- 2-10: 41%
- 11-100: 31%
- 101-1,000: 11%
- 1,000+ 5%

## Location:

- 82% US
- 6% UK
- 5% Canada
- 4% Europe (outside of UK)
- 3% Asia
- 2% Africa
- 1% India
- 1% South America

## Primary audience:

- 31% B2B
- 30% B2C
- 35% B2B and B2C

## Industry:

- Technology: 16%
- Entertainment, media & publishing: 15%
- Consumer products: 9%
- Healthcare/biotechnology: 6%
- Nonprofit: 6%
- Education: 6%
- Consumer services: 6%
- Financial services: 6%
- Ecommerce & retail: 5%
- Food & beverage: 4%
- Travel & tourism: 3%
- Government: 3%
- Automotive: 2%

# A look at what's inside

- More than half of PR pros say their top challenge is getting responses from journalists, with agencies (**59%**) more challenged than brands (**43%**)
- More than half of PR pros (**53%**) work 40+ hours/week *and* work after business hours at least once a week
- **41%** of PR pros earn between \$70K-\$150K. **52%** of PR pros at agencies make less than \$100K annually vs. **39%** of PR pros at brands
- Most PR pros pitch **4** or more media types—the most popular are online/digital publications, newspapers, magazines and TV
- Last year, PR pros said LinkedIn was the most valuable social platform. This year, Twitter takes the lead: **77%** PR pros say Twitter is the most important platform for their comms strategy, followed by LinkedIn (**73%**) and Facebook (**69%**)



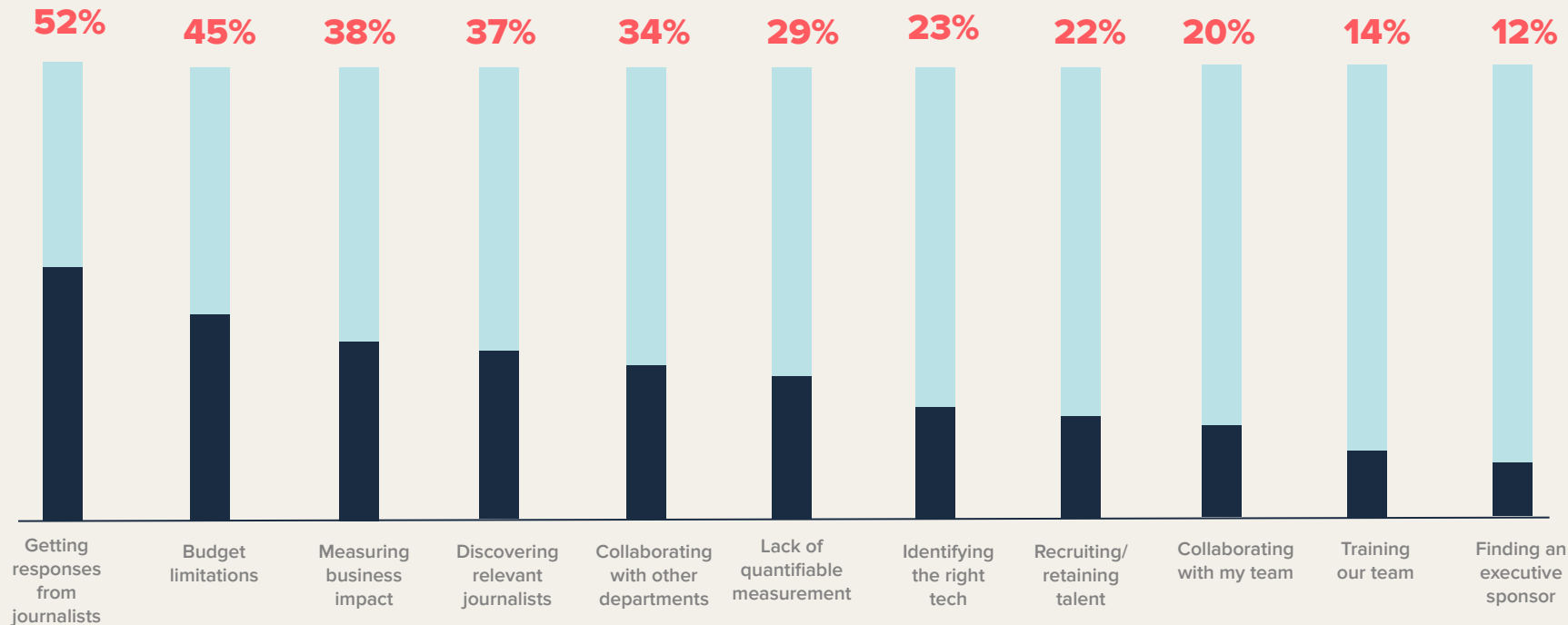
# 1



How PR pros  
work: challenges  
and priorities

# Biggest PR challenges: Getting journalist responses and budget, measuring impact

Which of the following challenges does your PR/communications team face? (select all that apply)



## Which of the following challenges does your PR/communications team face?

Agencies are more challenged with getting responses from journalists: **59%** vs. **43%** of brands.

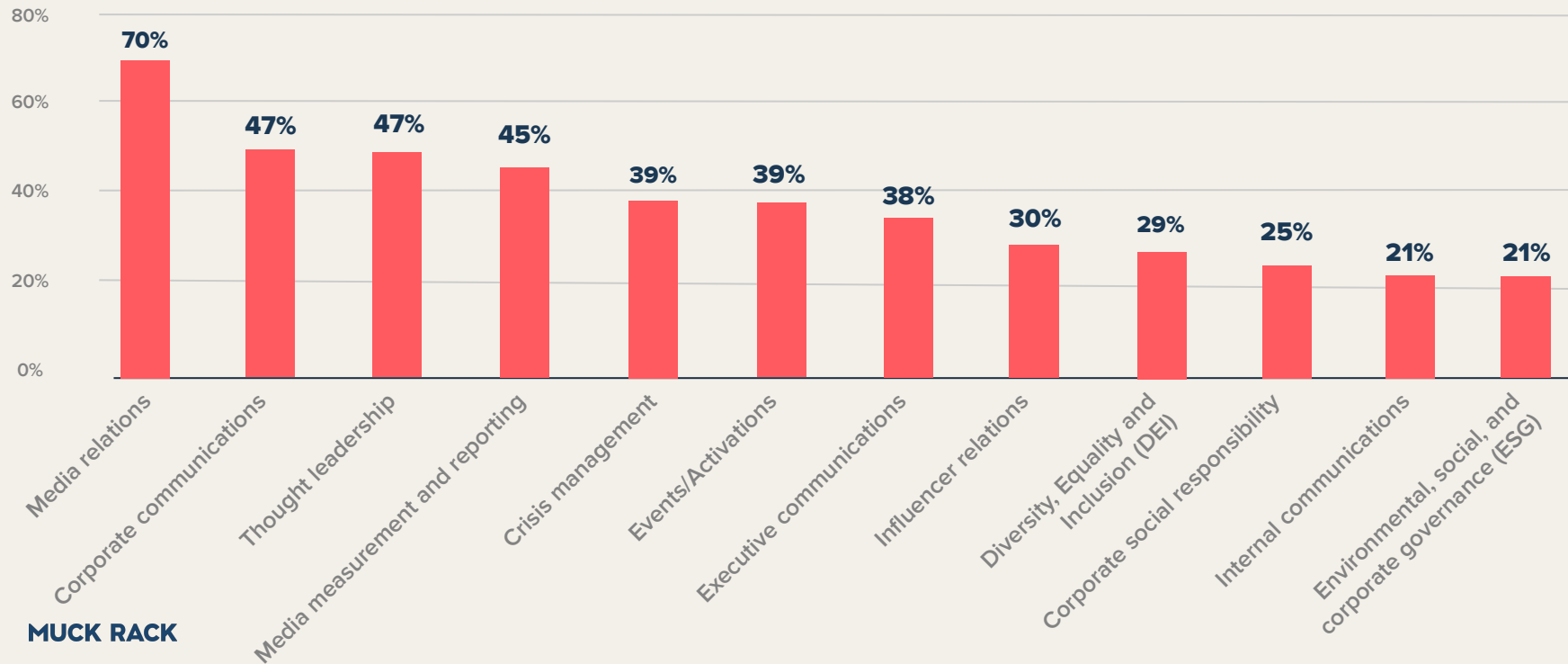
Agencies are also more challenged by measuring business impact (**40%** vs. **35%** of brands) and keeping up with new media (**37%** vs. **29%** of brands).

Brands are more challenged with collaborating with other departments (**44%**) than agencies (**23%**).



# The average PR pro focuses on 4.5 areas at once

What is your focus as a PR professional? (Select all that apply)



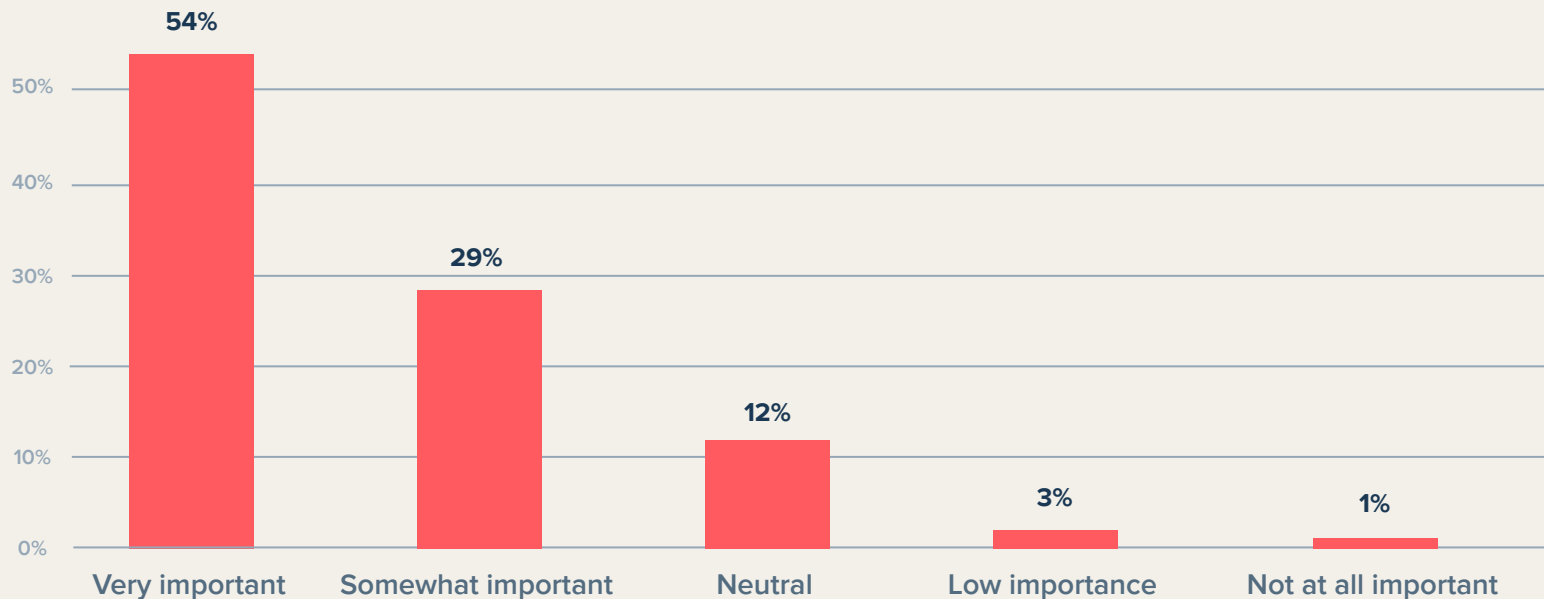
# What is your focus as a PR professional?

More PR pros at agencies focus on thought leadership (**53%**) vs. brands (**39%**).

More PR pros at brands focus on crisis management (**42%**) vs. agencies (**36%**). Those at brands are also more likely to focus on corporate comms (**56%**) vs. agencies (**44%**).

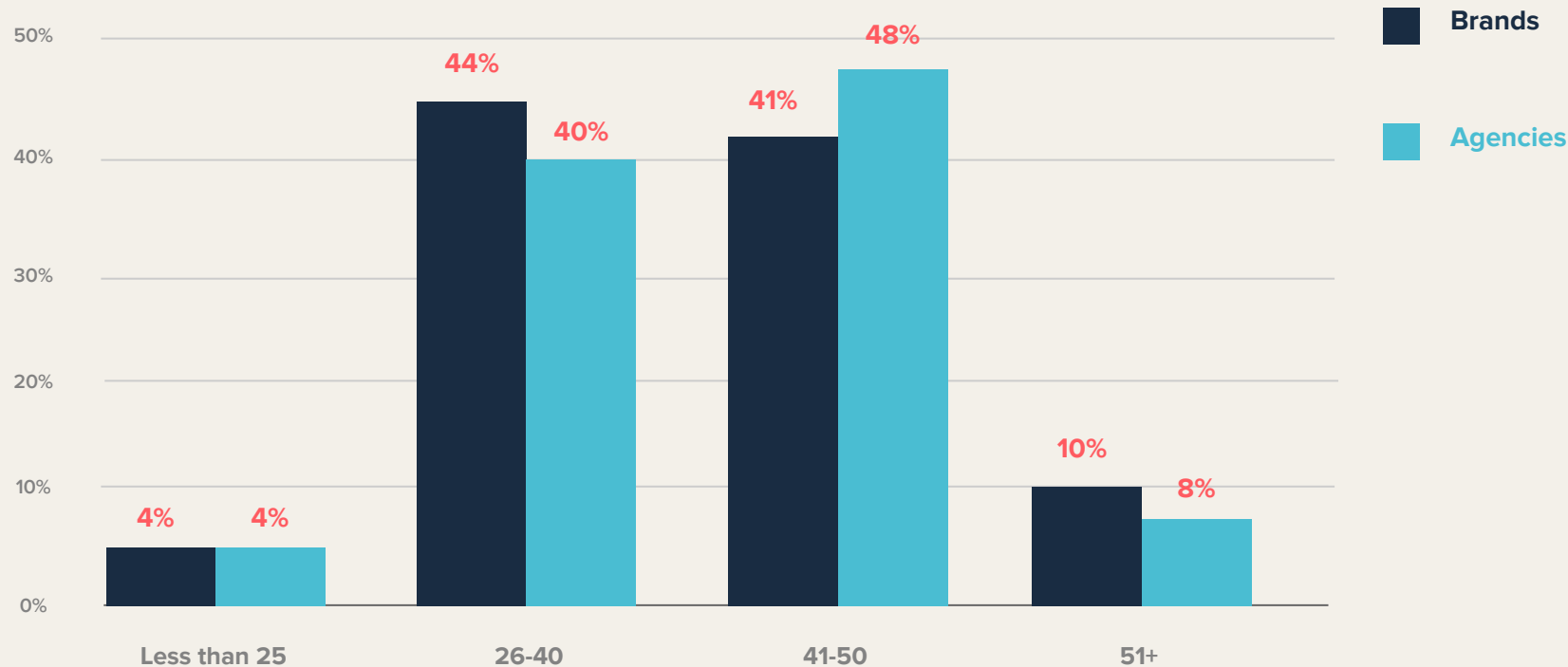
# 83% say DEI is somewhat important or very important at their company

How important is Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) at your company?



# More than half of all PR pros work 40+ hours per week

How many hours do you work on average per week?



