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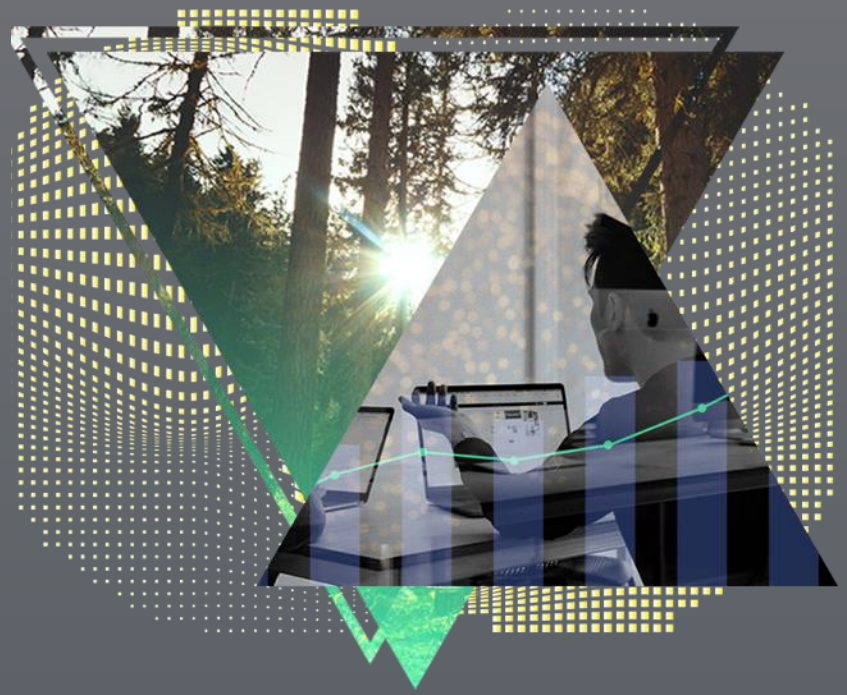
Innovating Sales Strategies To Better Meet Buyer Needs



Mary Shea, PhD - Principal Analyst

> “Every organization will need the ability to remote everything at a moments notice.”
>
> — Satya Nadella, CEO Microsoft

Source: “The Democratization of B2B Sales,” Forrester Research, Inc., Projected Publication, July 2020

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WFH Will Extend Indefinitely

53% of workers who are currently remote hope they will be able to continue to WFH more often even after the crisis is over.

Source: Forrester's Q2 2020 US PandemicEX Survey 2
Future Onsite Sales Meetings Will Come At A Premium

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January 2020
Unrelated to the COVID-19 pandemic, Microsoft announced its commitment to being carbon negative by 2030

February 2020
Even before the worst of the COVID-10 crisis hit, Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey announced on an earnings call that Twitter would begin building support resources to attract and hire remote workers.

March 2020
42% of C-suite execs surveyed by West Monroe said the current market crisis would fundamentally alter the long-term approach of their organization to remote work.

April 2020
50% of US workers surveyed by Forrester stated that they were afraid to go back to work due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

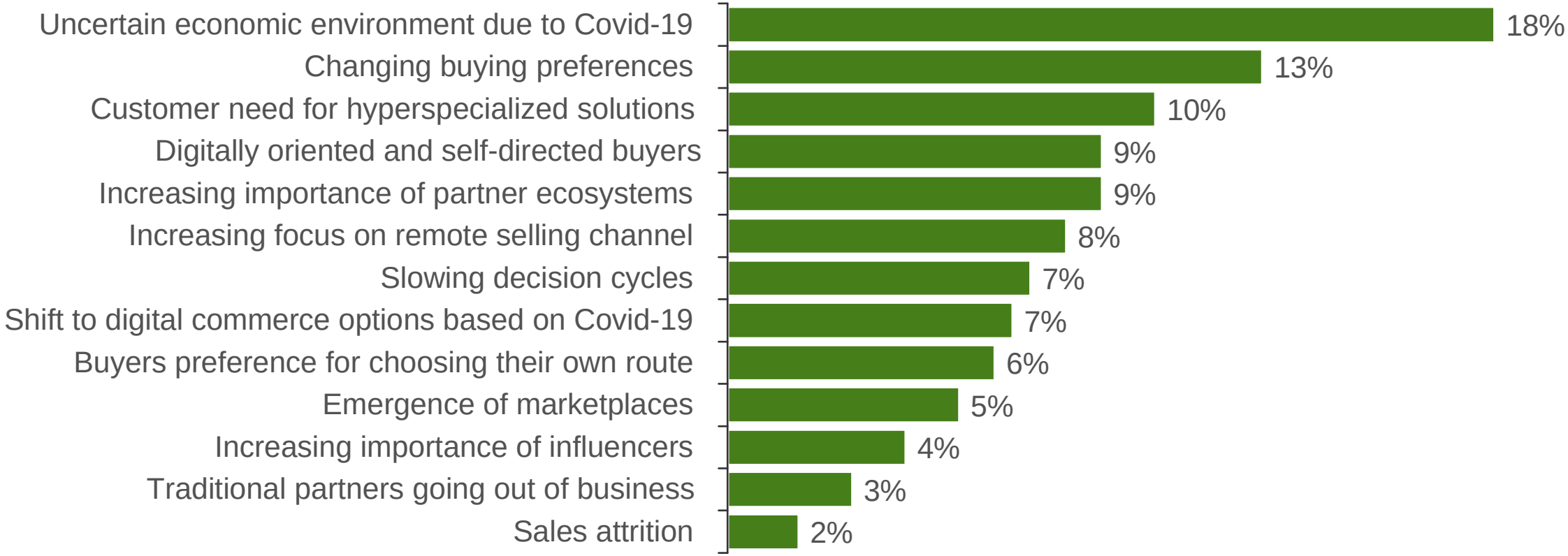
May 2020
48% of global purchase influencers that we surveyed said their organization would permanently maintain a higher rate of full-time remote employees.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg announced that in a recent employee survey, 20% of employees stated they were extremely or very interested in moving to full-time remote work.

Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey announced that all employees may work remotely forever if they choose to.

June 2020
54% of CFOs surveyed by PwC stated that they plan to make remote work a permanent option after the COVID-19 pandemic.

How highly each factor will influence changes in your GTM strategy? Choose the top 3 factors



Base: 240 responses from sales and channel professionals

Source: Forrester's Q2 2020 B2B Channel and Sales Survey

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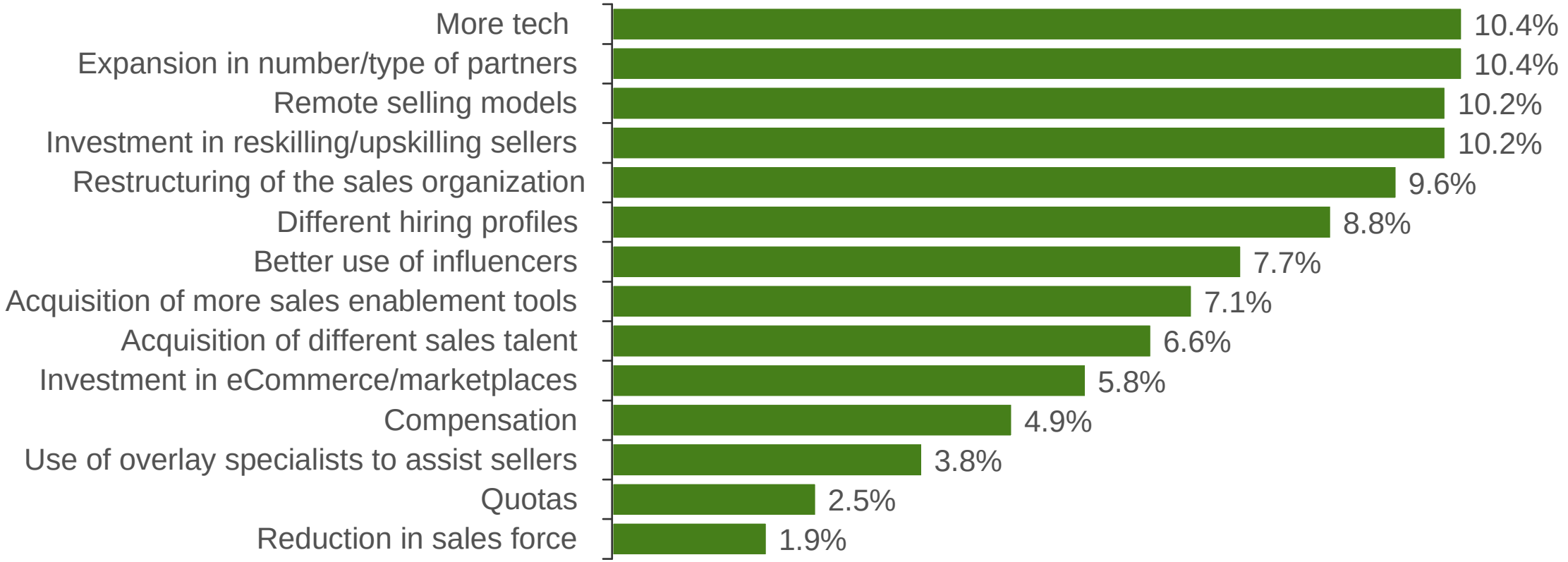
How do you intend to address the aforementioned challenges? (Select all that apply.)



Base: 364 responses from sales and channel professionals

Source: Forrester's Q2 2020 B2B Channel and Sales Survey

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What were the top three challenges your sellers faced regarding buyer/customer engagement at the end of 2019 pre-COVID-19?

Base: 228 responses from sales professionals

Source: Forrester's Q2 2020 B2B Channel and Sales Survey

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What are the top three challenges your sellers face regarding buyer/customer engagement in 2020 post-COVID-19?

Base: 228 responses from sales professionals

Source: Forrester's Q2 2020 B2B Channel and Sales Survey

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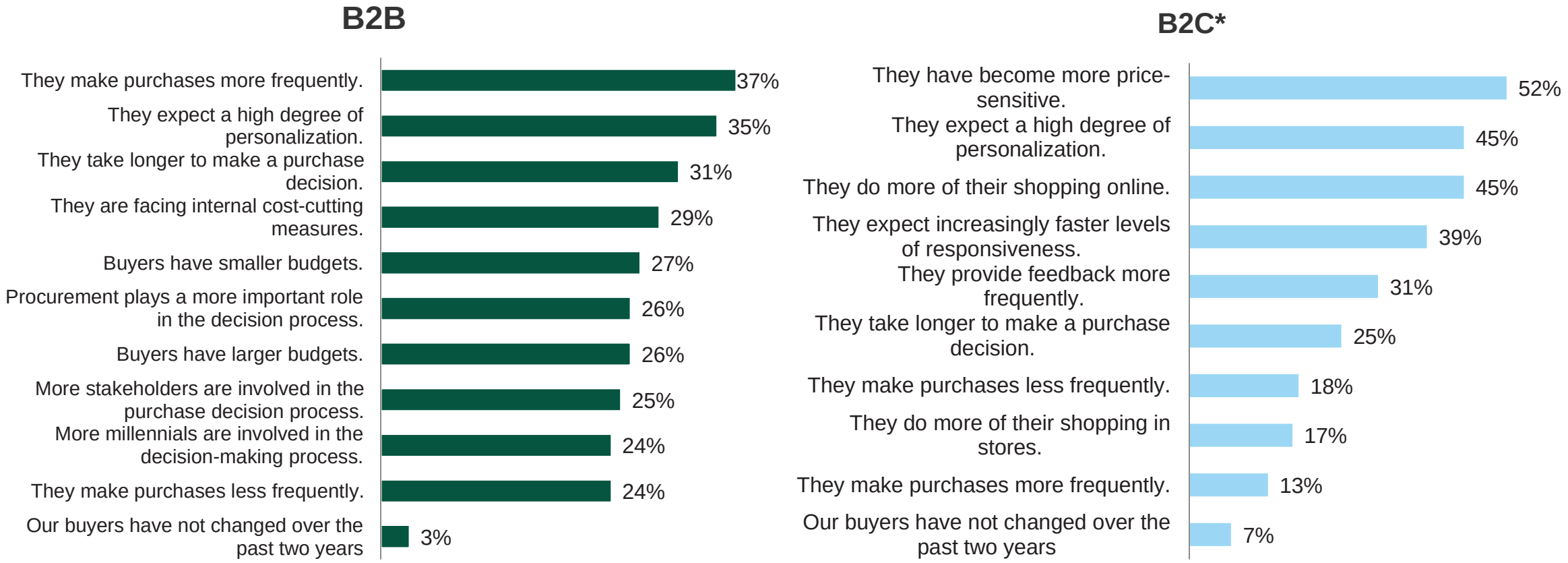
Organizations face a challenging current state