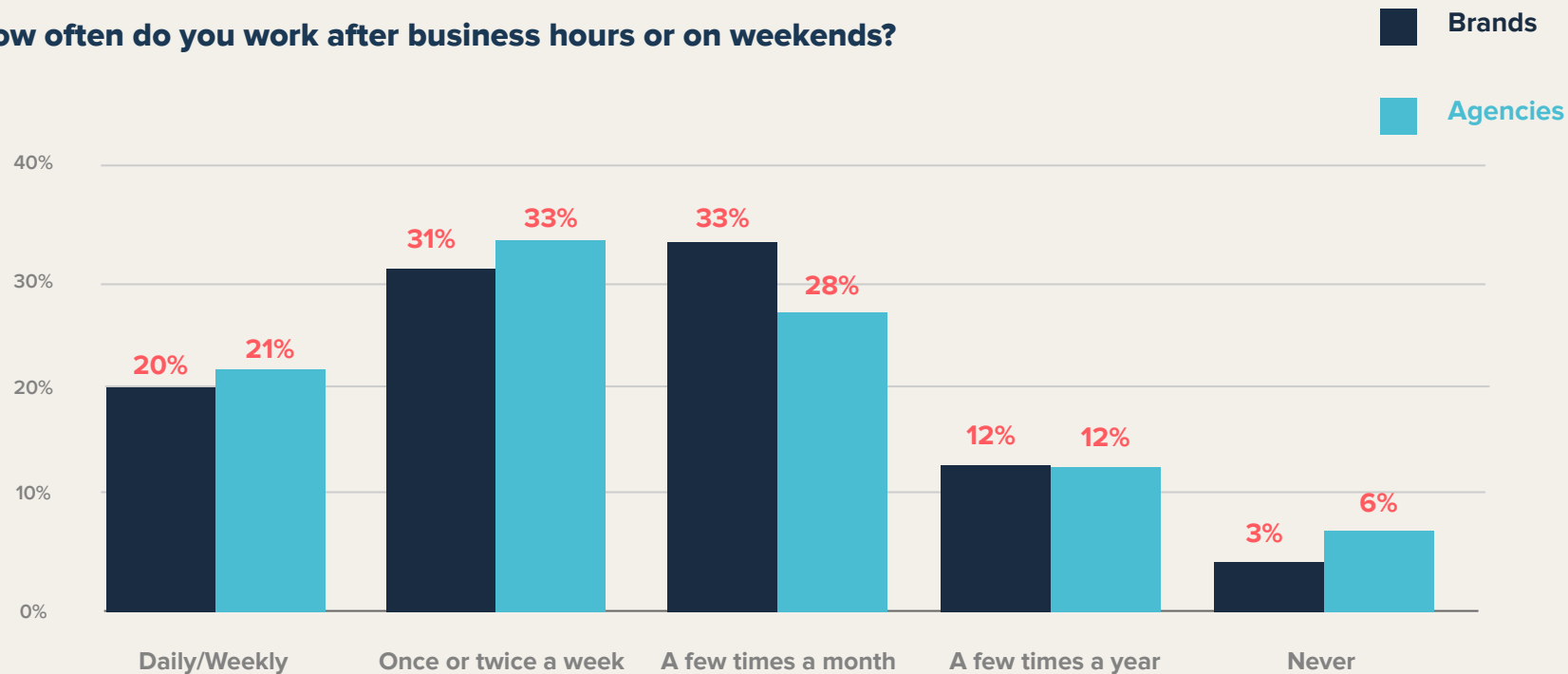
## How many hours do you work on average per week?

Overall, **55%** of PR pros work 41+ hours per week. **46%** work 41-50 hours and **9%** work 51+ hours. **40%** work 26-40 hours per week.

PR pros at agencies say they work more hours than PR pros at brands: **56%** at agencies work 40+ hours per week vs. **51%** at brands.

# 53% work after business hours or on weekends once a week or more

How often do you work after business hours or on weekends?



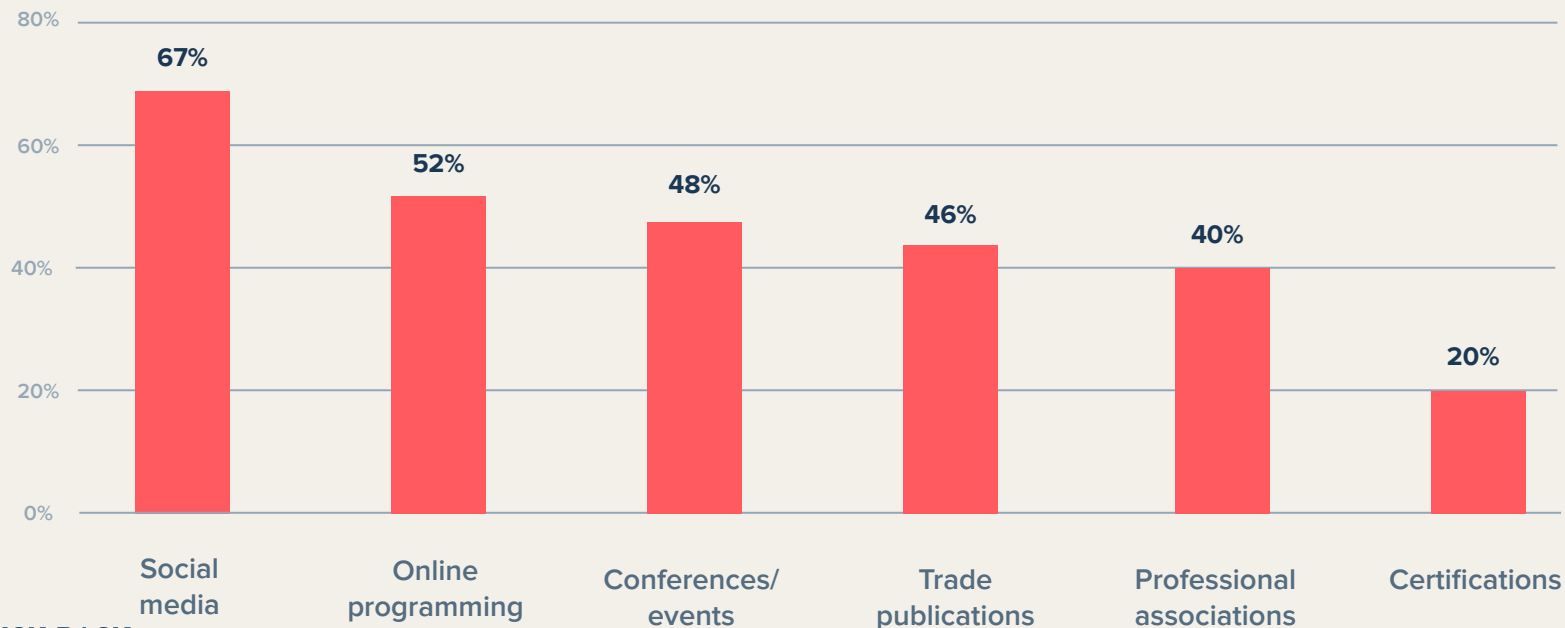
## How often do you work after business hours or on weekends?

Overall, **32%** of PR pros work after hours once or twice a week and **21%** do so daily. Only **12%** do so a few times a year and **9%** never work after hours or on weekends.

**54%** of PR pros at agencies work after hours or on weekends weekly or more vs. **51%** of PR pros at brands.

# To stay current about their profession, most PR pros rely on social media, followed by online programming

How do you stay current about the profession?

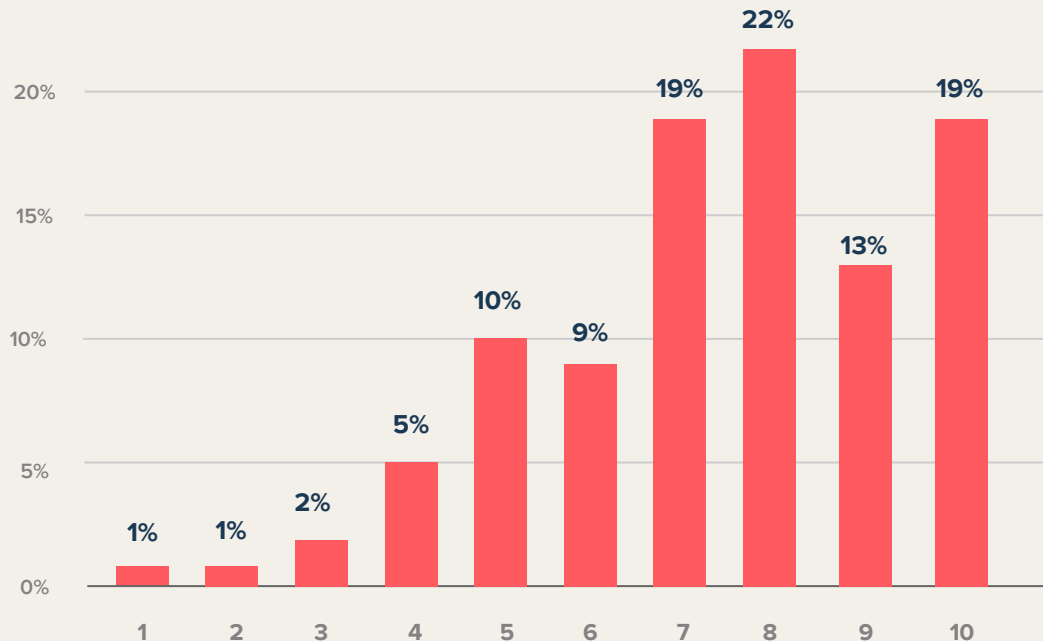




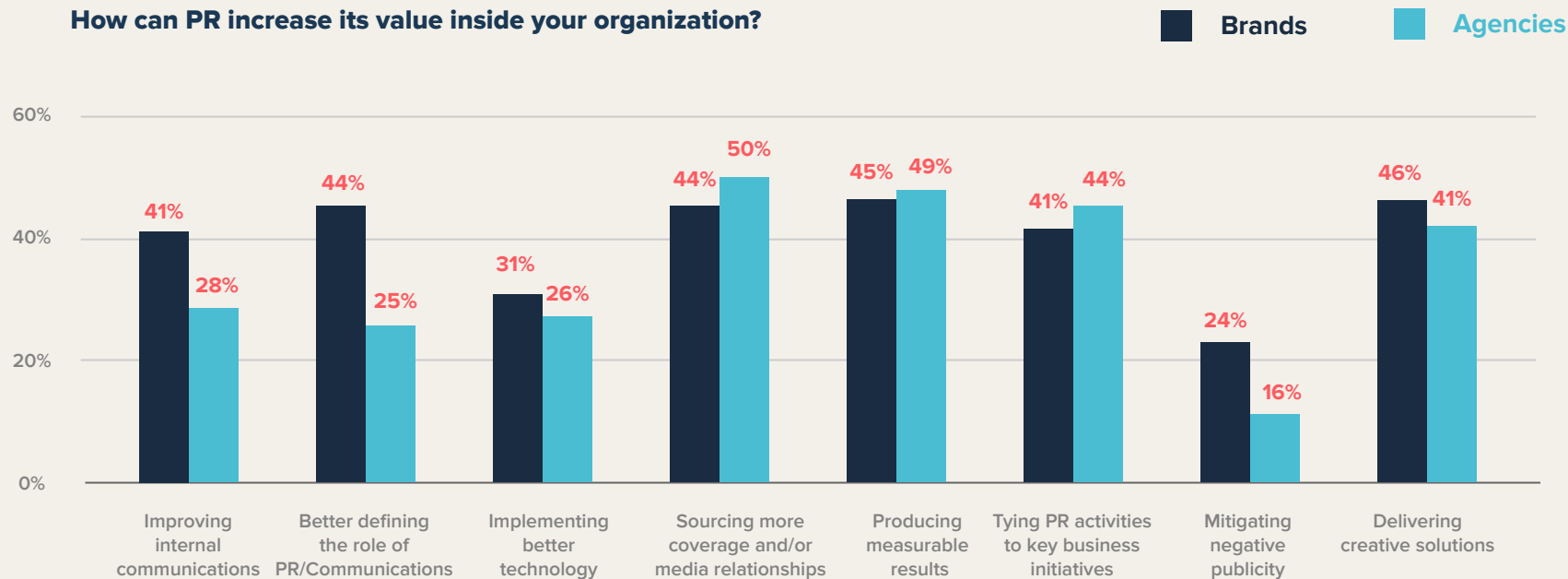
# 82% say their org regards their comms function as being close to a strategic partner

Only **19%** of PR pros rank the way their organization regards their communications function as a 5 or lower, meaning that they believe the PR function is treated closer to purely transactional in their organization.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being purely transactional and 10 being full strategic partner, how would you rate the way your communications function is currently regarded by business leaders in your organization?



# Sourcing more coverage and producing measurable results are the top ways PR pros say they can increase value inside their organization



## How can PR increase its value inside your organization?

About half of all PR pros say sourcing more coverage (**49%**) and producing measurable results (**49%**) are ways they can increase value within their organization.

Tying PR activities to key business initiatives (**43%**) and delivering creative solutions (**42%**) were also among the top ways to increase value.

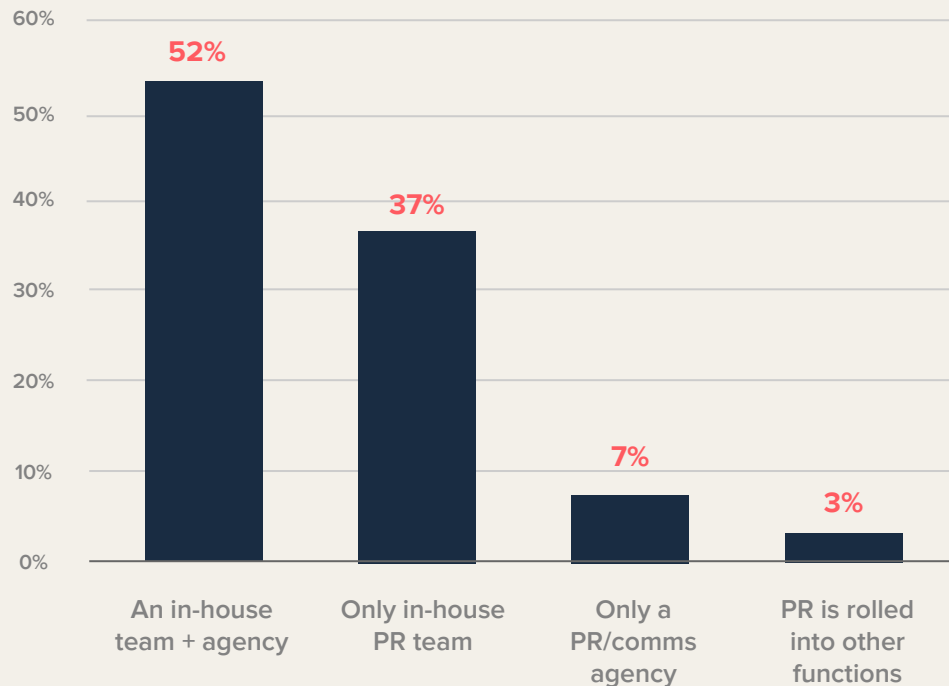
More PR pros at brands say better defining the role of PR/communications (**44%** vs. **25%** of agencies) and improving internal communications (**41%** vs. **28%** of agencies) can help them increase value.

# More than half of brands say their PR is managed by both an in-house team and an agency

The majority of brands (**89%**) have an in-house PR team and **52%** have both an in-house team and an agency.

**68%** of companies earning \$1B or more annually have both an in-house team and an agency. **61%** of companies earning under \$1M annually only have an in-house PR team.

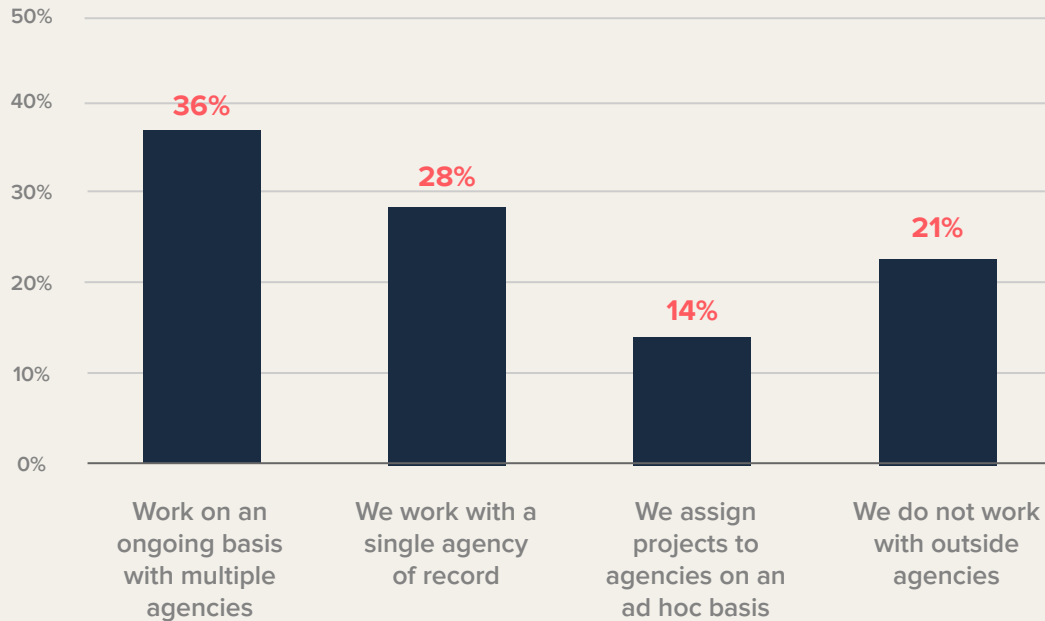
## Brands — My organization's PR is managed by:



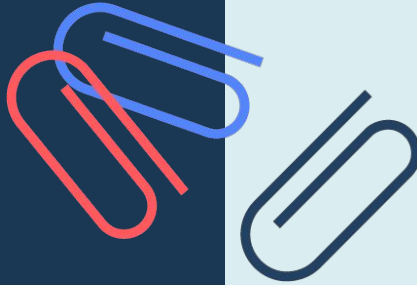
# 78% of brands work with agencies

The way brands work with agencies varies, but the majority surveyed either work with multiple agencies on an ongoing basis (36%) or work with a single agency of record (28%).