Buyers are changing, firms struggle with too many priorities & delivering to end customers, and their current tools aren't cutting it

Buyers are changing faster than organizations can keep up

They make purchases more frequently, expect higher levels of personalization, and are more price-sensitive.

Q11-How have your organization's buyers changed over the past two years?



Base: 152 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes
*Base: 89 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes
Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Microsoft, June 2020

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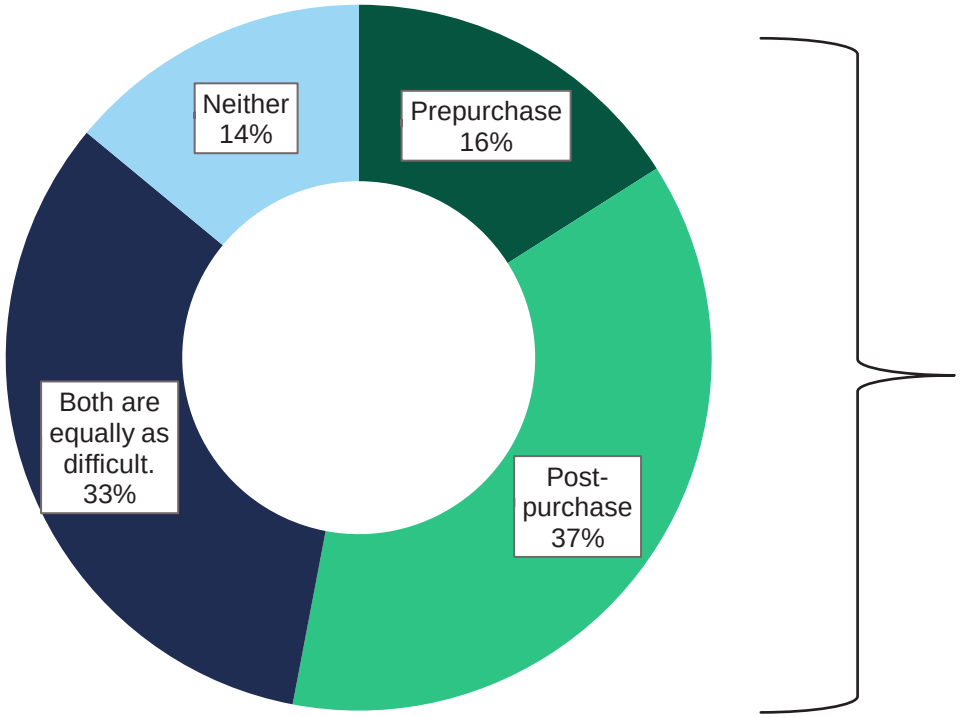
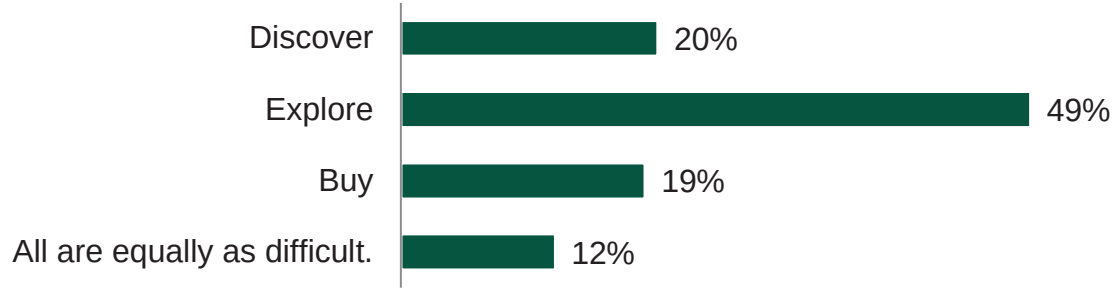
Firms struggle most with sales effectiveness (explore & ask phases)

Q14-At which point in the customer journey do you find it most difficult to support your customers?

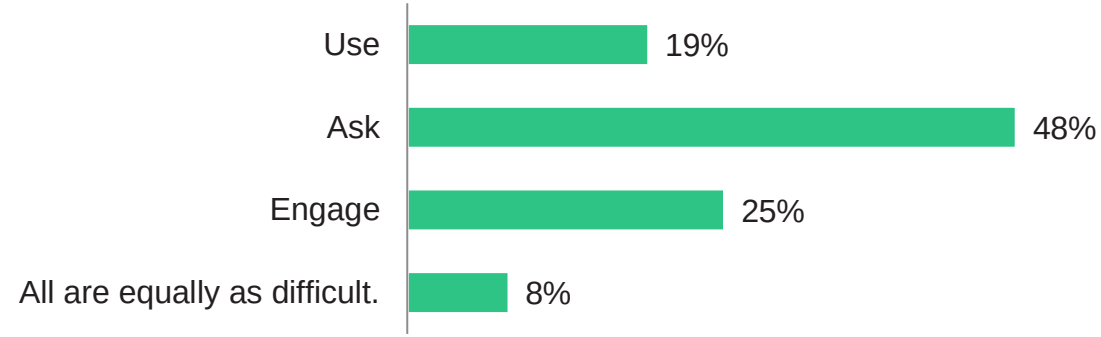


Q15-Which prepurchase task is most difficult for your organization?



Base: 246 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes

Q16-Which post-purchase task is most difficult for your organization?



Base: 349 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes

Base: 501 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Microsoft, June 2020

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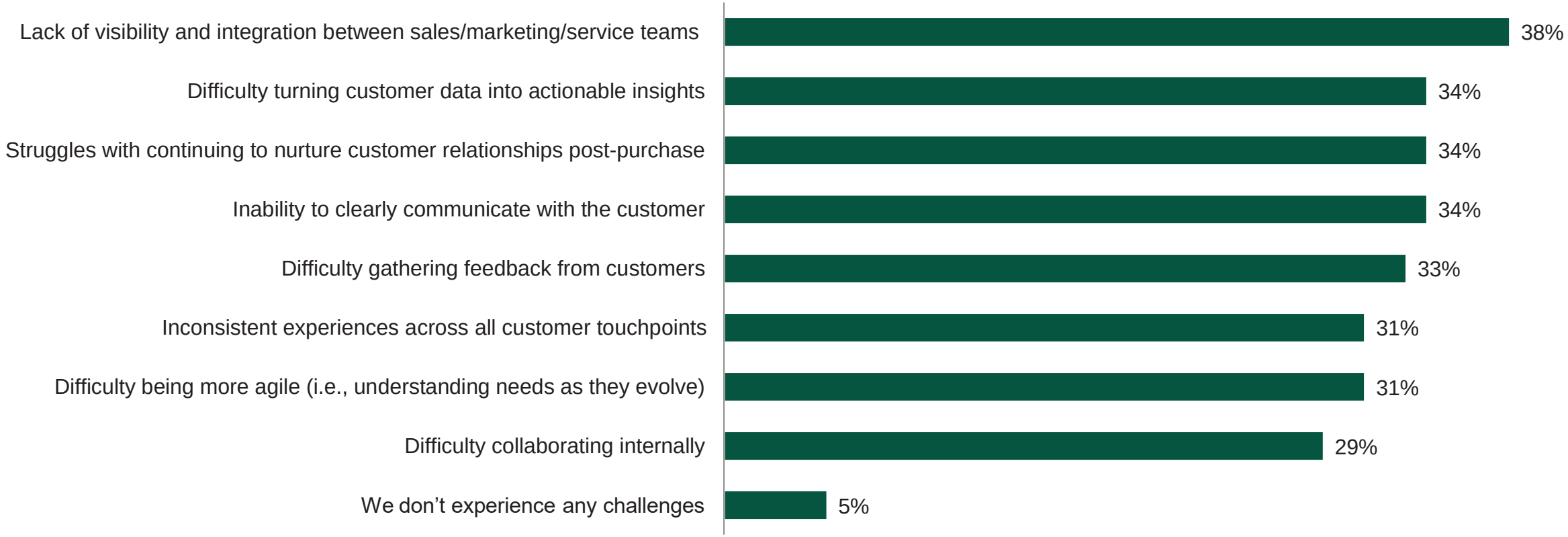
95% experience challenges when delivering end products to customers

Actionable insights, nurturing relationships, and team integration are barriers to delivery – not problems that can be fixed overnight.

Q9-What challenges do you face when delivering end products/services to your customer?



Base: 501 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Microsoft, June 2020

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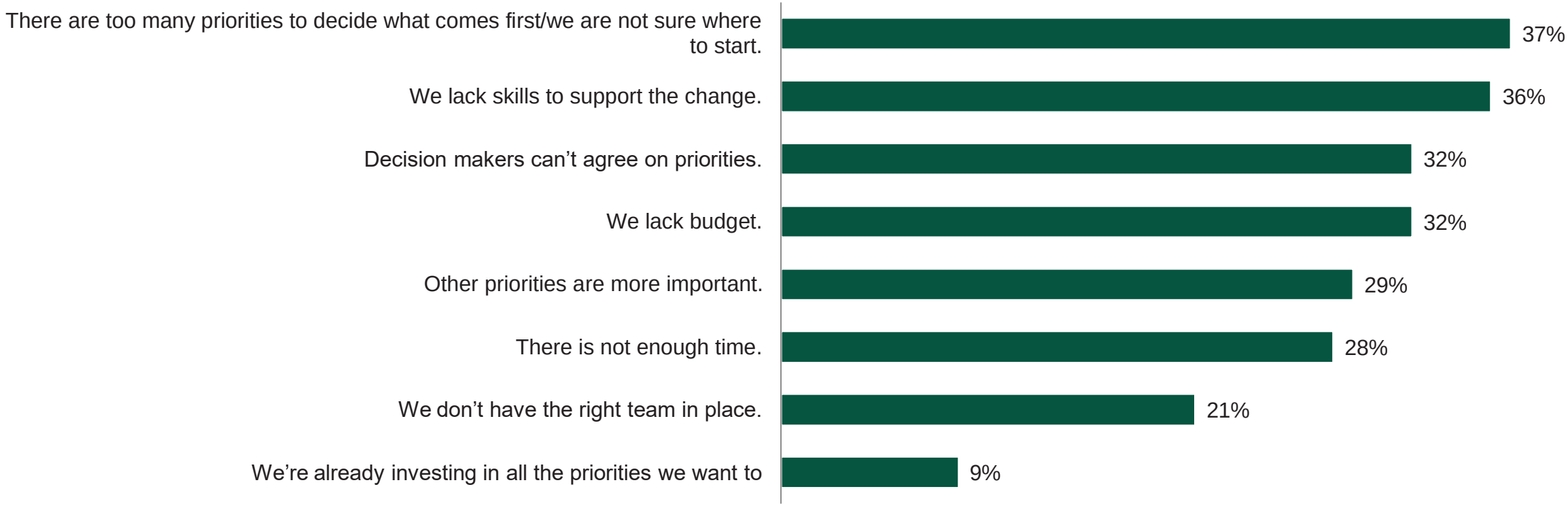
Investment indecision is due to competing priorities and lack of cultural support, not that they don’t have the right resources

Lack of budget, time, and team are lower on the list – meaning this is a cultural shift more than a quick fix.