## Brands — How do you work with agencies?



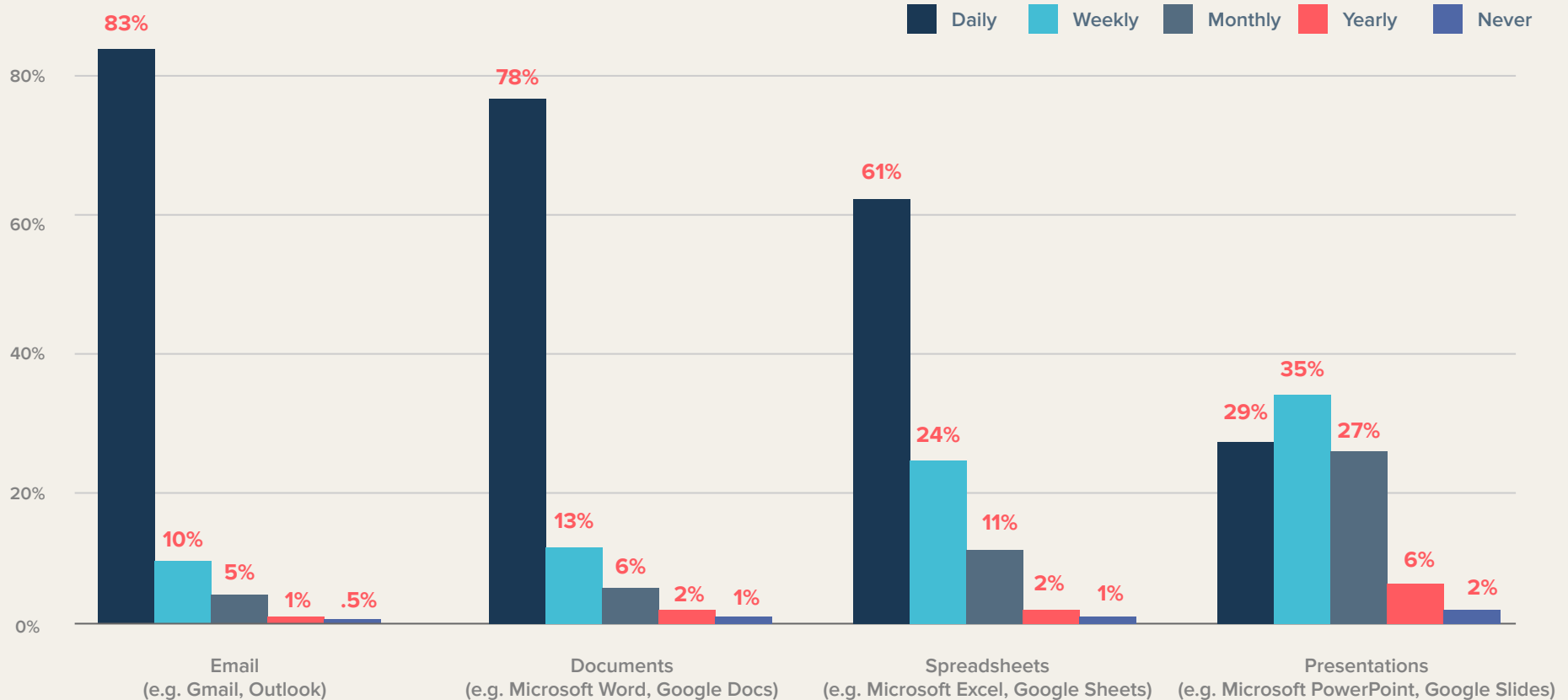
# 2



## Tech and tools

# Most use email, documents and spreadsheets daily

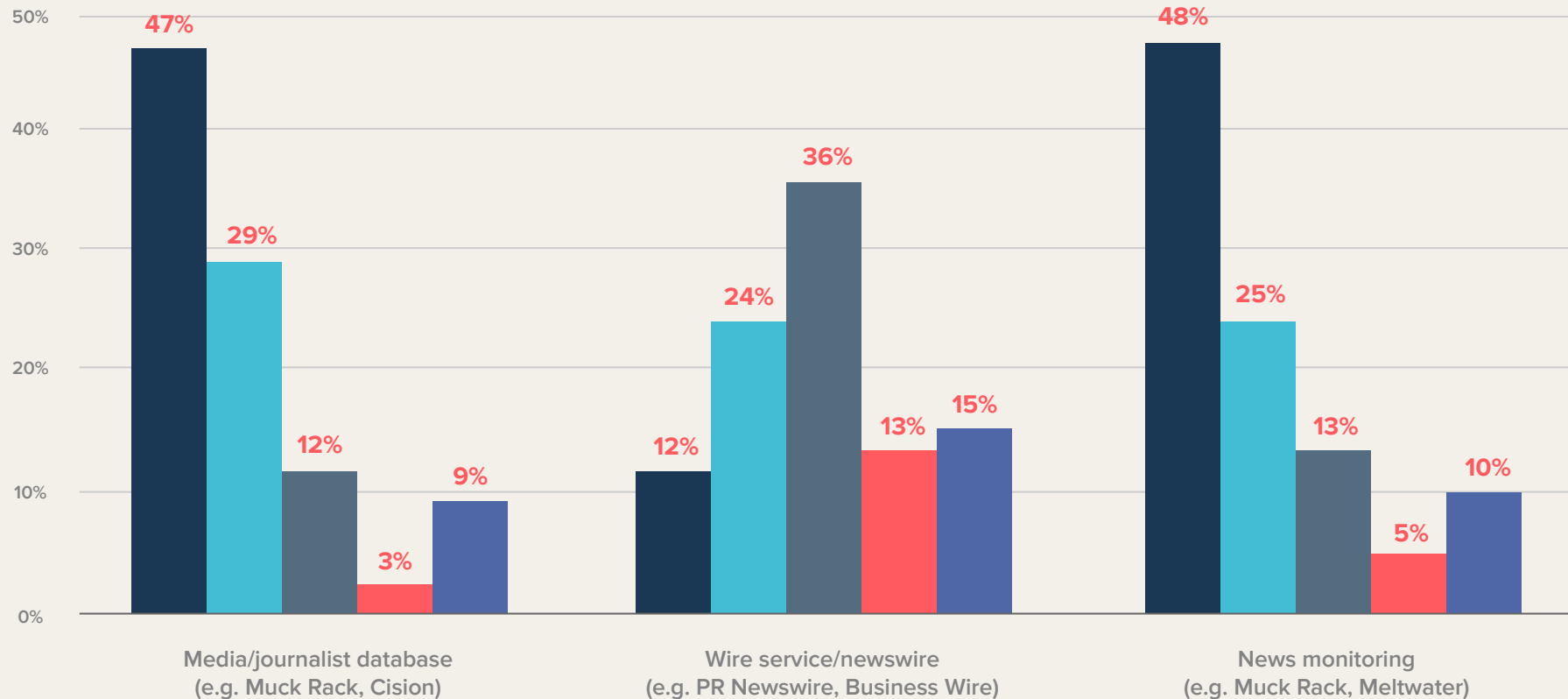
How often do you use the following productivity tools?



# About half use a database and news monitoring daily

How often do you use the following PR tools?

Daily Weekly Monthly Yearly Never

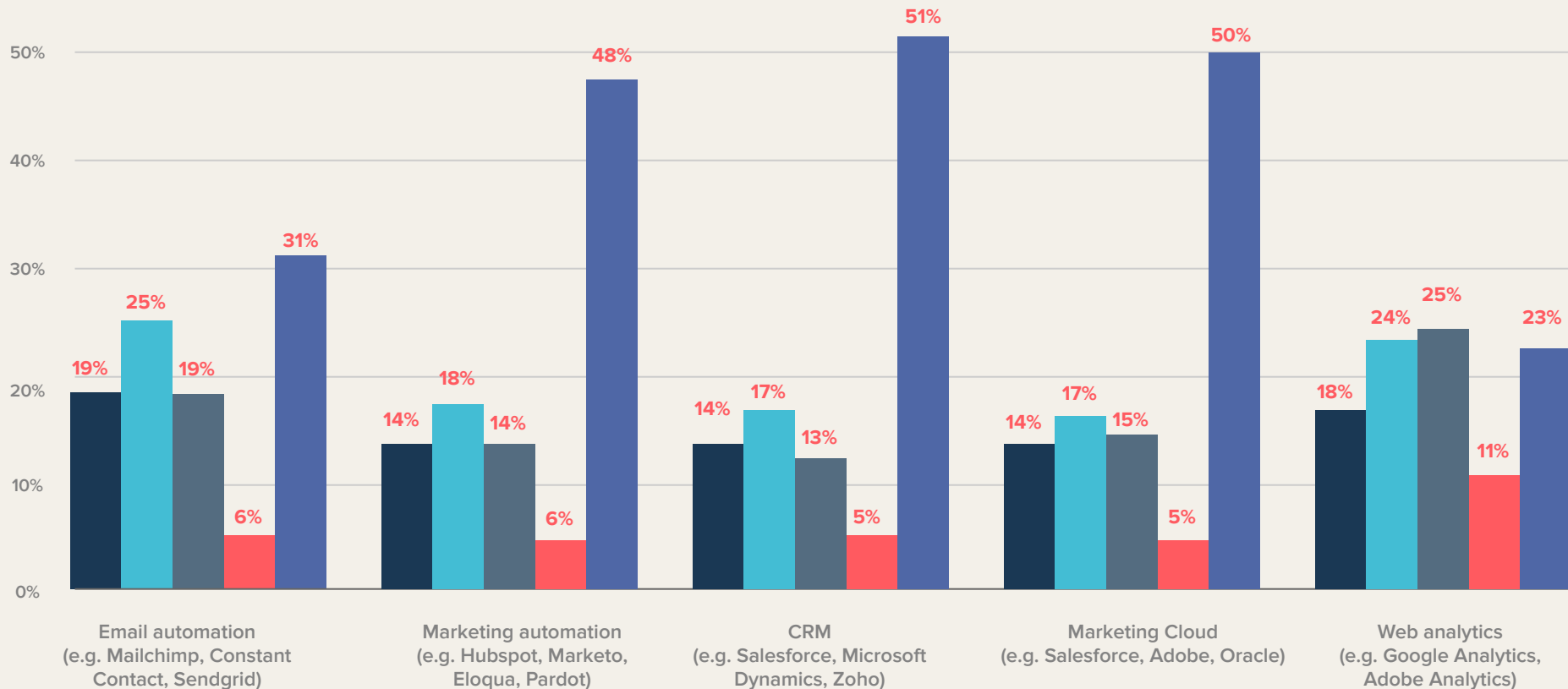




# Email automation and web analytics are used most frequently

How often do you use the following types of marketing software?

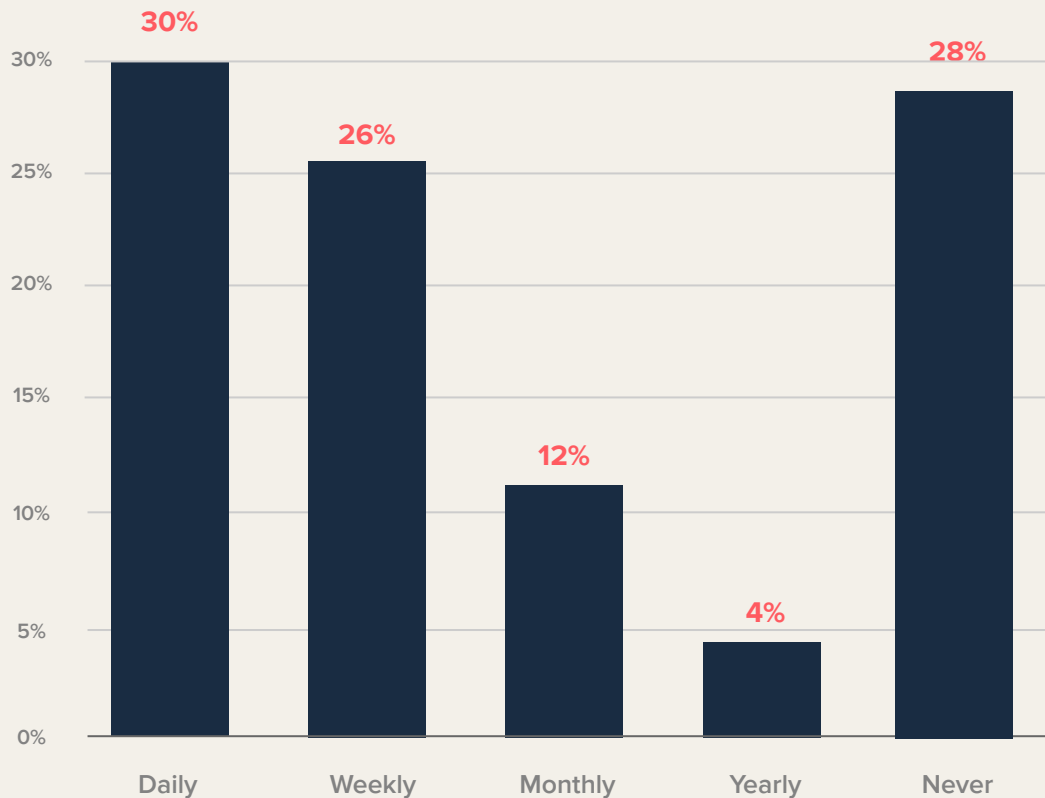
■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Monthly ■ Yearly ■ Never



# 56% use social media management software daily or weekly

Similar to last year, brands use social media tools more frequently than agencies: **65%** of brands use social media tools daily or weekly vs. **51%** of agencies that used social media tools daily or weekly.

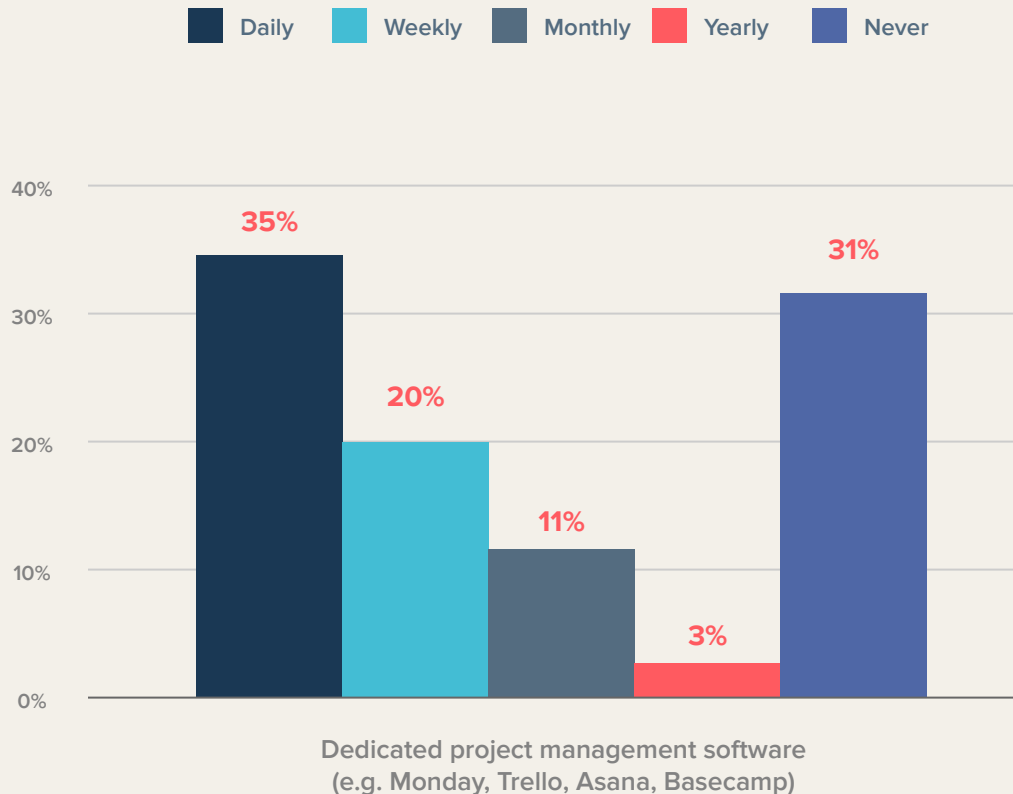
Social media management and/or listening software



# 55% use project management software daily or weekly

**41%** of brands use project management tools daily, and **24%** use them weekly. On the other hand, **31%** of agencies use them daily and **18%** use them weekly.