Q17-What is preventing your organization from investing in all the sales priorities you want to?



Base: 501 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes

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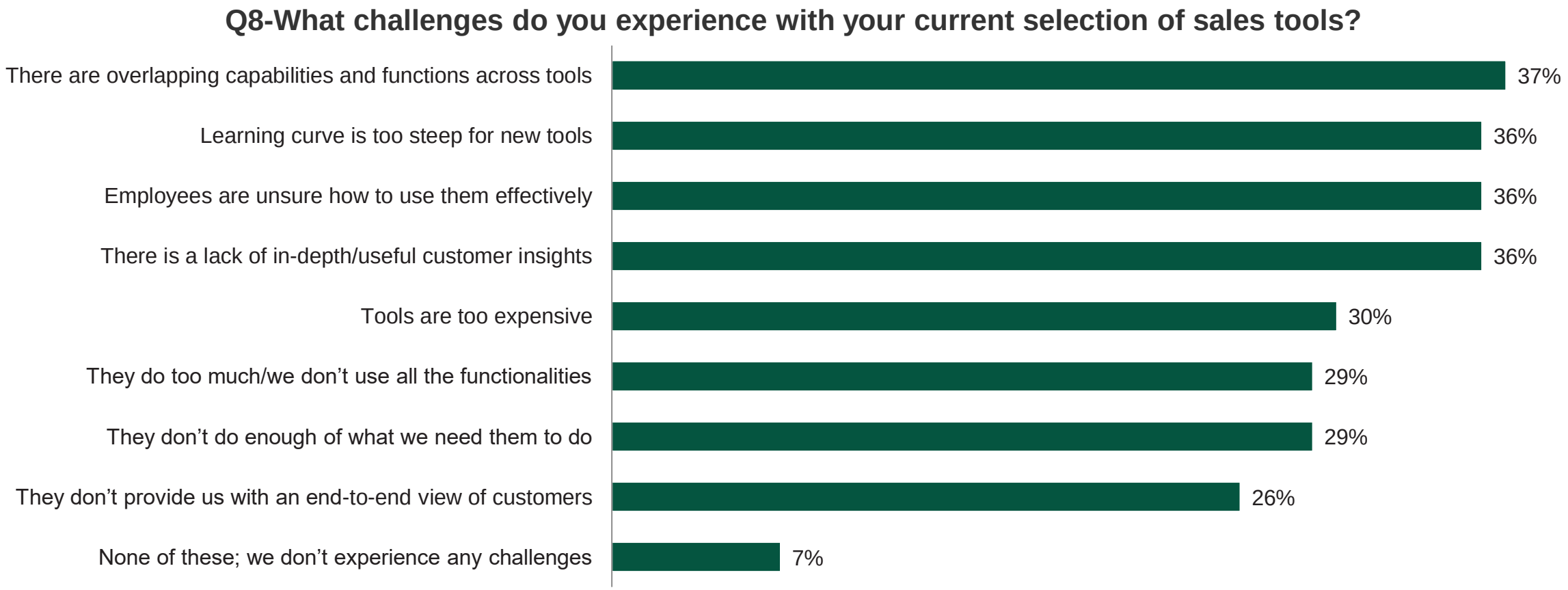
Current sales tools show marked room for improvement

Current tools overlap, are hard to learn, and employees require education.



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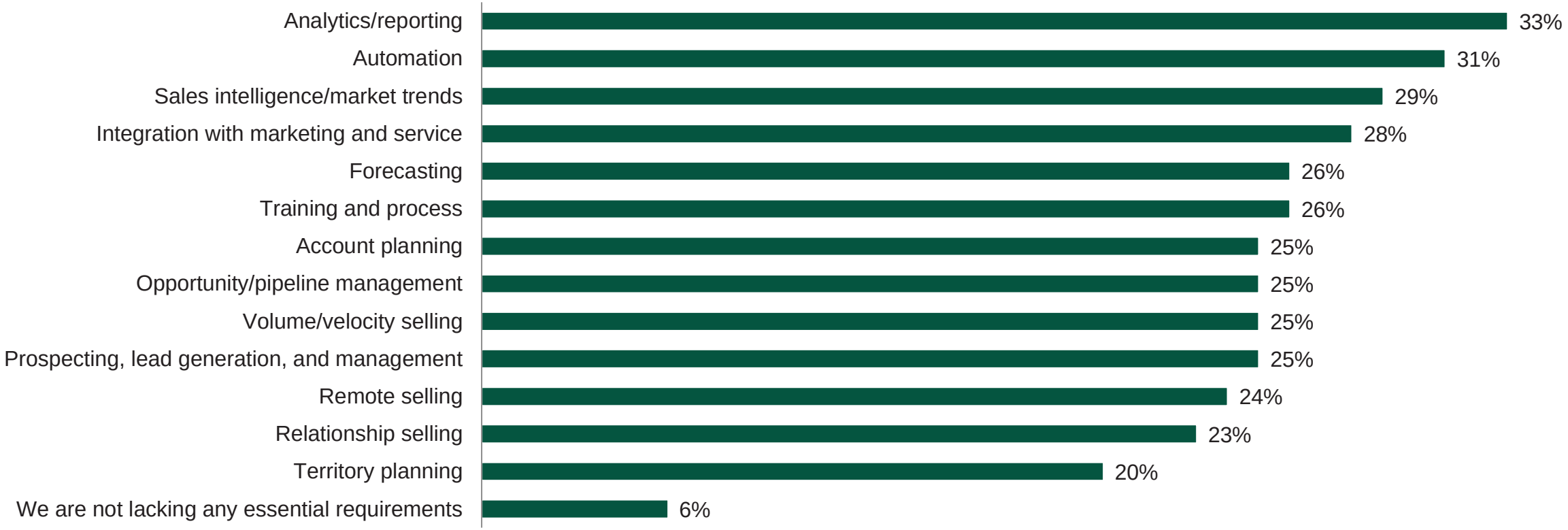
Better CX hinges on more advanced AI-driven factors than just improving sales tactics

Firms say better analytics, improved automation, and sales intelligence would boost CX.

Q10-What sales technology capabilities, if any, are you currently lacking that would be essential to helping you provide a better customer experience?



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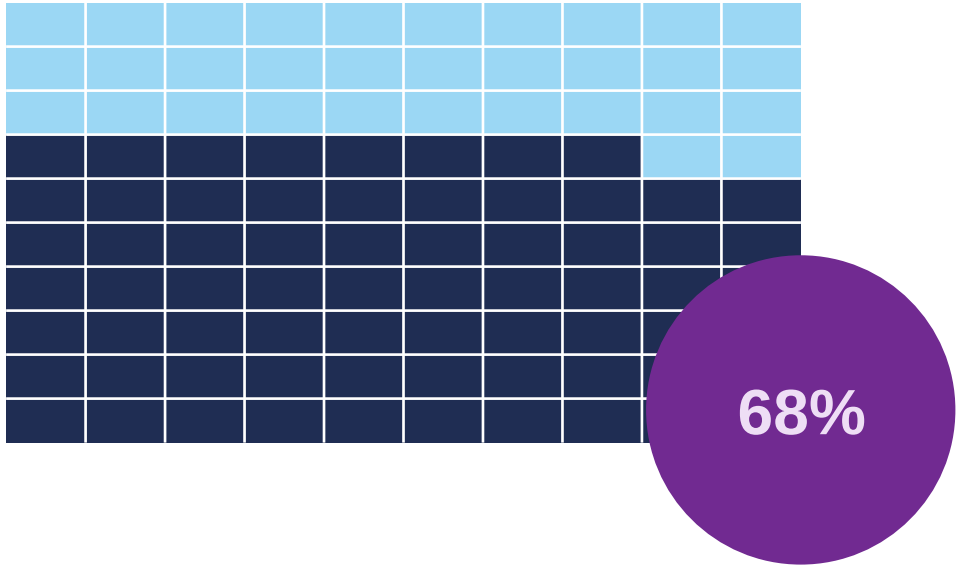
More than two-thirds of firms find their current tools to be subpar for reaching their goals.

Role/industry cut for this q



Our current suite of sales tools is ineffective at producing the outcomes we need.

Base: 501 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes

Source: A commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Microsoft, June 2020

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Where do we go from here?

Further investment in SFA – with the key functionalities in mind – will be what sets firms apart in the future.

The good news: firms are focused on righting these wrongs over the coming years

Firms plan to continue improving CX, data quality, and SFA investment.

Q19-What are your sales organization's priorities for the next 12 to 24 months? (Select up to top three.)

Base: 501 global decision makers of sales tools, technology, and processes

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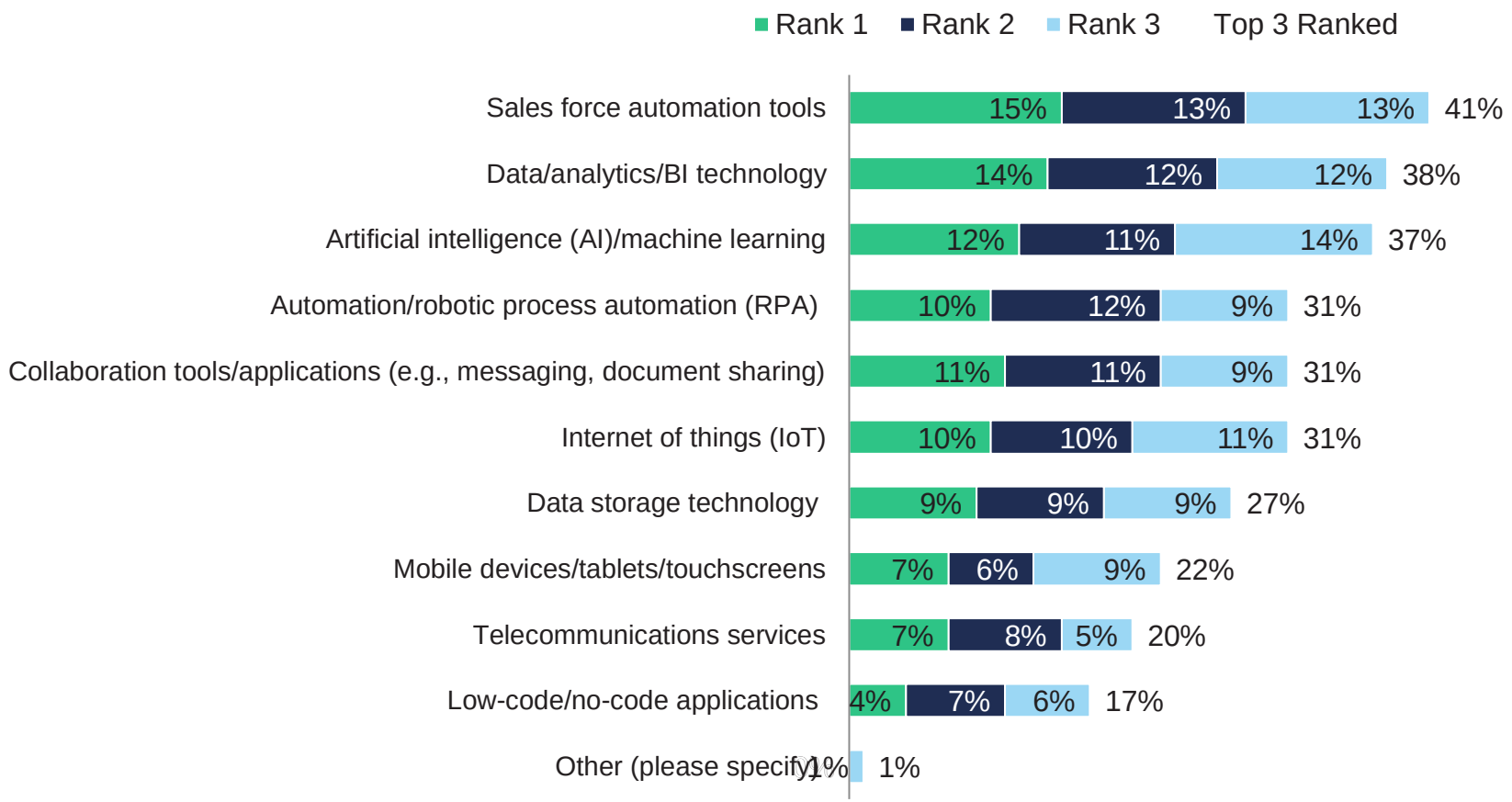
Firms also plan to center future investment on SFA tools and cutting-edge technology