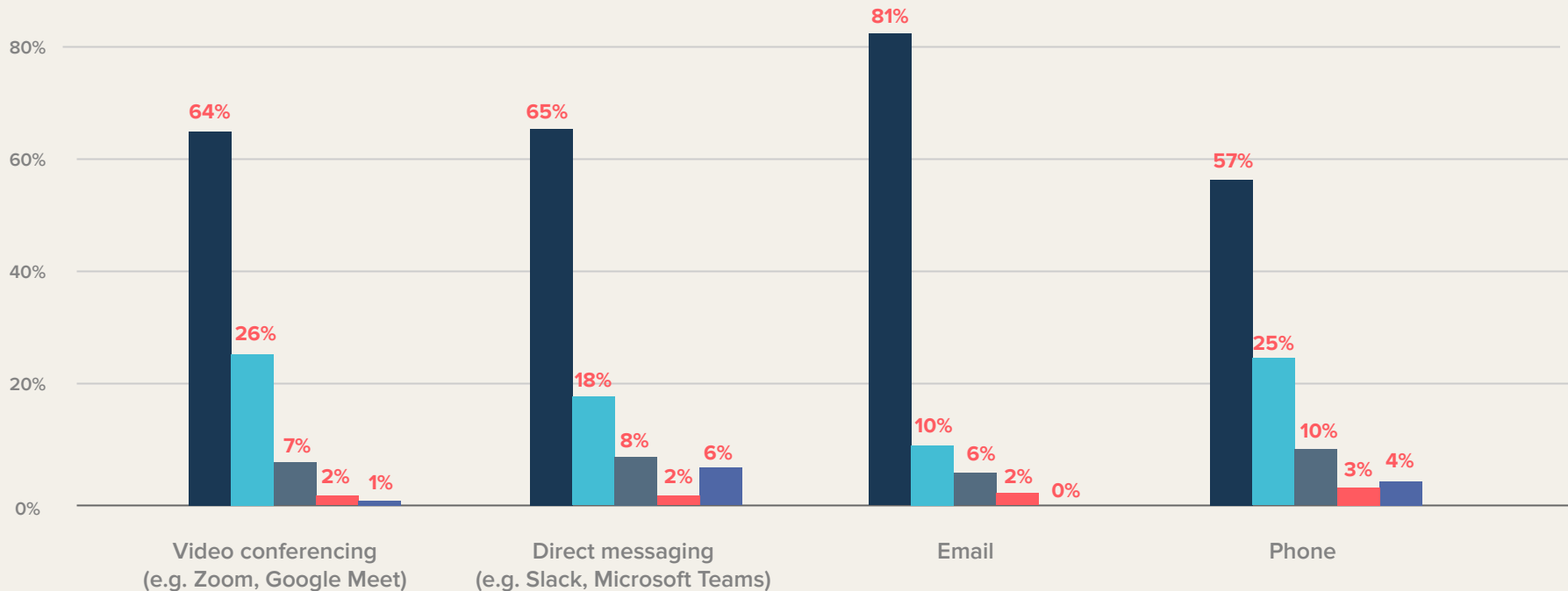
## Project management software



# PR pros say email, followed by direct messaging and video are everyday essentials

How often do you use the following types of communications tools?

Daily Weekly Monthly Yearly Never

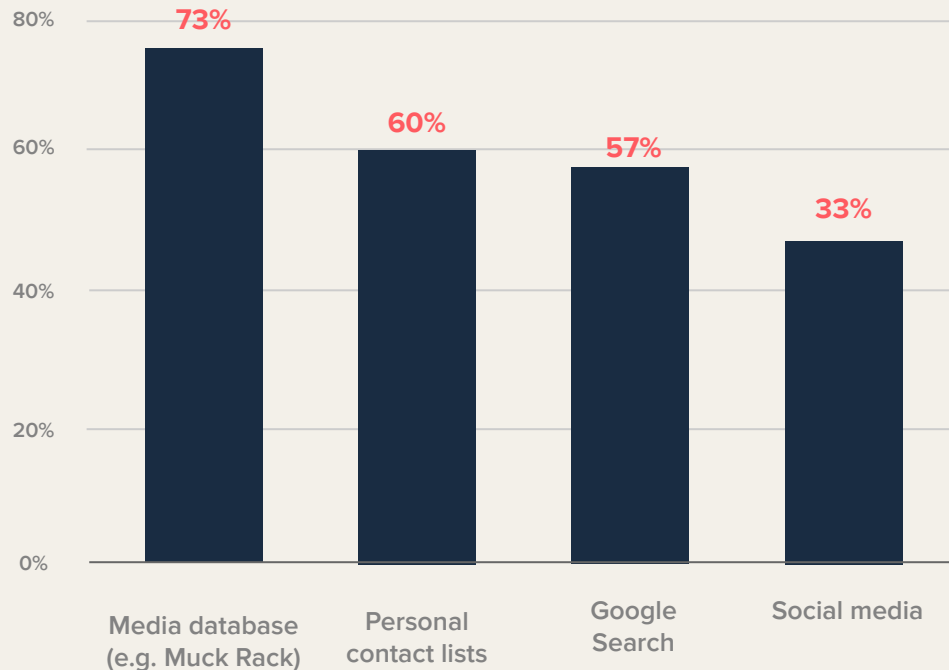


# The majority of PR pros rely on a media database to find relevant journalists to pitch

Most PR pros use a combination of methods to find relevant journalists: most turn to a media database, and more than half also use personal contact lists and/or Google.

More agencies use media databases (**80%** vs. **66%** of brands).

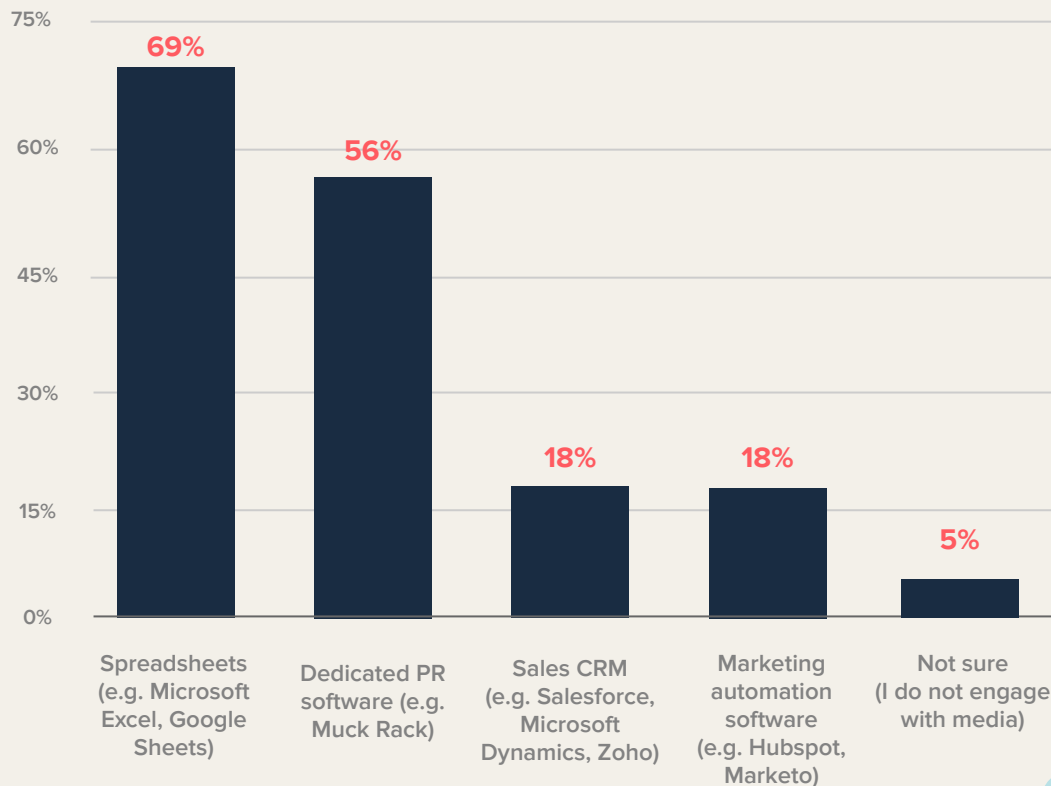
How do you find the right journalists to pitch?  
(Select all that apply)



# More than half of PR pros store media lists in spreadsheets, use PR software or a combination of the two

**73%** of agencies use spreadsheets vs. **67%** of brands. **56%** of both brands and agencies use PR software to store media lists.

## Where do you and your team store media lists? (Select all that apply)



# 3



## Connecting with journalists

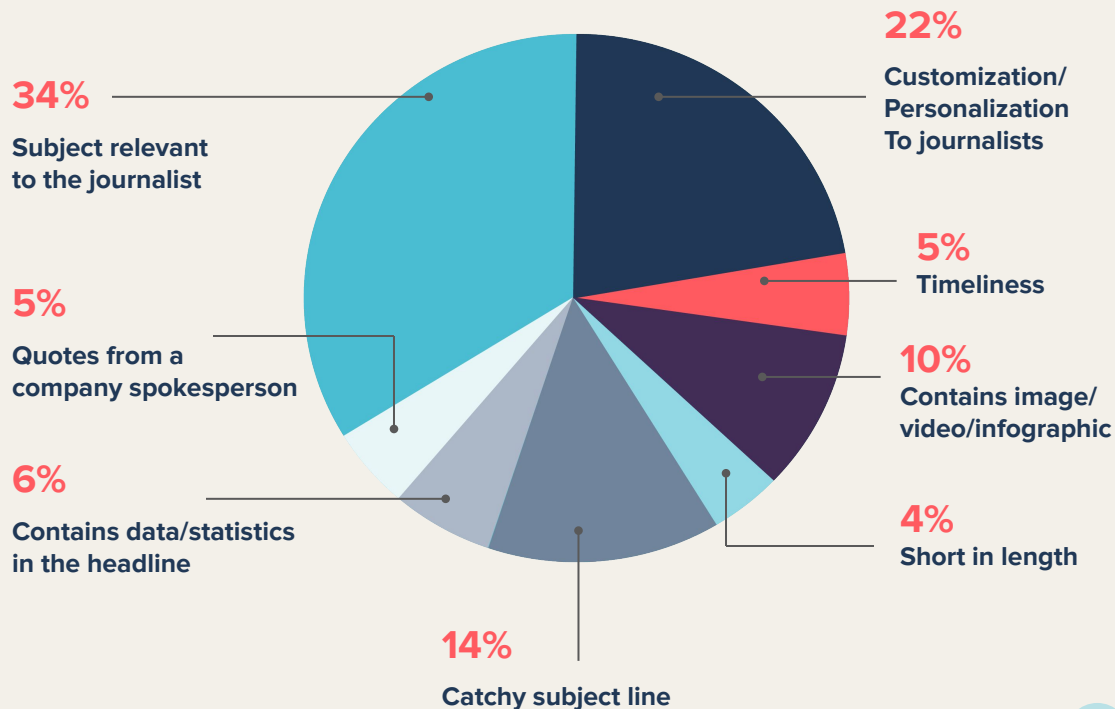
# Most agree that subject relevance followed by personalization are most important in a pitch

Compared to last year, more PR pros say a catchy subject line is important: **14%** this year vs. **4%** last year.

More PR pros also say visual pitches are important: **10%** this year vs. **1%** last year.

Fewer say that timeliness is important: **5%** this year vs. **14%** last year.

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



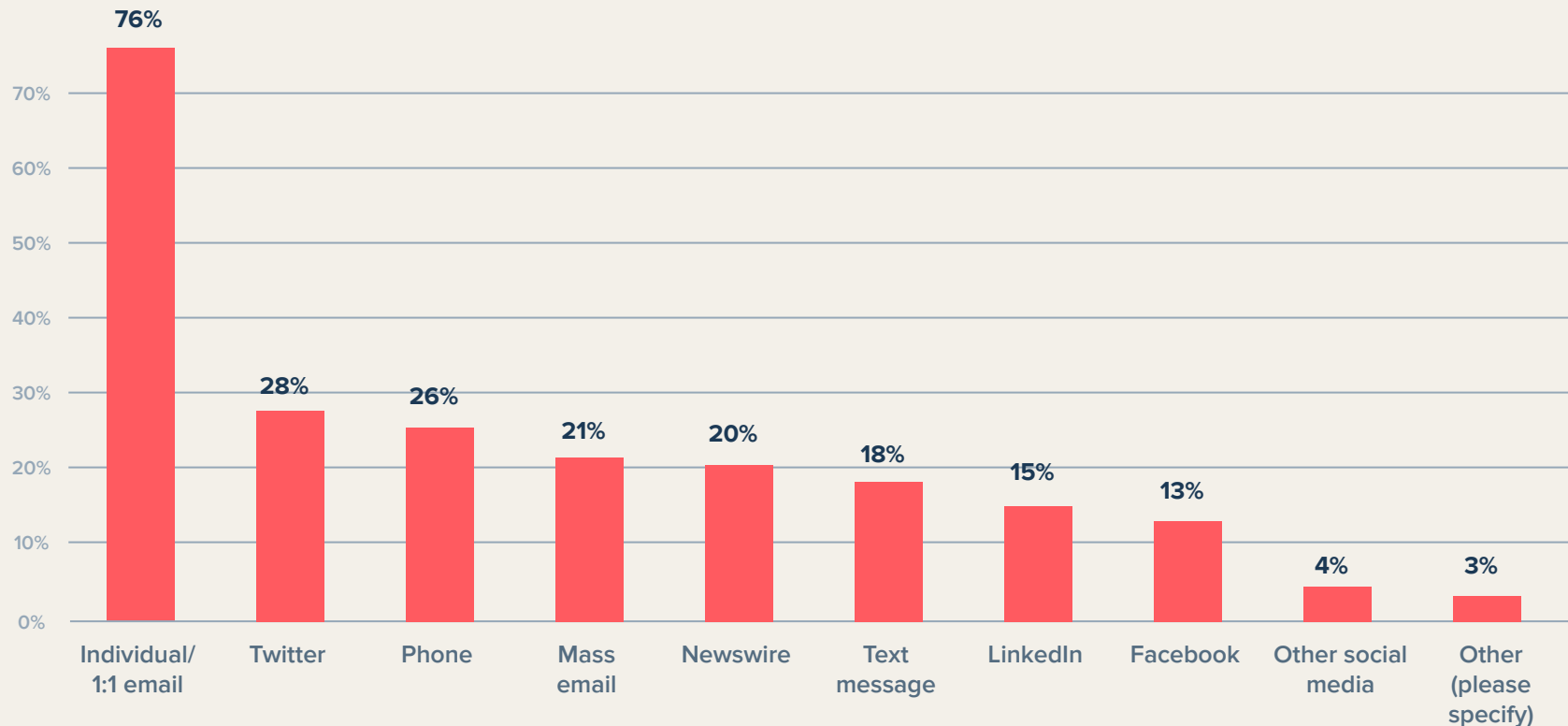


## Which of the following components do you believe is most important in a pitch?

In addition to ensuring that a pitch's subject matter is relevant to a journalist's beat *and* personalizing pitches to individual journalists, more PR pros are emphasizing the importance of catchy subject lines and visuals.

However, journalists say timing is still important: according to the [2022 State of Journalism](#), 24% of journalists say they will reject a pitch based on bad timing. Lack of personalization (22%) and a confusing subject line (15%) were additional reasons why they will reject a pitch.

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



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

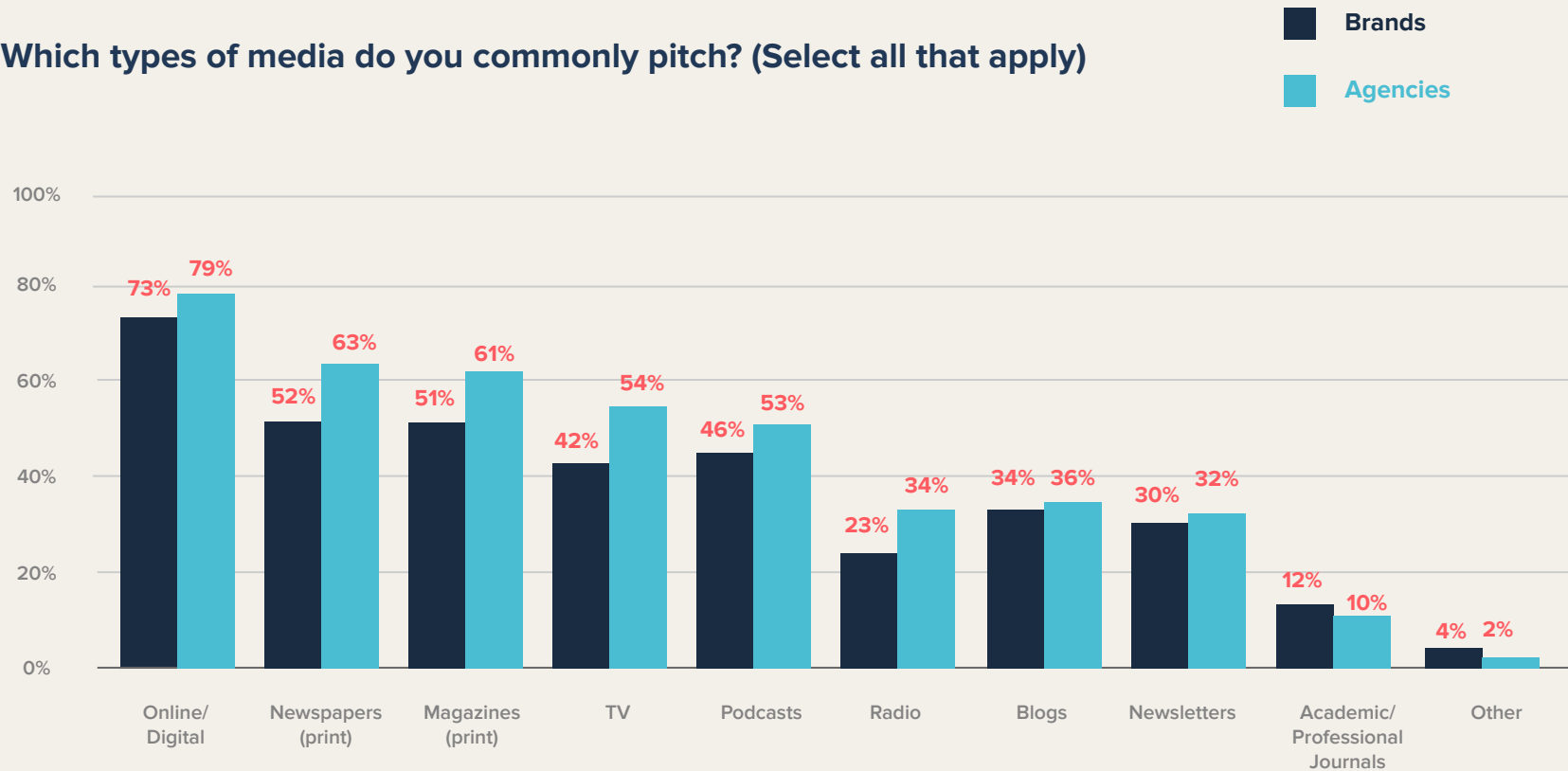
1:1 email is the preferred method across company types and sizes for reaching journalists. Agencies are even more likely than brands to use 1:1 email: **81%** of agencies vs. **67%** of brands.