Q18-Where is your company overall putting the greatest investment/attention when it comes to technology?



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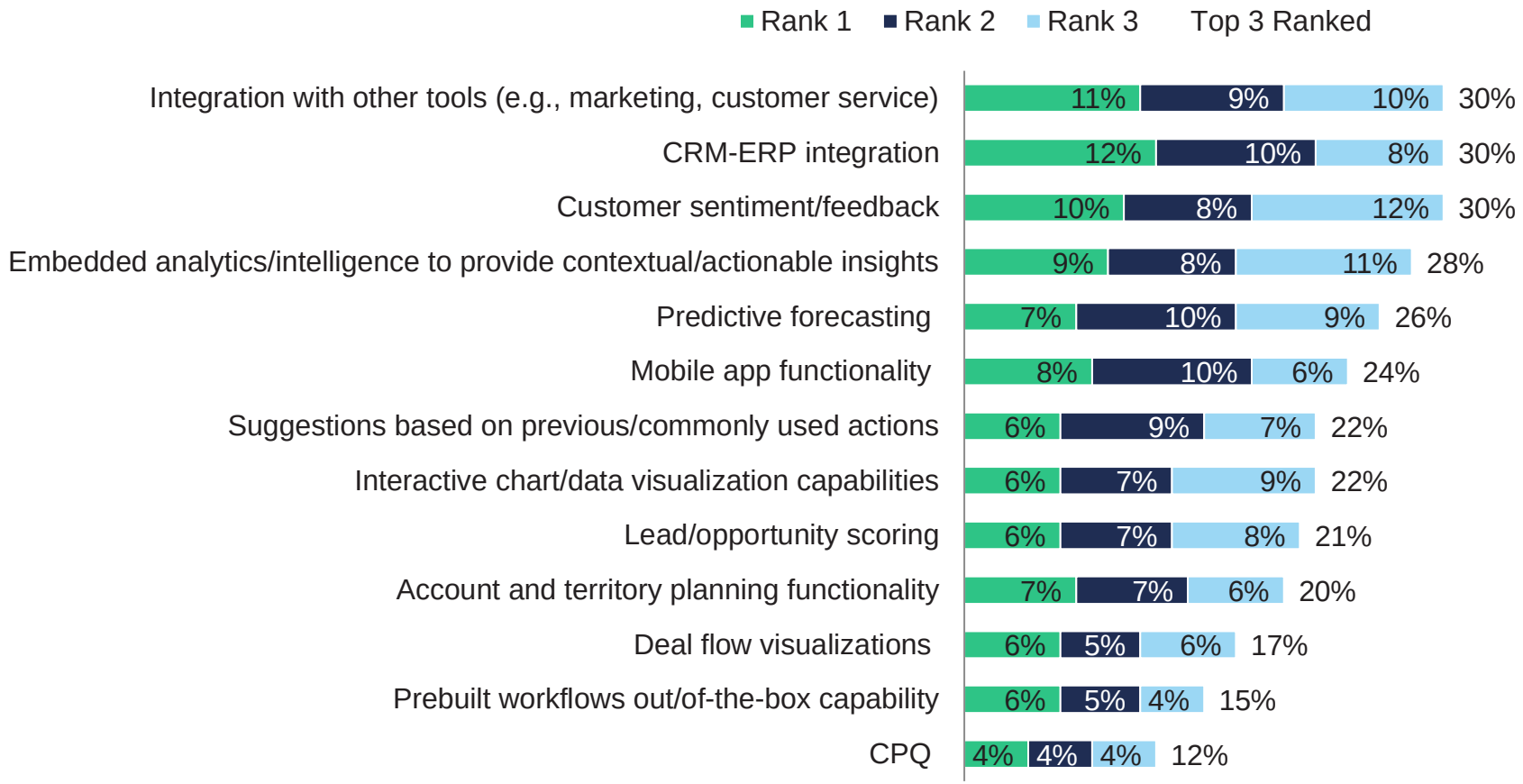
To provide the most value toward goal achievement, these tools must encompass integration, feedback, and analytics capabilities

Q20-Which of the following CRM capabilities would be most helpful in enabling you to achieve your future sales goals?



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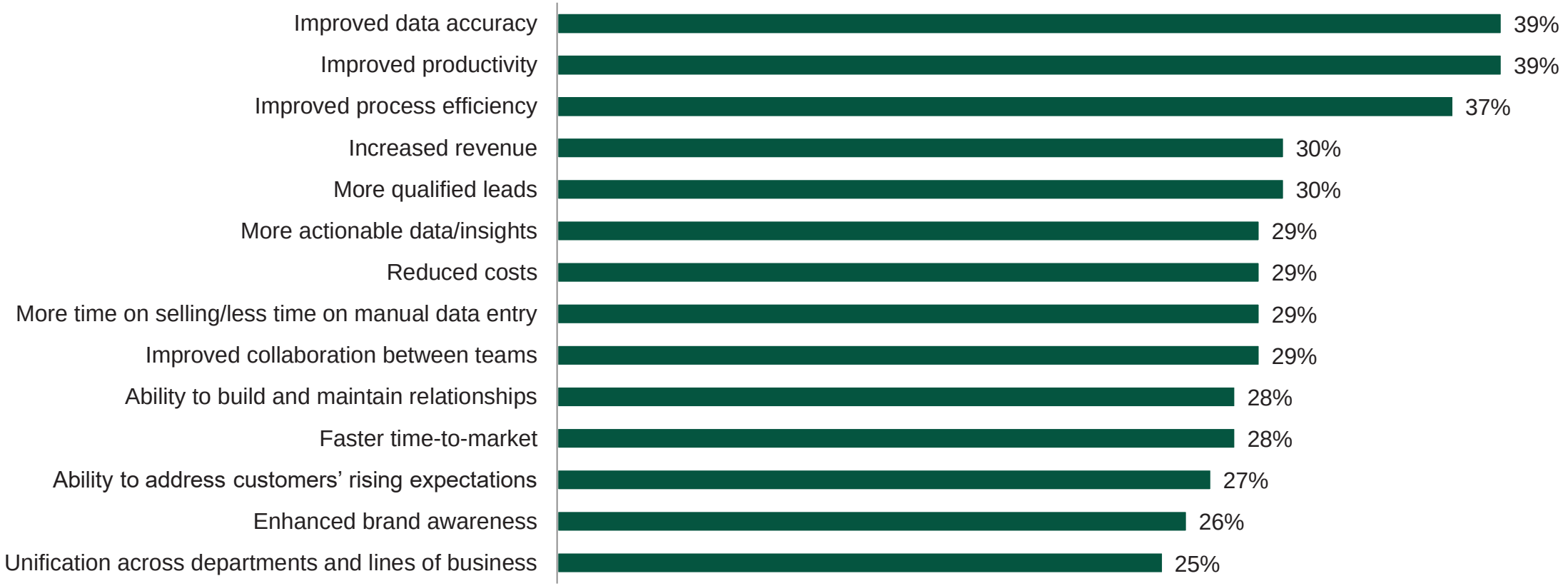
Proper utilization of these tools is expected to yield myriad benefits (1/2)

Q22-What internal/business benefits have you experienced, or would you expect to experience, from using CRM/SFA tools?



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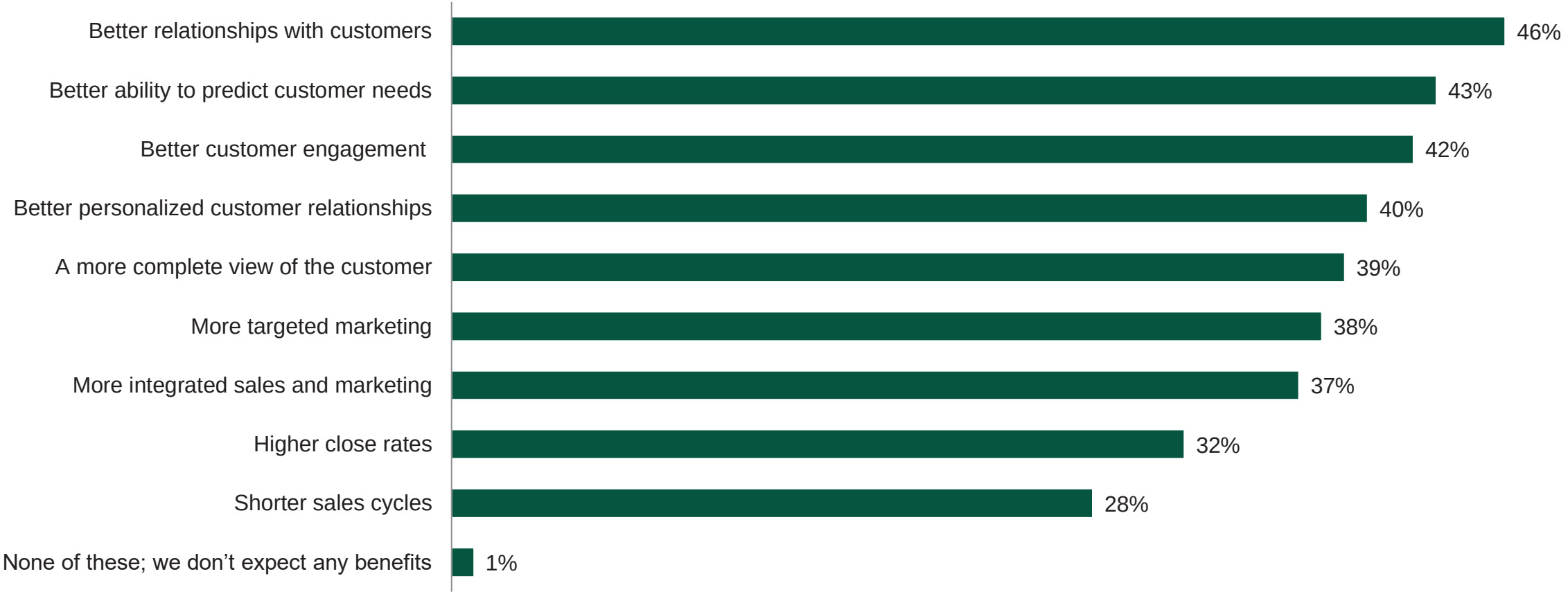
Proper utilization of these tools is expected to yield myriad benefits (2/2)

Q26-What external/customer benefits have you experienced, or would you expect to experience, from using sales force automation tools?



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