More brands are picking up the phone compared to last year: **28%** this year vs. **18%** last year.

Brands are also more likely to rely on Twitter: **33%** of brands vs. **25%** of agencies pitch via Twitter.

# Most PR pros pitch 4 or more media types, with online, newspapers and magazines among the most popular

Which types of media do you commonly pitch? (Select all that apply)



## Which types of media do you commonly pitch?

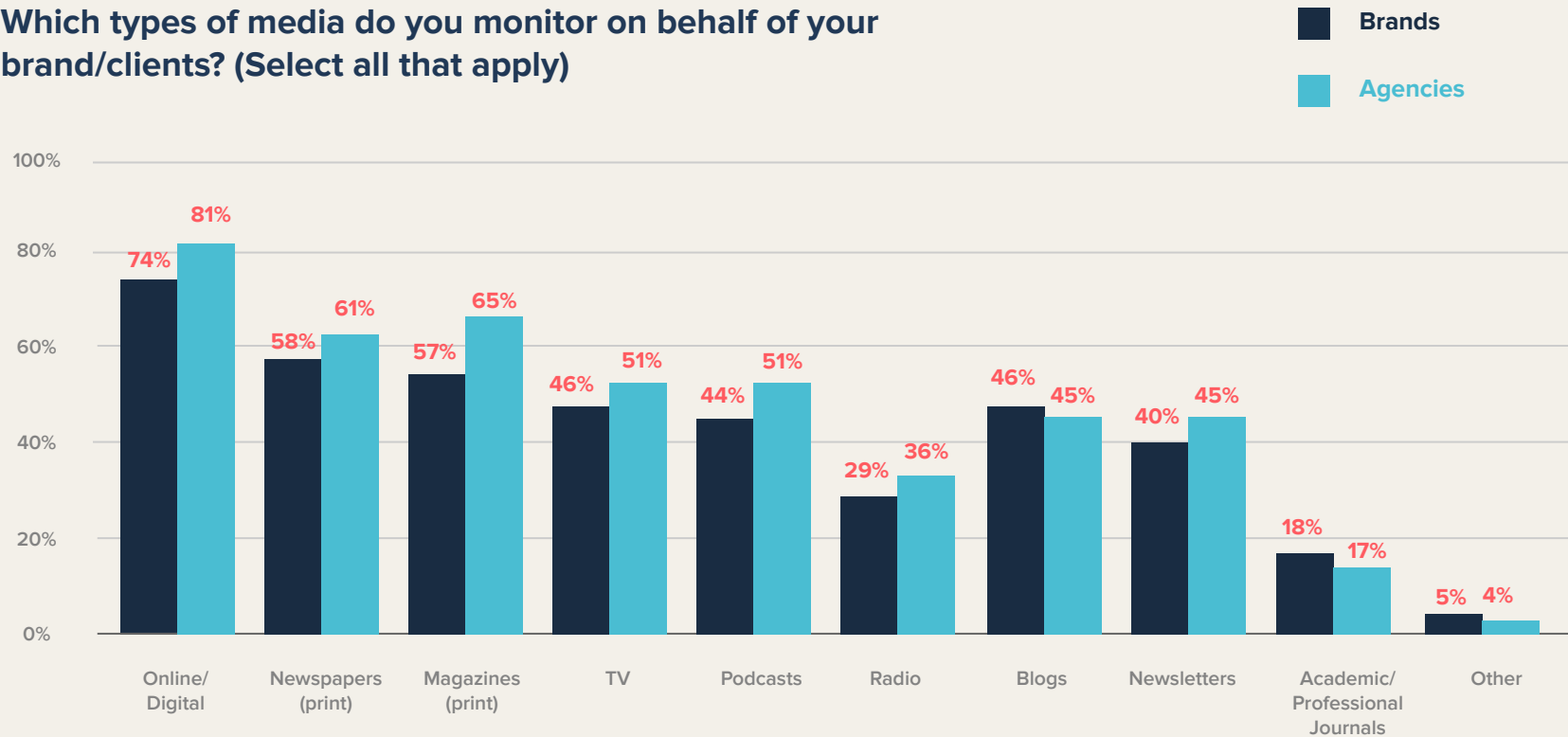
Across company types, PR pros are pitching online/digital publications (**76%**), newspapers (**61%**), magazines (**56%**) and TV (**51%**).

Podcasts continue to grow as a medium to pitch: last year, **36%** of brands pitched podcasts and **46%** pitch them this year. Agencies are even more likely to pitch podcasts: **42%** last year vs. **53%** this year.

Interestingly, fewer PR pros are pitching newsletters: **61%** of brands last year vs. **30%** this year and **66%** of agencies last year vs. **32%** this year.

# Most PR pros monitor online, newspapers, and magazines, and almost half of monitor podcasts

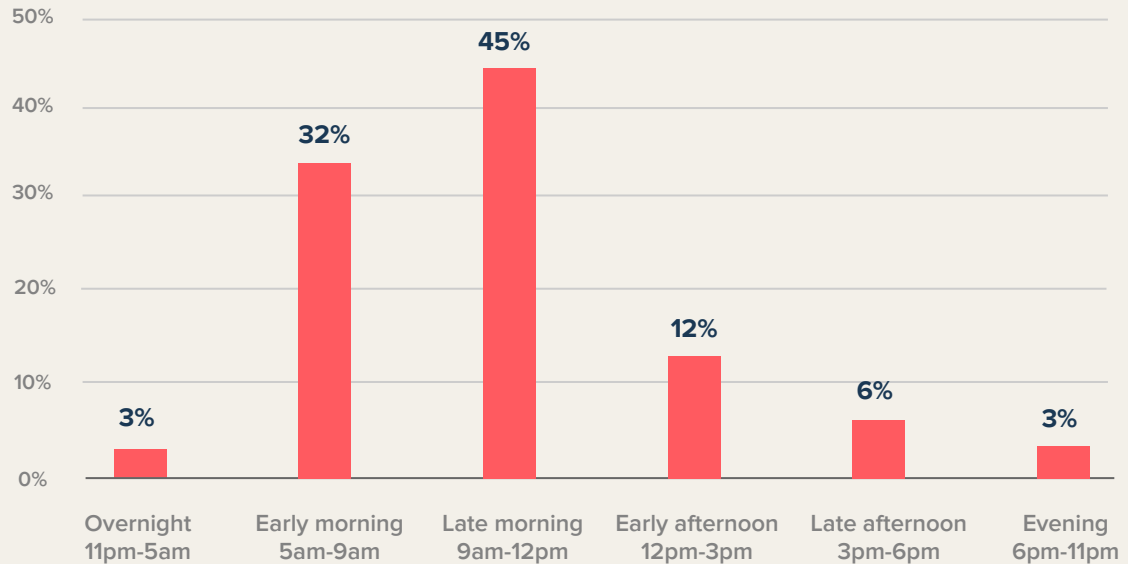
Which types of media do you monitor on behalf of your brand/clients? (Select all that apply)



# 77% prefer to pitch in the morning

This aligns with the preferences of **67%** of journalists who prefer to receive pitches in the morning, as reported in the [State of Journalism 2022](#).

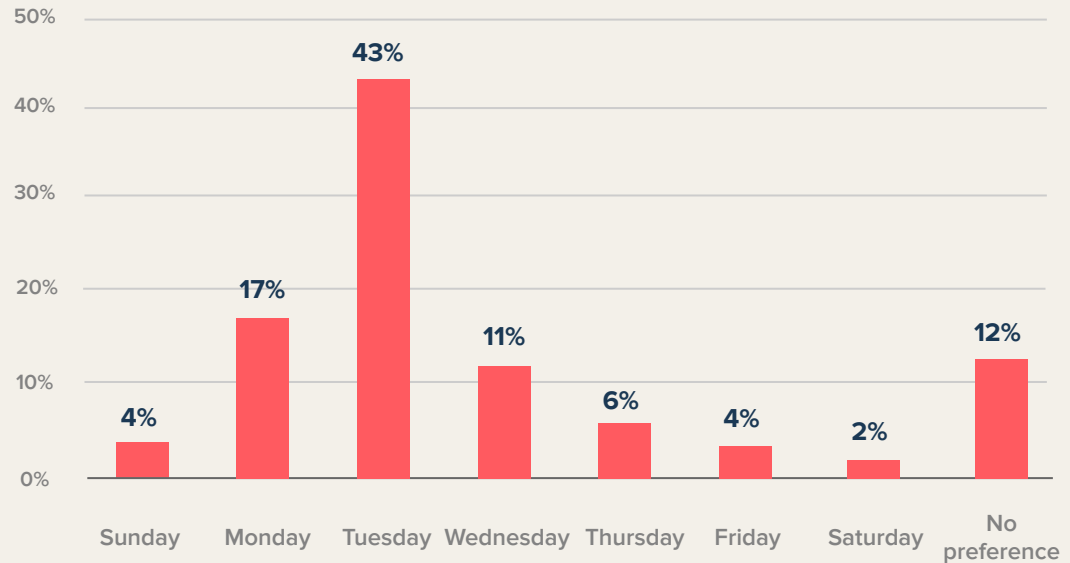
## When is generally the best time to send a pitch? (all times EST)



# Tuesday is the most popular day to send pitches

According to the [State of Journalism 2022](#), most journalists prefer to be pitched early in the week, with **Monday** ranked as their top choice.

On what day of the week do you most like to send pitches?

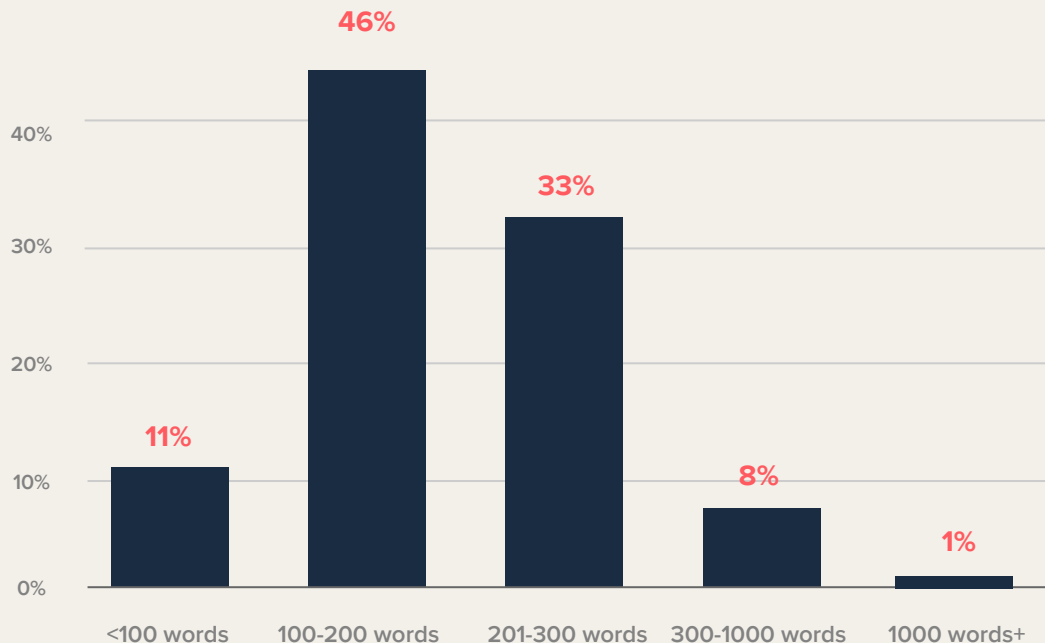




# 57% write pitches that are 200 words or less

Compared to last year, there is a **5%** increase of PR pros who are writing pitches in the 201-300 word range. Most journalists (**68%**) prefer pitches 200 words or less per the [State of Journalism 2022](#).

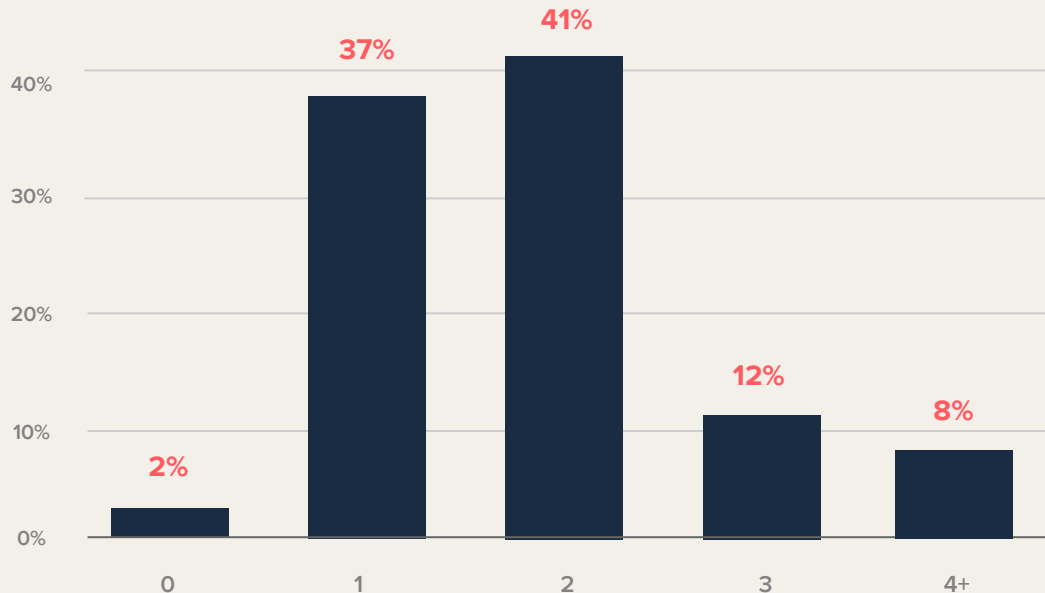
How long is the average pitch you send to journalists?



# 78% say 1-2 follow up emails are acceptable

Even though **20%** of PR pros say 3 or more follow ups are acceptable, only **9%** of journalists feel the same, according to the [State of Journalism 2022](#).

How many follow up emails are acceptable to send after your initial pitch?



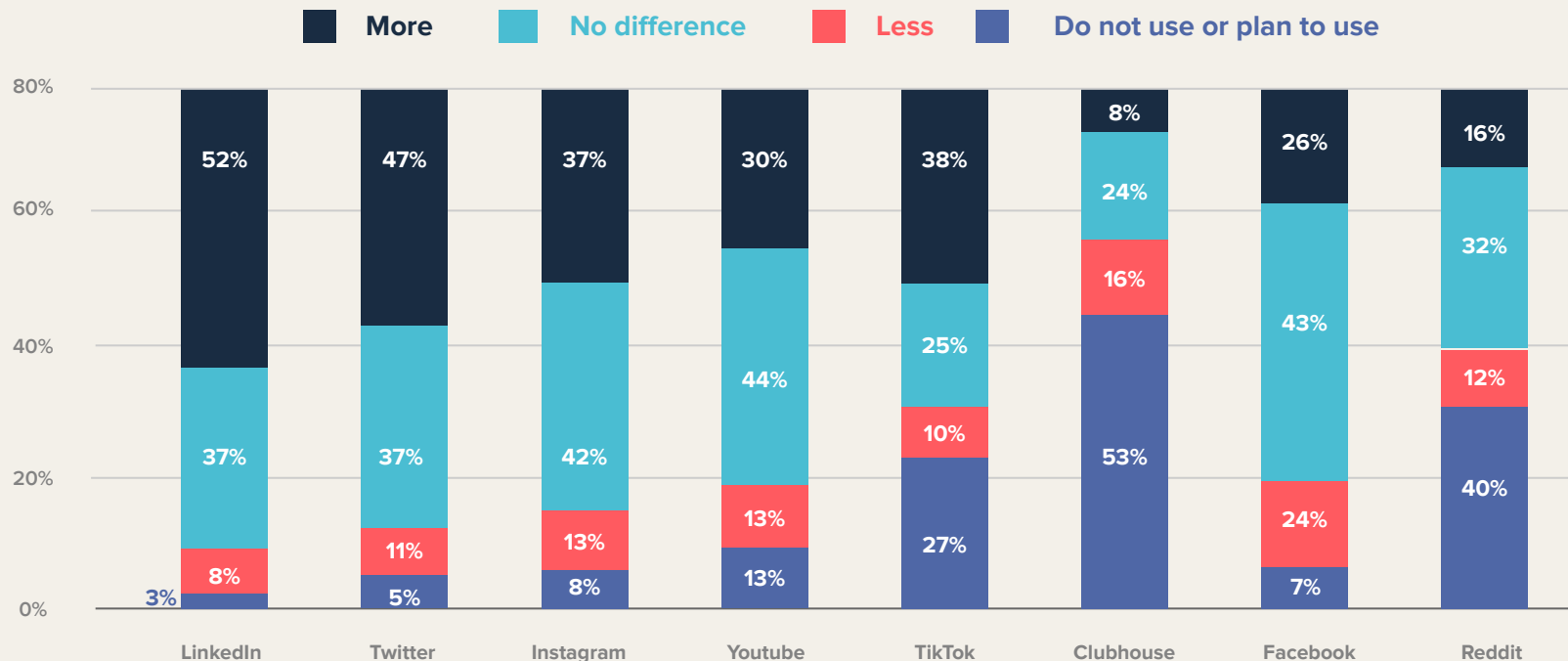
# 4



## Social media usage

# LinkedIn remains in the lead, followed by Twitter, Instagram and TikTok

Do you expect to spend more or less time on the following social networks this year?



## Do you expect to spend more or less time on the following social networks this year?

Overall, LinkedIn remains in the lead but slightly more PR pros plan to spend more time on Twitter in 2022: **47%** this year vs. **43%** last year. PR pros will be spending more time on TikTok too: **38%** this year vs. **33%** last year.

Brands will spend more time on Twitter (**51%**), Facebook (**34%**) and YouTube (**35%**).

Agencies will spend more time LinkedIn (**53%**), Instagram (**38%**) and TikTok (**42%**).

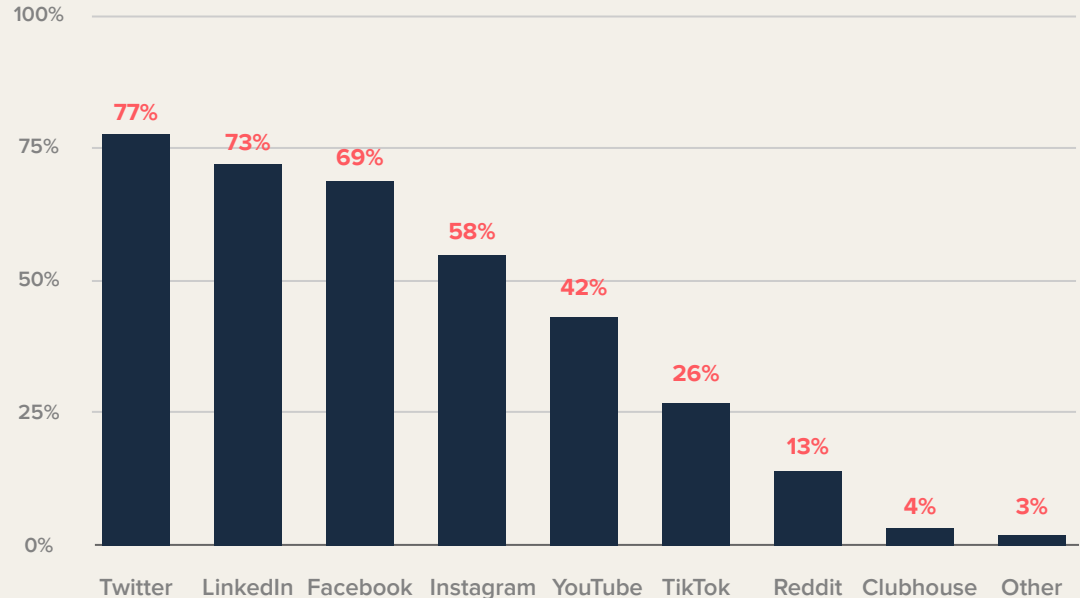
# Twitter takes a slight lead over LinkedIn as the most important social platform for PR pros

Last year, most PR pros said LinkedIn was most important, with Twitter coming in second at **77%**. Facebook is now in the top three: **69%** this year vs. **64%** last year.

More brands rely on Twitter (**78%**) vs. agencies (**75%**) and Facebook (**70%** of brands vs. **63%** of agencies).

Agencies say Instagram is more important: **60%** vs. **50%** of brands.

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

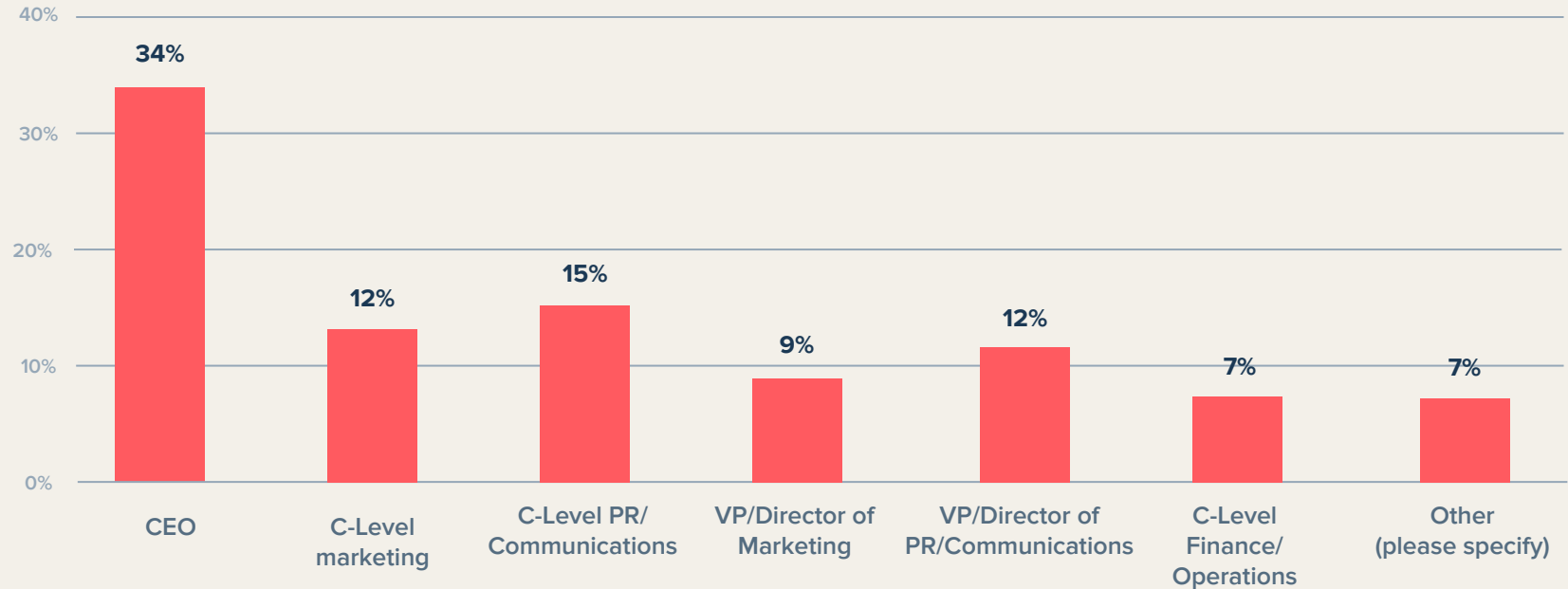


# 5



## Budgets, salaries and more

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



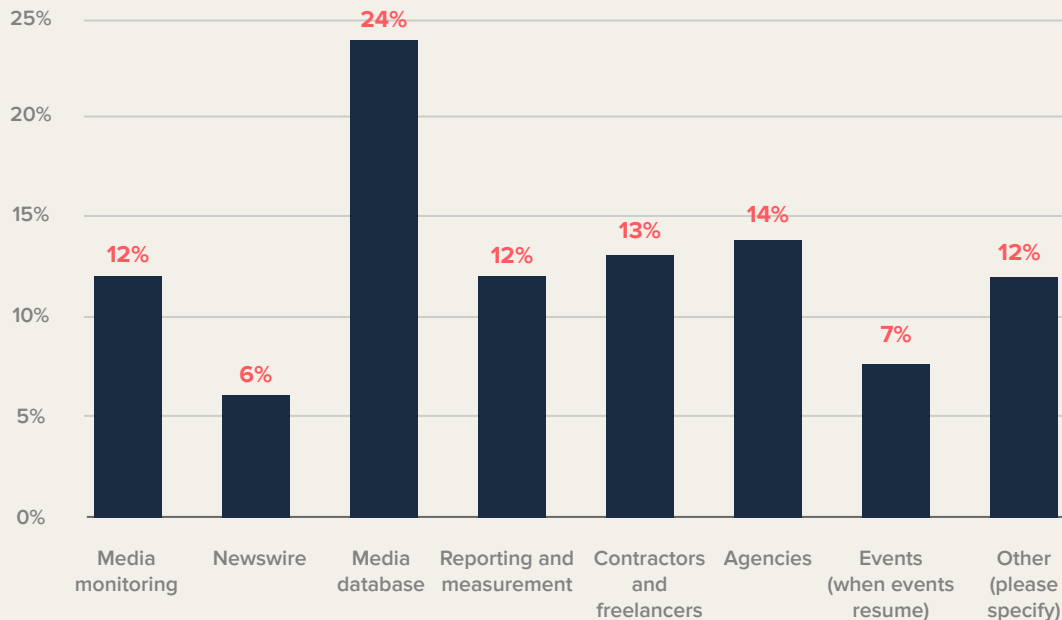


# Most PR teams invest in media databases, followed by agencies, contractors and freelancers

More agencies invest in media databases **28%** vs. **18%** of brands that do.

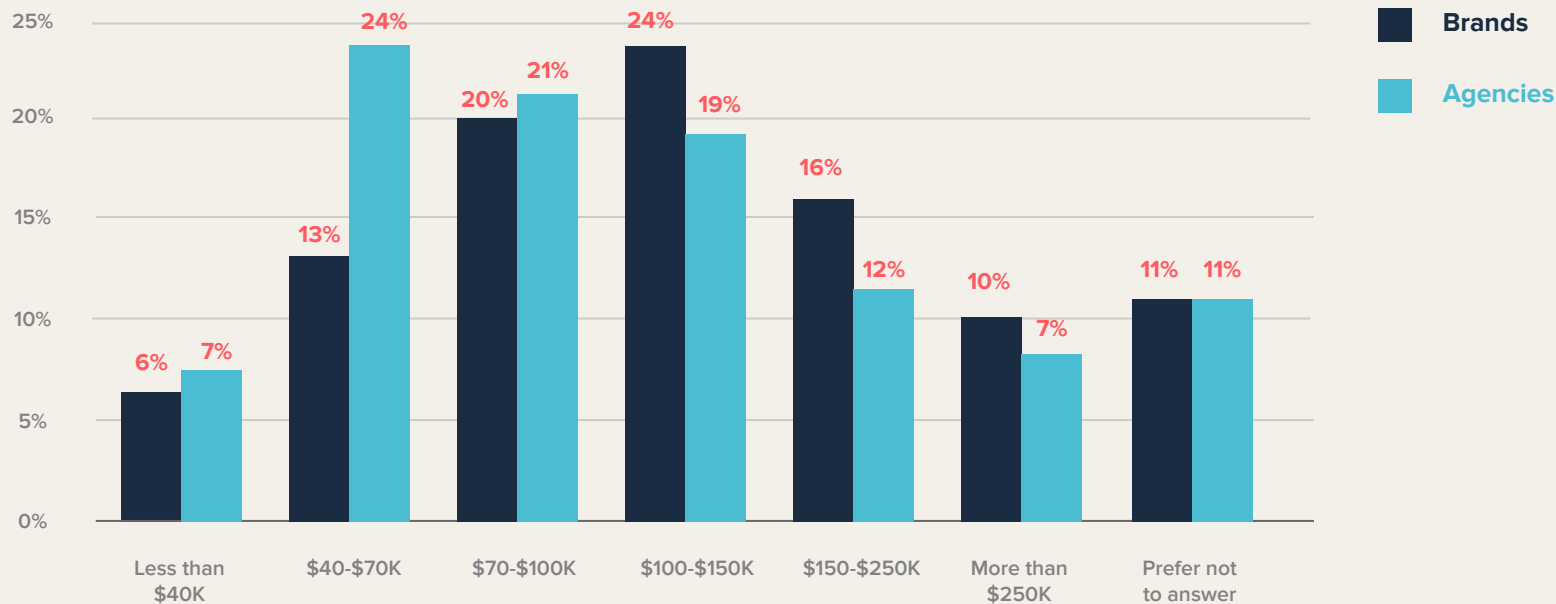
Under 'Other' PR pros listed internal comms tools, content creation and surveys.

Where do you spend the highest % of your PR budget (not including employee salary)?



# 52% of PR pros at agencies make less than \$100K annually vs. 39% of PR pros at brands

How much do you earn a year including bonus?



## How much do you earn a year including bonus?

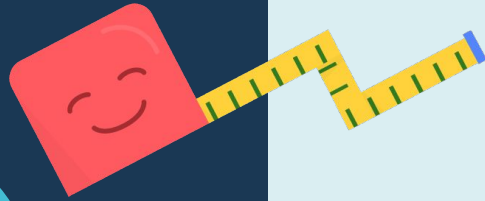
**61%** of PR pros at brands earn \$100K+ vs. **49%** of PR pros at agencies.

More than half (**53%**) of entry-level PR pros (associates/coordinators/specialists) earn \$40K-\$70K.

**30%** of PR pros with the title 'manager' earn \$70K-\$100K.

**27%** of PR pros with the title 'director' and above (supervisor, EVP, CXO/VP and CEO/founder/owner) earn \$100K-\$150K, and **27%** with these titles earn \$150K+.

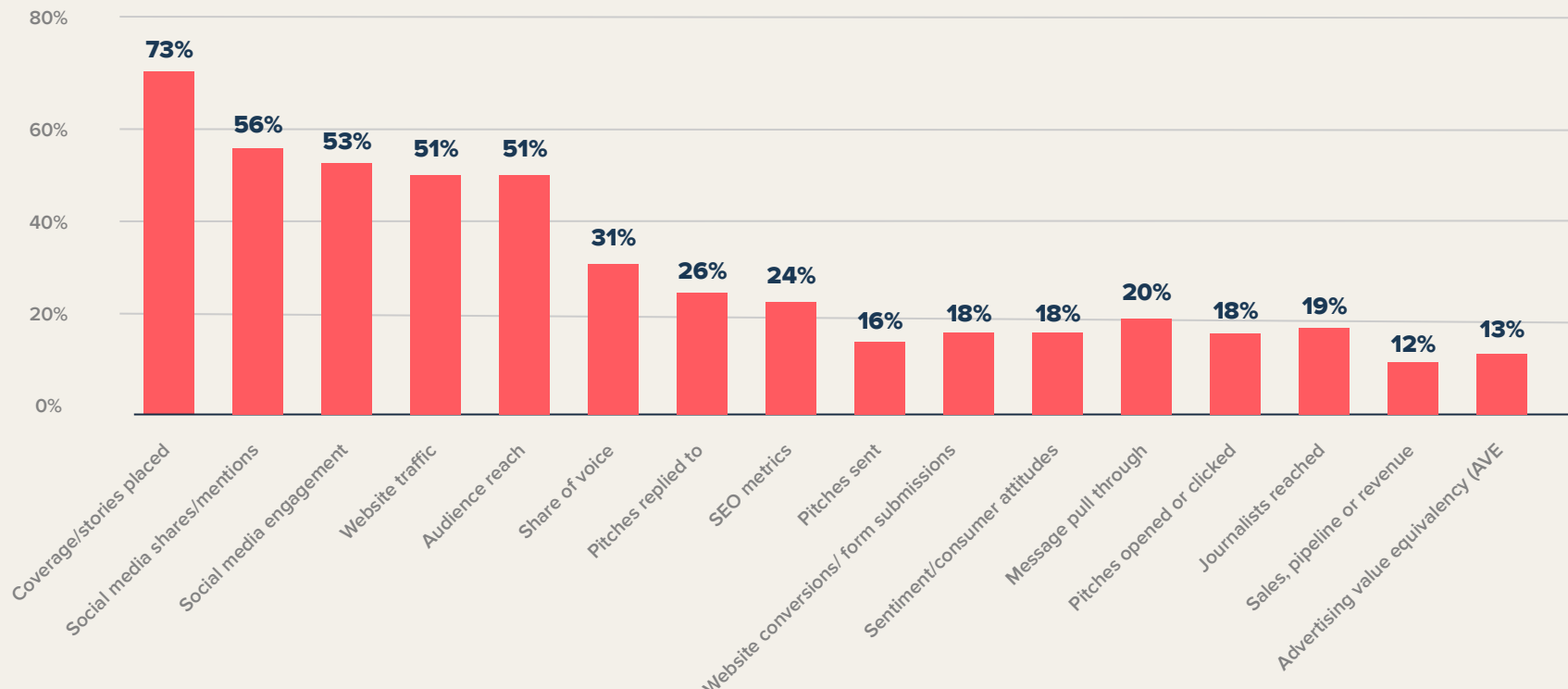
# 6



## Measuring success

# The average PR pro tracks 5 metrics

Which of the following metrics does your PR/comms team use internally to measure success? (Select all that apply)



Which of the following metrics does your PR/comms team use internally to measure success ?

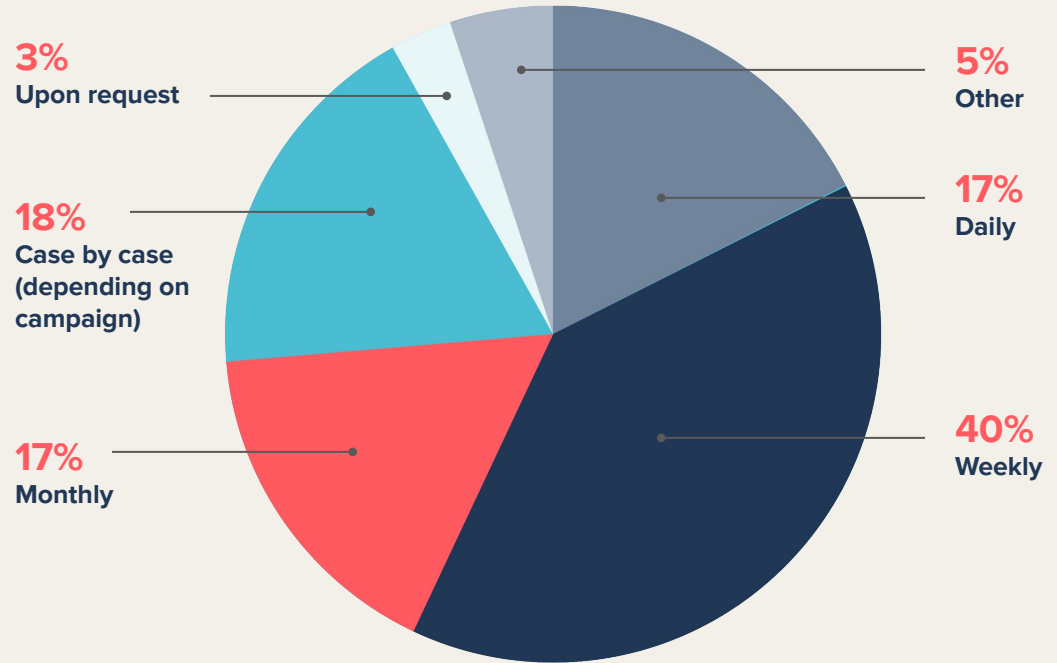
Coverage/stories placed is the most-measured metric (unchanged from last year).

This year, more PR pros are measuring social media: **56%** are measuring social shares/mentions and **53%** are monitoring social media engagement. Last year, according to the [State of PR Measurement](#), **51%** measured shares/mentions and **48%** measured engagement.

# 57% brief their executive team weekly or more

Both brands and agencies brief their executive teams with similar frequency: **58%** of brands and **59%** of agencies do so weekly or more.

How often is your executive team briefed on PR and communications activities?



# 7



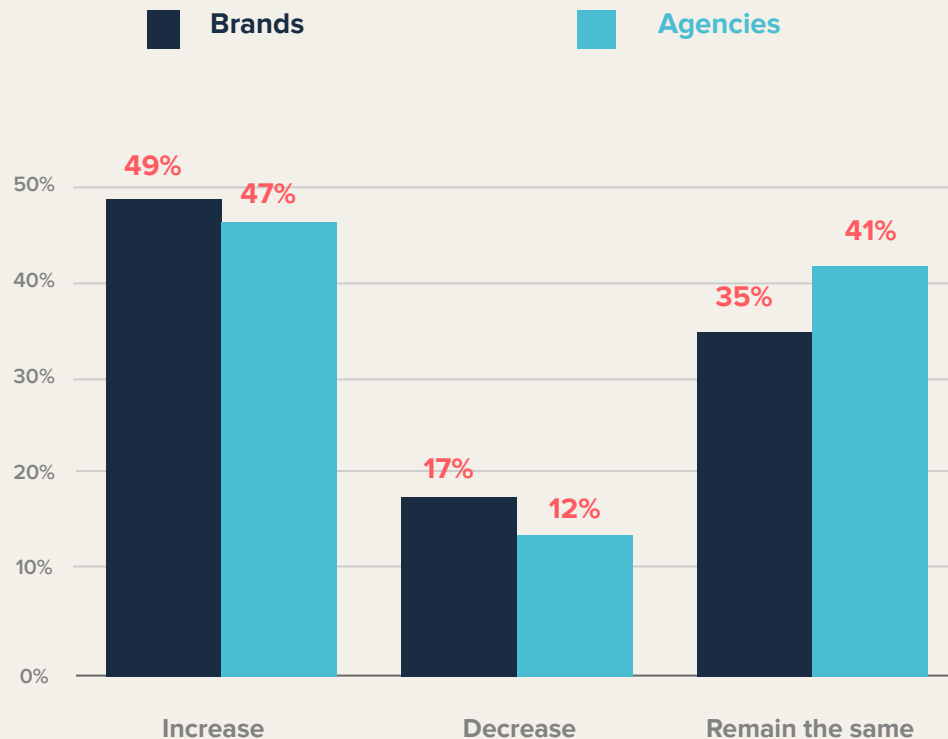
## The future of PR



# Most PR pros say their budgets will increase over the next year

Brands will increase budgets slightly more than agencies (**49%** vs. **47%**).

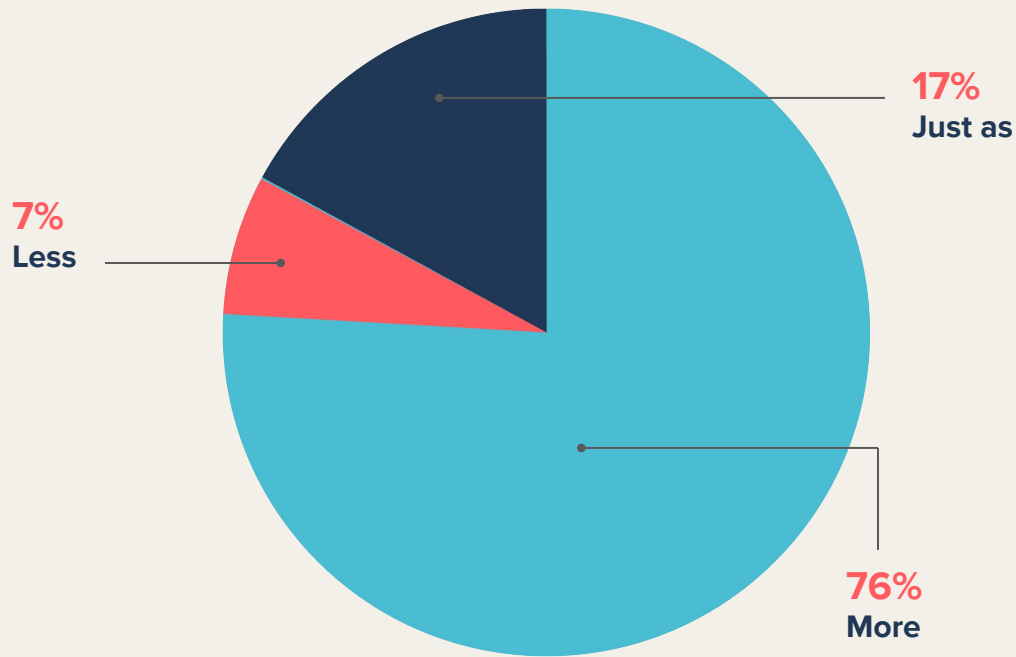
Over the next year, my company's budget for communications/PR will:



# Most PR pros believe their relationship with marketing will be more important in the next 5 years

Slightly more brands think the relationship will be more important: **78%** of brands vs. **76%** of agencies.

PR's relationship with marketing will be \_\_\_\_ important in the next 5 years



# Strategic planning, media relations and social media remain top skills for PR success in the next 5 years

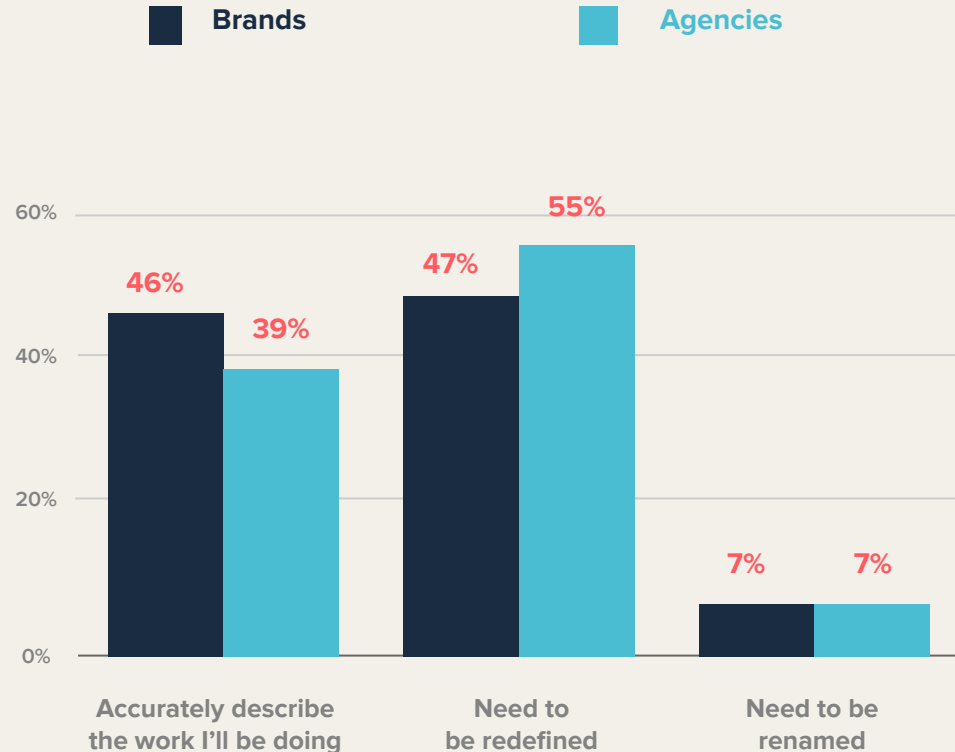
Which of the following skills will be important to your PR organization's success in the next 5 years?



# More than half of PR pros believe the term “public relations” will need to be redefined in the next 5 years

More agencies believe that the term will need to be redefined (**55%**) than brands (**47%**).

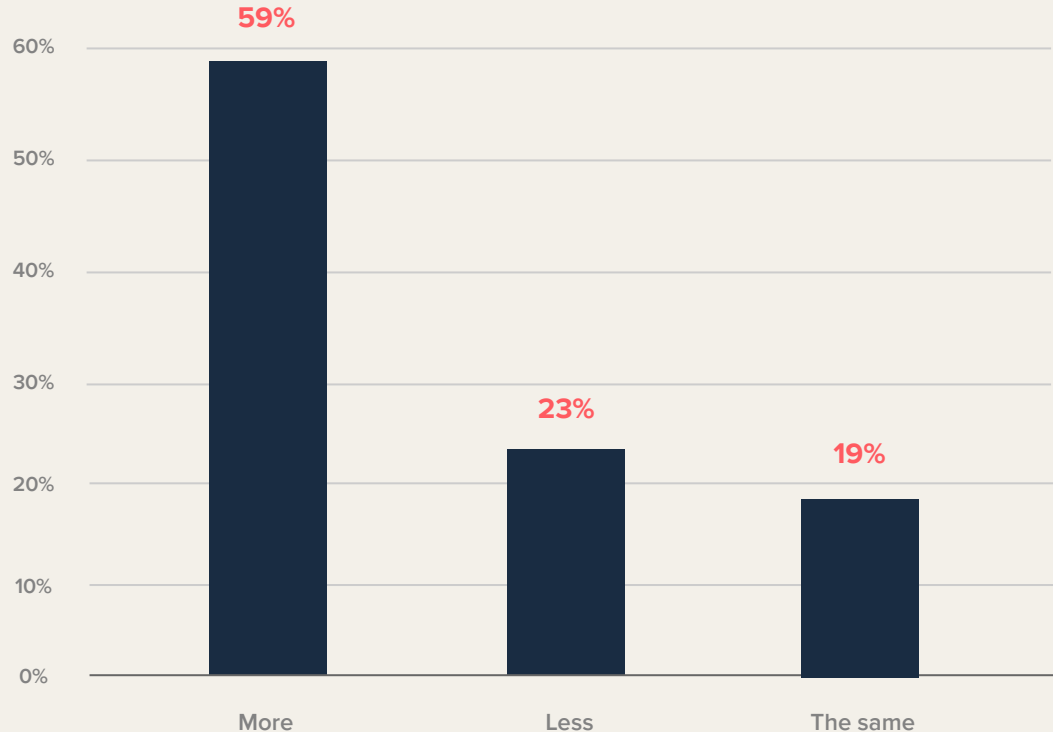
In 5 years, the term “public relations” will...



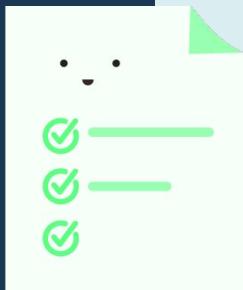
# More than half of PR pros say they will secure more earned media in the future

Brands say they will secure more earned media (**65%**) than agencies (**55%**).

Do you think you will be securing more or less earned media in the future?

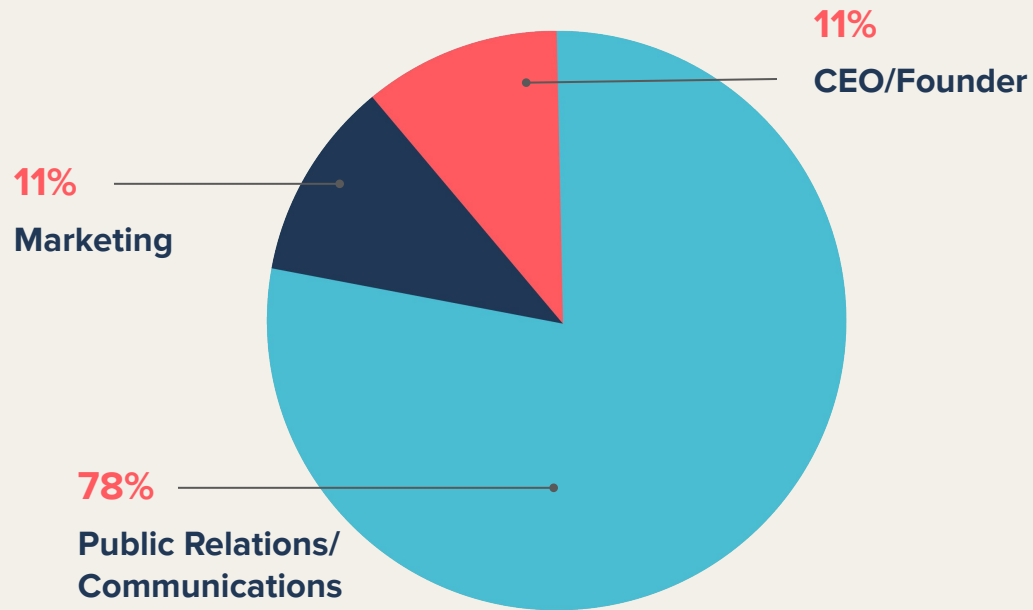


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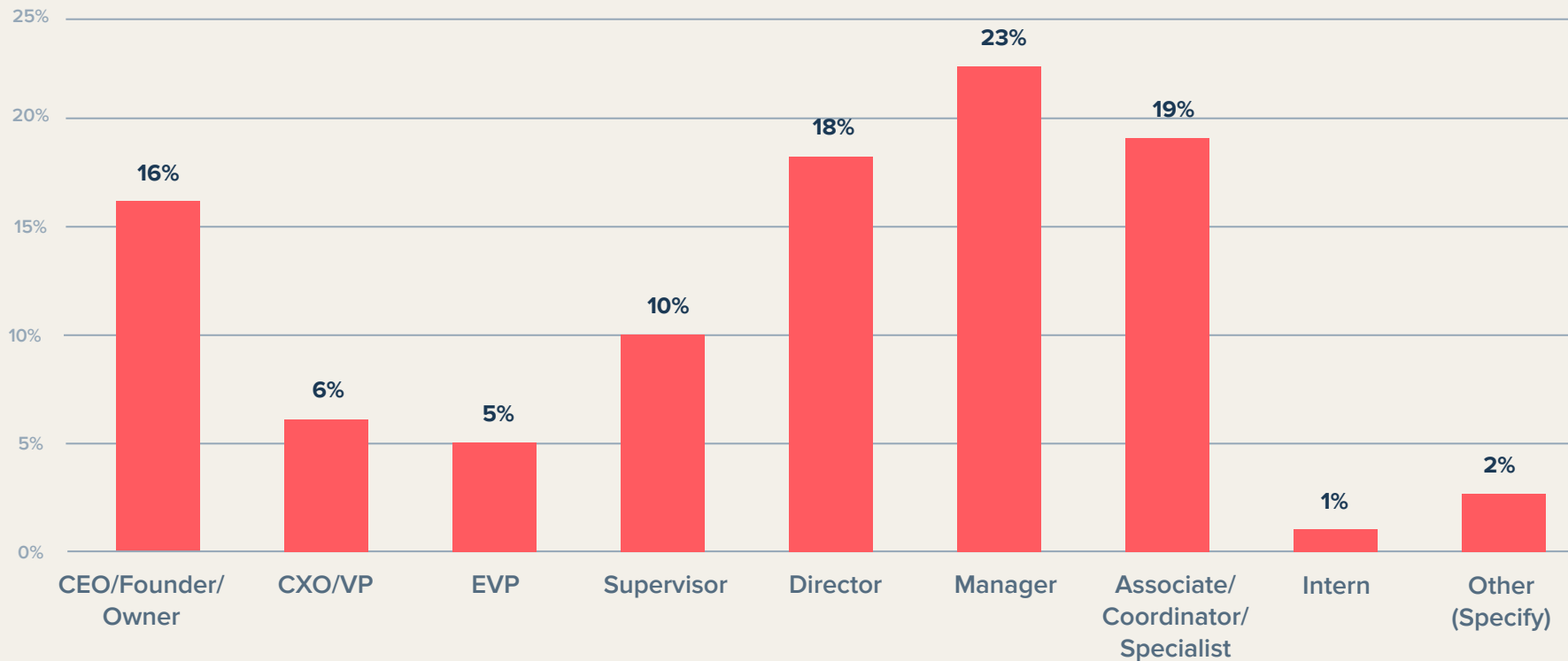


## Appendix: Expanded audience breakdown

# What department do you work in?

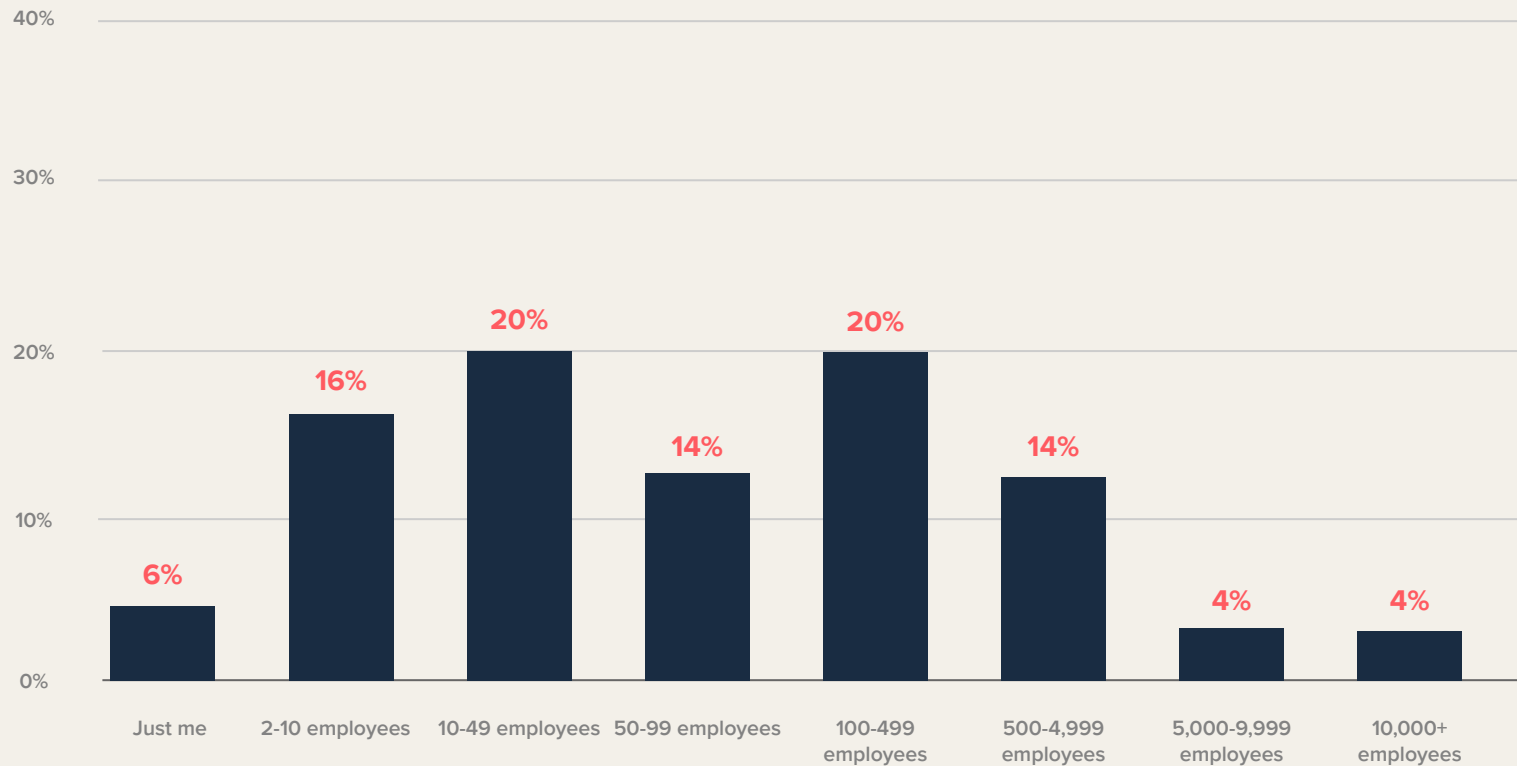


# What best describes your level in your company?

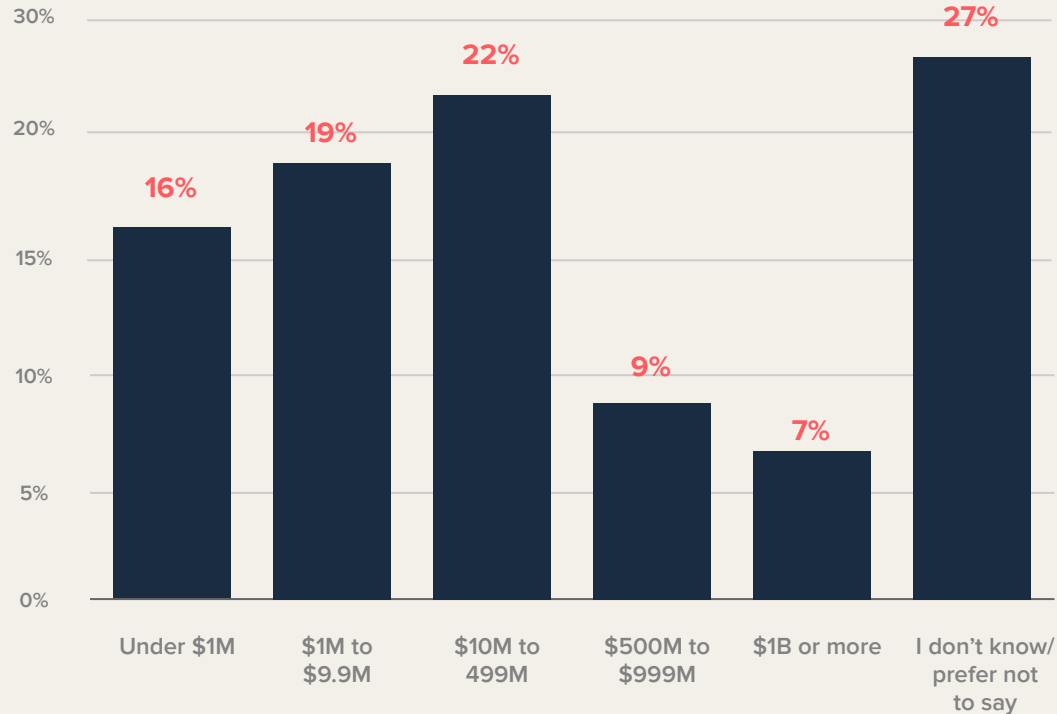




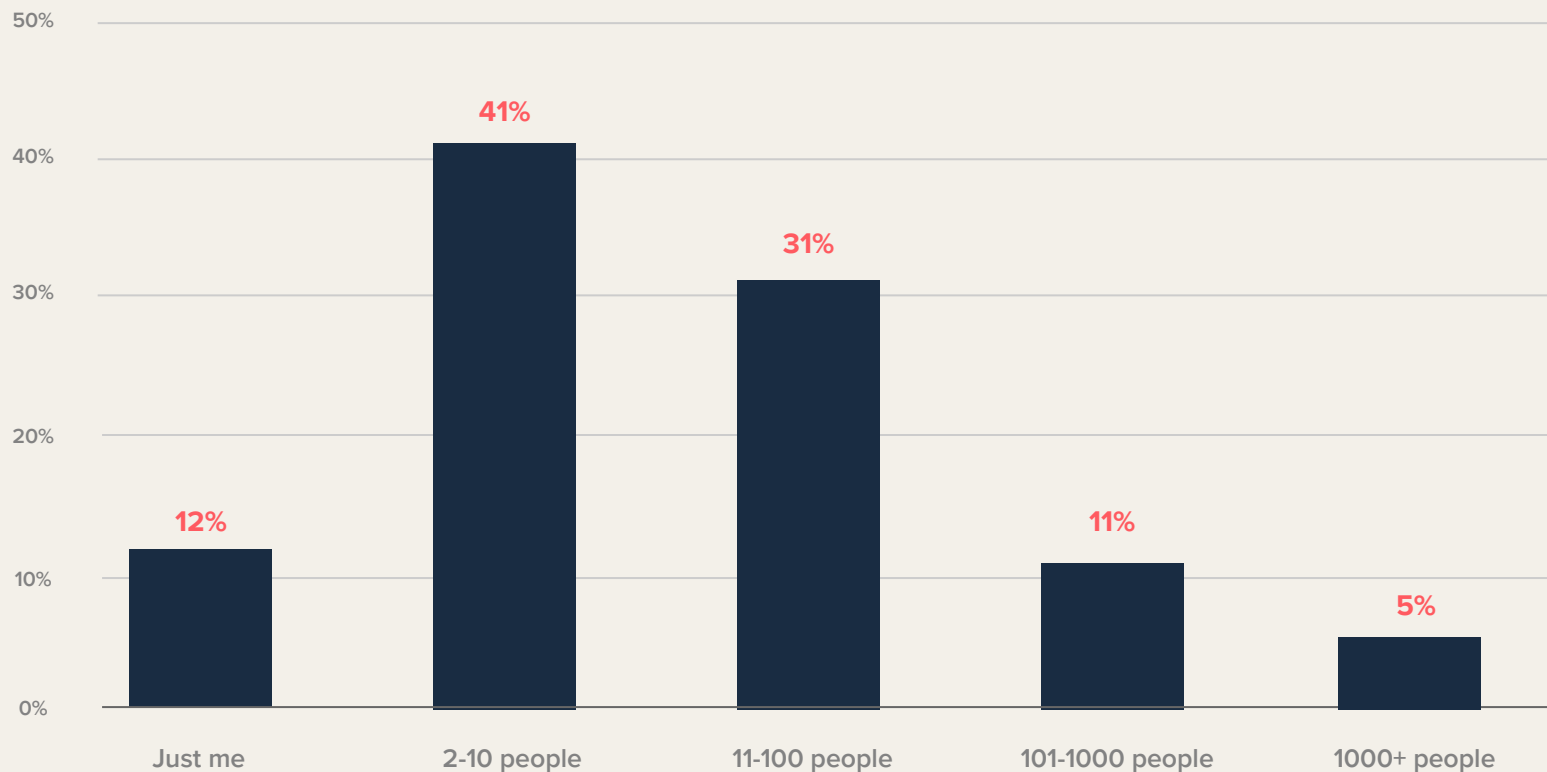
# How many people work at your company?



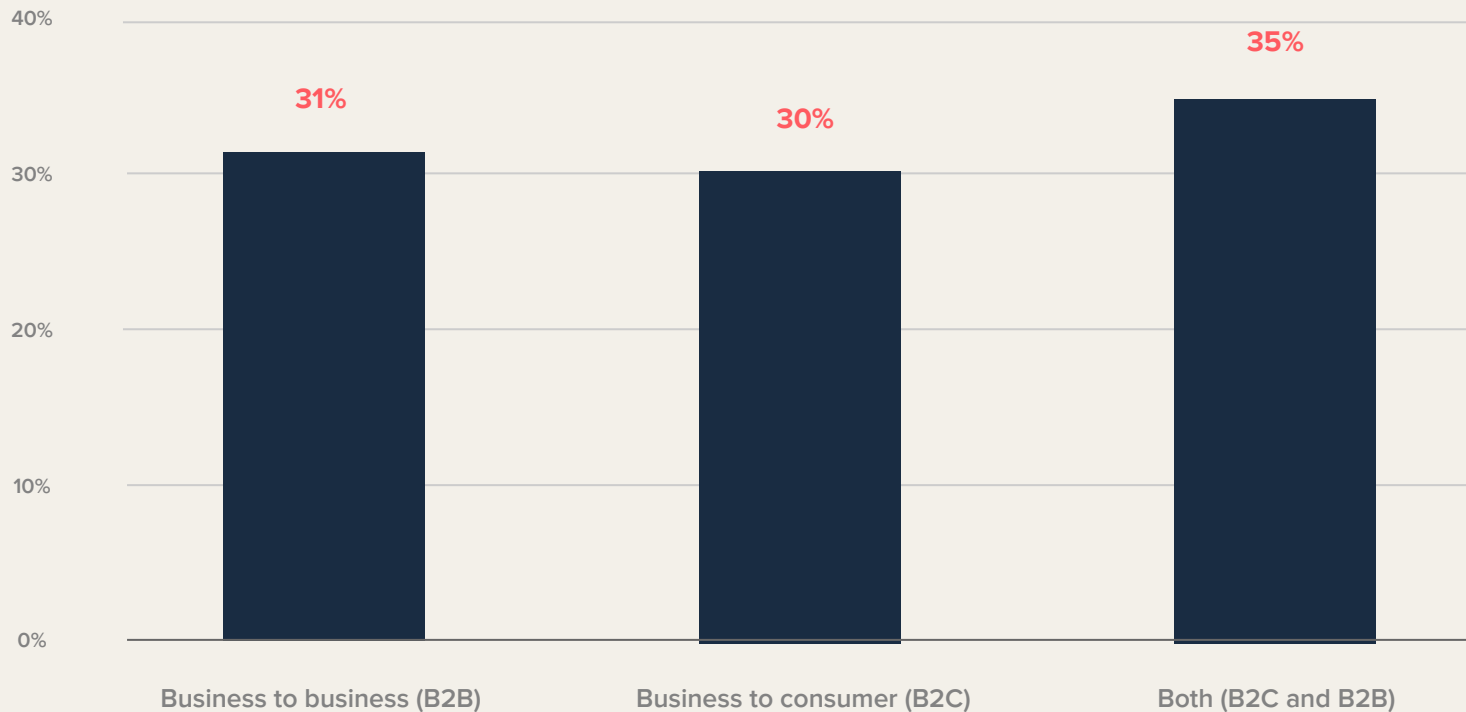
# What best describes your company's average annual revenue?



# How large is your entire company's PR/communications team?



# The primary audience my organization/clients sell to are:



# Thank you!

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

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